



ROUTLEDGE
HANDBOOKS



The Routledge Handbook of Community Development

Perspectives From Around the Globe

Edited by Sue Kenny, Brian McGrath and
Rhonda Phillips

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Routledge Handbook of Community Development explores community development theory and practice across the world. The book provides perspectives about community development as an interactive, relevant and sometimes contradictory way to address issues impacting the human condition. It promotes better understanding of the complexities and challenges in identifying, designing, implementing and evaluating community development constructs, applications and interventions. This edited volume discusses how community development is conceptualized as an approach, method or profession. Themes provide the scope of the book, with projects, issues or perspectives presented in each of these areas.

This handbook provides invaluable contextualized insights on the theory and practice of community development around core themes relevant in society. Each chapter explores and presents an issue, perspectives, project or case in the thematic areas, with regional and country context included. It is a must-read for students and researchers working in community development, planning and human geography and an essential reference for any professional engaged in community development.

Sue Kenny, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor, International and Community Development, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia served as former Director, Centre for Citizenship, Development and Human Rights and Chair, Australian and New Zealand Third Sector Research organization. Sue has forty years' experience throughout Australasia, Europe and the UK.

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“The Routledge Handbook of Community Development provides unique and useful perspectives on major community development topics based on a variety of geographical perspectives. The collection of articles will be especially useful for readers interested in building on other practitioners’ experiences in addressing issues in their localities. In that respect, this handbook provides a wealth of practical insights that otherwise would be difficult to access. While it is difficult to organize a project such as this in ways that are useful to all readers, the editors group the articles into major community development topics and the contributors provide unique perspectives based on their experiences with various issues. This volume makes an interesting and useful contribution to the field of community development practice and is worth examining.”

*Norman Walzer, Ph.D., Senior Research Scholar, Northern Illinois
University Center for Governmental Studies, USA*

“The Routledge Handbook of Community Development does a brilliant job exploring and highlighting the philosophical, ethical, and professional complexities embodied within the evolving field of community development. The books structure provides an effective framework to critically examine a constantly dynamic field.”

*Bryan Hains, Ph.D., Director, Community Innovation Lab; Associate
Professor, Community & Leadership Development, University of
Kentucky, USA*

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PREFACE

There is growing interest in community development. It offers ways of dealing with social, political, economic and cultural issues across the globe. Indeed, community development, as a basis for policy development, a field of practice and a philosophical approach offers engaging and often unique perspectives on how to seize opportunities for sustainable development and respond to the issues facing humankind today.

Because the aim of this book is to provide insights into community development internationally, the three co-editors were chosen because of their coverage of the major regions of the world. From the outset, we were interested in structuring this book to provide an overview of community development as it is conceptualized and practiced in different contexts. We wanted to demonstrate not only the variety of community development activities globally but also the richness of community development as a living and dynamic field.

One of the first decisions to be made was whether to structure the book thematically or around geographical regions. Each of the editors took responsibility for contacting authors in specific regions (Rhonda in the Americas; Brian in the UK, Ireland, Africa and Europe; and Sue in the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia and New Zealand). However, it was not our intention to present any of the chapters as representative of a particular region. Instead, we decided to organize the chapters thematically. We agreed upon seven themes—Governance and Community Development; Place and Community Development, Sustainable Livelihoods and Community Development; Culture and Creative Expression in Community Development; Identity, Belonging and Connectedness; Community Development, Human Rights and Resilience; and Engagement and Knowledge. In selecting the range of topics covered, we sought to communicate the scope and depth of the field. Yet while we used these specific themes to structure the book, it was not always easy to decide which of them was the most appropriate for each of the 32 chapters, because many of the chapters could have been placed in several of the thematic areas. This shows both the interconnectedness and complexity of community development research and practice.

Community development is not just a field of study. It involves actions based on values and principles. In this sense it has normative foundations (addressing issues of “what should be”, rather than considering only “what is”). We contacted people to contribute chapters that include activists, practitioners, academics, policy makers, teachers and researchers committed to the principles of community development. We explained to the authors that we conceptualized

community development as an interactive, relevant and sometimes contradictory way of addressing issues impacting the human condition, which begins with the perspective of communities, and that we were interested in chapters that discussed community development in different settings. We were looking for the authors' ideas and experiences regarding how community development was understood and practiced and the opportunities and challenges involved. We aimed to provide insights into community development as an international field, with chapters that would: engage the existing literature on a particular issue, theme or research project; illuminate the context, including political, social and political factors; and elucidate the particular meanings of community development applied in the chapter. We would like to thank all those who have contributed for the open and generous way in which they set about the task of writing and their patience with our requests for further information and iteration.

In November 2016, as we began editing this book, Donald J. Trump was elected as the next president of the United States of America. Trump won in spite of the vast majority of polls predicting a clear win for his adversary, Hillary Rodham Clinton (and indeed Clinton received more overall votes than Trump). His election was yet another expression of the rise of populist politics. For example, at the end of May 2016, the people of the Philippines had elected Rodrigo Duterte as their new president. Duterte won against traditional mainstream politicians, with his appeal as a "plain-speaking", anti-establishment politician and his claim that he would "clean up" drug use and crime, even when this meant extrajudicial killings of drug users and criminals. In June 2016, a referendum that had been urged by the populist leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), Nigel Farage, was held in United Kingdom. This referendum was about whether UK citizens wanted to stay with or leave the European Union (EU). In a surprise result, particularly because business, academic and many political leaders supported the "remain" case, and there was little detail regarding what leaving the EU actually meant, the leave campaign for exit (Brexit) was supported by 51.9 percent of those who voted. While not at the apex of political power, right-wing populist parties remain active in France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Greece.

Analyses of the reasons for the support given to populist politics, and particularly support for right-wing populist parties, are ongoing. They include assessments of the effects of globalized neoliberalism that has operated in different countries, the ways in which democracy is practiced, the fear of migrants and refugees, especially Muslims, and the ways in which nationalism is being fomented. What is clear though, is the undoubted appeal of a politics that exploits the grievances of those who believe that they have been ignored by those in power. A common refrain from lower-middle-class sections of society has been that they have become powerless, while minority groups, such as migrants, refugees and even drug users have been "free-loading" off the system, or in some cases, taking jobs from the more deserving population. This form of politics is based on simplistic explanations of complex social and economic problems.

At the end of 2017 it is unclear as to how the recent rise of populism will eventually play out. There will, of course, be varying trajectories for populist politics in different countries, and while it is anticipated that many of the promises of populist leaders will not be fulfilled, we cannot predict what this will mean. However, we do need to be thinking about what the rise of populism means for community development. One view is that on one level there is a synergy between community development and populism. For example, there are convergences around critiques of elites and neoliberal globalization, the claims concerning the authenticity of ordinary people and the commitment to the empowerment of those who are alienated from the key power structures of society. Indeed, the empowerment of ordinary people is a key theme of community development, as illustrated in the chapters in this book. Empowerment processes begin by listening to the grievances and dreams of those who have experienced disadvantage

Preface

and discrimination and responding to their needs and interests. It involves taking these needs, interests and visions seriously. But taking needs, interests and visions seriously does not mean accepting the racist, misogynist or homophobic framework in which populist concerns are so often expressed. Community development practice requires rejecting sloganizing and jingoism, naïve understandings of the causes of disempowerment, and fanciful solutions. It entails nurturing mutual relationships with and between people of different backgrounds, at local, national and global levels. It also involves establishing spaces for cooperation and open discussion of different viewpoints. Many of the ways of undertaking these tasks are presented in chapters of this book. They are often very challenging. But we avoid such challenges at our peril.

Community development is underpinned by values that are antithetical to those of right- and even left-wing populism. For example, community development is based on a commitment to universal human rights and social justice for all, not just for self-identified aggrieved sections of society. Community development is committed to pluralism, to informed discussion and debate, and to political analysis based on deliberation rather than embedded in simple slogans. Instead of claiming that they alone speak for communities and rejecting the legitimacy of oppositional views, whereby political opponents are deemed “enemies of the people” (see Muller 2016), community development practice encourages voice and respects the diversity of beliefs, life-style and viewpoints found globally.

Community development principles will most likely be severely tested in the next few years. Yet simplistic populism is not the way forward. Community development, as illustrated in the book, can critique existing power relations and structures, and it can offer alternative ways of enriching sustainable human life on this planet through collective and cooperative endeavor. We hope this book will provide the readers with both insights into the breadth of community development as well as inspiration to think about and act upon different ways of collectively organizing our lives for a better future.

Reference

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The inspiration for this book has come from the commitment of ordinary people working away at the grassroots in the millions of small community development projects now operating across the globe. While, of course, it is not possible to do justice to the dedication of these people in one book, we hope that this book can pave the way for future publications to capture the range and vitality of community development. As for personal acknowledgments, there are many.

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INTRODUCTION

Sue Kenny, Brian McGrath and Rhonda Phillips

Community development as a field of study and practice is largely a product of the second half of the twentieth century. Like many social and political movements since World War II, it is concerned with creating better lives globally and ensuring that human beings can become agents of their own destinies. It operates on the basis of a commitment to social justice, social equality and the principles of universal human rights. In its broadest sense, community development is a way of empowering ordinary people to act together for the purpose of influencing and exerting greater control over decisions that affect their lives (Craig 1998: 15; Taylor 2003: 3; Mayo 2005: 101; Ife 2010: 67; Gilchrist and Taylor 2011: 3; Kenny 2011: 8). It is underpinned by a strong emphasis on meaningful community participation and collaboration. The endeavor to empower communities means that people are able to live the kinds of lives that they value, rather than having “what is good for them” decided by others (see Sen 1999: 18). The wide appeal of community development, as the basis of official policy as well as a form of emancipatory politics, has meant that it traverses a wide range of ideas, visions, approaches, interests and socio-political contexts (Shaw 2008). Indeed, it is manifested in myriad forms across the globe. This diversity of community development means that it is often a contentious field of action (Mayo 2008: 13). In this book we seek to capture key elements of this international diversity.

While it is based on collective endeavor, unlike many collective movements, community development is not about mass (and often violent) revolutionary struggles directed at replacing one ruling group with another. Indeed, its strategic sites of action are not nation states, nor the class-based workplaces of socialist struggle, but the complex world of communities. The study of communities has lent itself to a considerable degree of debate and investigation. It is well established that community is defined in many ways, but generally involves a group of people who come together, or relate to each other, voluntarily and deliberately, around issues of (desired) common identity, interest, cause or territory (Brent 2004; Day 2006; Neal and Walters 2008; Kuecker et al. 2011; Somerville 2011; Mulligan 2015). Traditional discussions of community emphasized homogeneity and consensus, yet the identification of a group as a community does not preclude internal differences, divisions or conflicts. Contemporary relationships and connections are such that while communities can be thought of as location or place based—“communities of place” or “grounded communities” (Kuecker et al. 2011; Mulligan 2015)—they are not constructed nor encountered only as face-to-face, but also practiced in the virtual world. Kuecker et al.’s (2011) typology of “grounded”, “way of life” and “projected”

communities offers a useful way to think about the multiple, active and normative dimensions through which community is expressed and sought after. As the chapters suggest, we need to be attentive to the dynamic and fluid ways through which community formation in different local and national contexts is woven into the patterns of community development practice. The place aspect of communities is explored deeply in Chapters 6 through 9.

In this book we see that community development practitioners, activists and organizations work with and for communities in different ways, such as raising awareness and facilitating community members to articulate their needs (for example, see Chapter 9); identifying and mobilizing their assets and resources (see Chapters 7 and 25); and developing collaborations between communities and other actors who can facilitate and support community empowerment and expression (see Chapters 15, 17, 29 and 30). Additionally, other elements are explored, including developing capacities and self-reliance (see Chapter 26); and critiquing and challenging power that undermines communities as well as democratic community development (see Chapters 2, 3, 14, 15, 22 and 23); and signposting critical challenges and directions for community development into the future (see Chapters 1 and 28, with the latter addressing knowledge and data considerations). Different perspectives are used to analyze these activities. For example, analysis can begin with a conception of community development as a job or profession; as a particular approach to change; as a process (such as developing the ability to act collectively); as a political activity; and as an outcome (the result of action) (Kenny 2011: 11; Phillips and Pittman 2014: 7). Of course these perspectives are not mutually exclusive and all are demonstrated throughout this book.

There are varying theoretical frameworks used throughout the chapters. These frameworks are important because they provide the intellectual maps that we use to make sense of our experiences, and they set the backdrop to our assumptions about how the world works. Theories are used to explain the contexts of community development activities, including constraints and opportunities. They inform decisions regarding strategies and appropriate forms of intervention. For example, Chapter 24 discusses how social psychological and neurological theories can explain the stresses facing communities in war-ravaged parts of the Middle East and North African (MENA) region. In Chapter 25, Bauman's theory of refugees as dispensable "human waste" is used to explain conceptions of and attitudes towards refugees in the contemporary period, as a backdrop to their study of community development among refugees. Immigration is also explored in the context of integration in Chapter 21.

As well as drawing on theories to explain situations and guide action, community development has a multitude of concepts. Freire's concept of conscientization, for example, is a central theme. It can be applied as both an explanatory tool and as a guide to strategic community development interventions (see Chapter 9). In the past two decades social capital has made its way to the center of community development discourse. Ideas around social capital are explored in Chapters 7 and 32. Another form of capital, known as cultural capital, is explored in Chapters 13 through 17, with case studies as well as framework exploration of network and collaborative development. Another long-standing concept in community development is that of sustainability. In Chapters 10 through 12, some of the meanings of sustainability in community development and the ways in which it is practiced are discussed, including at the regional level.

As indicated above, one of the most important ideas in community development is the commitment to the empowerment of ordinary people through community development agents. The differing views of empowerment and agency can also highlight the diversity of standpoints that exist in the study and practice of community development. We now look more closely at two areas: (1) empowerment and (2) community development agents, forms and purposes.

Empowerment

While there might be a general consensus that the broad aim of community development is to empower communities so that they have more control over their future, there is no simple agreement about *how* to empower communities. Indeed, while there is considerable diversity evident in community development activity, the question of empowerment is one with which all who work in and/or engage in academic study of the field must grapple. There are several major areas and related theories for community development, including relationships (often expressed in social capital theory), structure (capacity to bring about or stop change—structural functionalism) and power (the control or access to all types of assets and resources—often expressed in conflict theory) (Hustedde 2015). Power is about control, whether individual or collective. So another way to think of the question, how to empower communities, is to look at issues of control and capacity for it.

There are many different conceptualizations, levels of sophistication and applications of power theory within the community development literature (see e.g. Varley and Curtin 2002; 2006; Cheshire 2003; Brennan and Israel 2008; Herbert-Meade 2012). Varley and Curtin (2002; 2006; 2013), in their communitarian populism interpretation of collective action, offer a useful analytical distinction between two aspects of power: power over and power to. The former refers to those sources of domination, such as centralized state or corporate decision making, that remove control from local communities, while the latter refers to the “ability of the relatively powerless to form stable groups, capable of engaging in effective collective action” (Varley and Curtin 2013: 129) to counteract and control these structural forces. A “power to” approach is also evident in studies concerned with the nature of community agency (e.g. Brennan and Luloff 2007). Varley and Curtin (2002) distinguish between “radical” and “pragmatic” ideal typical populist approaches to collective action, both of which seek to champion the cause of the subordinated in society but with different vision and tactics. The former approach tends towards more ambitious transformative change of the status quo, based on radical ideology, highly participative organizational culture and a willingness to engage in direct oppositional action against dominant interests. The latter pragmatic approach promotes more directive organizational culture, incremental concrete actions and typically through integrationist partnership arrangements with other actors, particularly the state. Similarly, in a useful analysis, Gilchrist and Taylor (2011:16) distinguish between different perspectives on community development that can help us to understand varying views of empowerment. These are: (1) making the structures work more smoothly; (2) rebalancing the system to be fairer and more democratic; and (3) fundamentally changing the way society operates. While it is important to acknowledge that these approaches are models, and that in real situations they overlap, for the purpose of analysis we can apply them to discern three approaches to empowerment. Below we explain these approaches and we comment on some of the ways in which these approaches are illustrated in this book.

Empowerment can mean that ordinary people are more involved in community affairs, and their involvement can nurture a commitment to working together to ensure that *the system functions as smoothly as possible*. For example, community development practice involves facilitating connections between community members to assist them to prioritize needs collectively, to access resources, to identify their own assets and to decide in cooperation how these resources and assets should be best used. In some contexts, there is particular urgency around the need for these processes to take place. Chapter 11 discusses the role of a community organization, Forum Bangun Aceh (FBA), working with ordinary people in tsunami-affected Aceh, to identify their needs and priorities, to assist them to identify assets and access resources and to decide

how these could be utilized. As discussed in the chapter, the overwhelming desire of the survivors after the tsunami that occurred in 2004 was to get back to normal, which involved efforts to get (what was left of) the system to work as smoothly as possible. In a different context, that of Australia, the title “community development” has been applied to a number of programs that have aimed to ensure that Indigenous Australians fit into Western culture, so that Indigenous Australians can live better lives. However, as Kickett-Tucker and Ife (Chapter 22) point out in a critique of the “close the gap” rhetoric—which aims to lift the standard of living of Indigenous people to that of non-Indigenous people—underlying “close the gap” policies is the assumption of the superiority of non-Indigenous cultures. Their discussion draws attention to how “making the system work more smoothly” can undermine the community development commitment to empowerment through self-determination.

Rebalancing the system can occur through ensuring that powerful groups are accountable to communities, and by changing the ways in which decisions are made: for example, establishing structures that guarantee that environmental and minority groups are represented, and listened to, on policy matters. Giving voice to marginal groups can shift thinking about the assumed role of a powerful group, including professionals such as welfare workers, to speak on behalf of others. Speaking for others is an established practice that denies the right of people to state their own views. This is particularly so when it comes to people with disability, or groups without power, such as young people. Ideas around such issues in the context of youth are explored in Chapters 18, 19 and 20.

Ensuring that those who are disadvantaged and marginalized have voice is an important human right. Chapter 26 discusses how principles of community development can be utilized to support the attainment of human rights for children with disability. Empowerment aimed at rebalancing the system is also illustrated in Chapter 4, in which the Area Assistance Scheme (AAS) in Australia is analyzed. The AAS aimed to give ordinary people more say in the development of local public policies in Australia. While many rebalancing activities involve giving communities more say at the policy level, empowerment can also occur when communities bypass the state and eschew government funding or in other ways take charge of their own development in their own way, as discussed in Chapters 30 and 32, with cases from Memphis, Tennessee and Turkey.

There are also more radical agendas for empowerment through community development, whereby communities challenge and change dominant power relations, and indeed, the very *way in which society operates*. Challenges to the way a society operates rest on an awareness of social injustices and human rights, such as those experienced by Indigenous peoples (see Chapter 23). Consciousness-raising and commitment to social justice and human rights have always been a central plank of community development. As noted above, discussion of awareness-raising often draws on the work of Paulo Freire and his concept of conscientization. In Chapter 10, the centrality of conscientization is explained as a way that has been used to combat the passive acceptance of authoritarian culture. This chapter focuses on the repressive military regime that was in power in Myanmar from 1962 until 2011. Similarly, Chapter 14 explains how critical theater in the Philippines has involved raising critical awareness of different forms of political repression in that country. In the Philippines, there is a long tradition of critical arts programs raising awareness about oppression and human rights abuses and promoting the mobilization of ordinary people with the aim of transforming society.

Many Indigenous struggles are based on the idea that empowerment requires fundamental change to Western cultures, especially challenging the ways in which Western cultures patronize and oppress Indigenous cultures. As a case in point, in Australia and New Zealand cultural traditions based on Western modernity are assumed to be superior to Indigenous cultures (see Chapters 5 and 22). Chapter 22 draws attention to two crucial components of community development

work with Indigenous people: the validation of different forms of social association and deep respect for the integrity of Indigenous cultures.

Community Development Agents

There are also differing views of the agents of community development. First, for some commentators, community development is conceived as a job or profession. A number of chapters in this book, either implicitly or explicitly, identify the agents of community development as external professionals (see for example, Chapters 24 and 31).

Second, there is the view that does not emphasize community development as a profession, but nevertheless sees it as an activity best undertaken by those who are external to a community. An argument supporting this view is that external practitioners are more independent than internal members of a community and they can offer fresh insights into issues and alternatives in a community. Such an external practitioner can draw on experiences outside the community to talk about “what happens elsewhere”. Using external experiences, they can animate a community, provide a broad framework for identifying needs and assets, assist in community planning and explain how to construct spaces to give voice. However, given that community development involves facilitation of the needs and agendas of communities as community members themselves see them, external community development agents need to respect local traditions and processes. Giving voice in the context of understanding and validating local cultural attitudes, beliefs and practices is important for enabling communities to express themselves in their own terms and to articulate multiple voices (see Chapters 13, 23 and 30).

Third, in contrast to the view that community development is best practiced by external people, community development also takes place through a facilitator who is already an intrinsic part of the community (Ife 2013: 308–310). Such a practitioner might be thought of as an organic activist or organic leader (Kenny 2011: 277), a local motivator or, in Saul Alinsky’s terms, a native leader (Alinsky 1969: 64–65). An argument supporting understanding of community development agency is that people who are already part of a community are those who are best positioned to facilitate community development processes—because they have a deep understanding of the way in which their community works (see for example, Chapters 11, 22 and 25).

Finally, there is the argument that identifying a single leader or animator undermines the collective nature of community development. Agency should not be thought of in terms of individual initiators or leaders, because community development involves many animators and facilitators. Indeed, there are different skills in any community, and community development is a process that brings these skills together. From this viewpoint, agency inheres in the community itself (see Chapter 17).

Thematic Structure of the Book

As the chapters in this book illustrate, the contexts, forms and processes through which community development occurs are multiple. As a way of organizing the book we have set out thematic sections that can highlight different ways in which community development is conceived of and practiced in relation to governance; place; sustainable livelihoods; culture and creative expression; identity, belonging and the life course; human rights and resilience; and engagement and knowledge. Below we provide an overview of the book, via the seven thematic sections used to organize the 32 chapters.

Part I: Governance and Community Development

The programmatic form of much development work, involving the state and other actors, is the main focus of this section. Cornelia and Jan Flora begin by offering perspectives on governance, through a decidedly local community-focused lens. In the neoliberal context in which communities in the United States find themselves, governance through the mobilization of civil society via its organizations is critical. This chapter presents an overview of governance issues in relation to the role of civil society. Different forms of governance are discussed, along with underlying foundational concepts from Tocqueville and Weber that help explain what we observe in communities. The relationships of power and partnership and local basic social forces (political—economic—community group; what we would call state, market and civil society) are explored in the context of how to interact positively all together.

Among the themes are those of centralization, rationalization and neoliberal ascendancy, which are explored by Marilyn Taylor, primarily in the context of the UK but drawing on the experiences of other OECD countries. She traces the evolution of “partnership” arrangements between multiple stakeholders that have characterized the politics and style of community development in many countries. While partnership—particularly during the UK’s New Labour period—seemed to offer much for communities in the way of funding and representation, the dominant discourse and politics of partnerships were often criticized over their centralized control, local politicized nature and the underlying agendas and principles of new public management. Taylor outlines that while the fortunes of community development have been tied to the state for a long time, it is the underlying political culture and discourses of government that shape the agenda. More recently, since 2010, neoliberal-inspired Conservative-led governments have accelerated the attrition of community development supports, services and organizational networks/alliances of the kind that emerged during the partnership era. At the same time, particular communitarian styles of initiative have been encouraged, such as social investment, social enterprise and resident-led approaches. These approaches offer potential but pose particular challenges for those who take seriously issues of social justice, social inclusion and self-determination. While the consensus-style development ground has shifted considerably, Taylor also alerts us to the new landscape of democratic, citizen-led and independent forms of collective social justice movements, in the UK and elsewhere, which continue to exert bottom-up pressure on governments and corporations. The challenge for community development continues to be around finding and nurturing those spaces of community interactions and collaborations that challenge the conditions and consequences of neoliberalism.

These issues are further articulated in the chapter by Mae Shaw, who urges the need to reclaim the ethical and democratic impulse of community development from its current state of crisis in the UK. Shaw highlights the range of competing concepts, political intentions and policy claims that have made community development not only appealing to a wide audience but also vulnerable to neoliberal colonization of its democratic values and practices. The argument is that various centrally funded programs have meant community development becoming increasingly subjected to neoliberal-style “modernization” processes. The language, cultural practices, disciplinary power and “technology” of market-based performance-driven management rationalities have a demoralizing and silencing effect on those who seek more democratic spaces with which to counter social injustice. To counter the “unconscious cynicism or demoralization” likely to arise from such hegemonic processes requires sustained critique and engagement with like-minded others to rebuild confidence and contest these demands. Shaw highlights the importance of naming the contradictions and tensions that arise when community development is framed within an official, managerial agenda. At the interface of programs and communities,

practitioners should use their position to practice a more “strategic politics of translation” to the benefit of those marginalized from mainstream policy and politics. Like Taylor, she argues that perhaps more than ever before, there is urgent need to build relationships forged in solidarity, as well as alliances and spaces that push back at the limits being placed on creative, inclusive and democratic forms of community development.

The theme of colonization of community development by the state is further explored by Jenny Onyx in her chapter, “Community Development and Governance: An Australian Example”, which discusses the relationship between grassroots action on the one hand and the response by the state on the other, through the analysis of a major funding scheme that lasted forty years in New South Wales, Australia. She argues that this funding demonstrated that community development-driven social change can be highly productive within a supportive governance environment, but that the underlying rules and principles of community development are non-commensurate with a neoliberal-driven bureaucratic regime of the state, posing dilemmas and difficulties for community development practitioners. The focus of Garth Nowland-Foreman’s chapter in this section traces the foundations and growth of community development in Aotearoa New Zealand, including its particular historic engagements with the state. He too, deals with the issue of whether government support and sponsorship necessarily promote a more passive or collaborative style of community development and he poses the question of what the implications are for the future of community development when public policy becomes inimical to community development.

Part II: Place and Community Development

There is evidence throughout the chapters that place, socio-political conditions and history are important in making sense of why particular community development projects are successful or fail. However, success and failure of community development projects are never narrowly determined by context itself. How communities deal with situations, and in particular how they deal with adversity draws attention to the importance of agency—how communities themselves respond to the conditions resulting from larger forces, both of global and national origins. Choi Oe-Chool begins this section by presenting Saemaul development, originating in Korea as a poverty alleviation and development approach. Saemaul Undong started in the 1970s in South Korea and is a successful example of national development addressing fundamental problems in rural development and as a means of alleviating poverty. Saemaul is described as a mindset, methods and mechanisms that are customized to the circumstances of a community. This model of development, especially for developing countries, holds much potential as a way to have resident-driven development, in conjunction with regional governments.

Poverty alleviation is further explored in Gary Green’s chapter on place-based approaches. Bringing together ideas of building on assets within communities, the strengths and weaknesses of place-based approaches to poverty alleviation and unemployment are explored. The evolution of place-based development is presented, and the argument is made that both government and the nonprofit sector could enhance the effectiveness of these type of programs in poor neighborhoods and communities. Institutional innovations are explained as mechanisms to counter some of the external influences on poor and working-class neighborhoods. By linking community-level, grassroots efforts to larger organizations and institutions, key resources and networks can help alleviate poverty.

While community development formed a concerted strategy of colonial and postcolonial policy in in Africa during the mid-twentieth century (Holdcroft 1982), there has been a long and diverse history of Indigenous practices and models that characterize community development. In their

survey of the main and diverse approaches to community development over time in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), Uchendu Chigbu, Chimaraoke Izugbara and Walter de Vries argue that there has been no serious attention paid to the influence of land and culture for the sustainable development of local communities. In order to address major issues of poverty and sustainability, it is incumbent on policy makers to introduce proper land policies which address issues of land rights, land uses and inheritance cultures. There are many forms of land tenure—in terms of land access, use and ownership—in SSA and development approaches must be sensitive to what impact particular forms of development have on income generation, exclusion, social capital, participation and empowerment. Linked to this, the authors draw attention to a major theme for many Indigenous communities the world over, which is the general attrition of local cultural distinctiveness. Where local culture faces threat of dissolution—through Indigenous language or heritage loss for example—a mark is left on a community's collective identity and well-being. The case for land- and culture-based community development (LCCD) is made, identifying the key links across such dimensions which have not received the attention they deserve in this region. They propose a number of strategic possibilities through which the value of culture, connected to place making, can be renewed to sustain local communities.

Anthony Ware discusses the success of a community development program established in Myanmar, notwithstanding the recent history that has made the development of civil society institutions difficult. He analyzes the reasons for this program's success, considering contextual factors and local innovations. His finding is that the program successfully combined Freirian processes with participatory development, a capability agenda and a rights-based approach which emphasizes active citizenship.

Part III: Sustainable Livelihoods and Community Development

This section considers the ways in which community development projects conceptualize and practice sustainability. Mark Roseland and Duane Fontaine launch this section by considering sustainable community development approaches for fostering “green” economies. Foundational concepts are provided, considering both weak and strong interpretations of sustainable development. Weak sustainability is the dominant approach in neoliberalism, with the “rational choice theory” of human behavior as its foundation, and a dependence on the individual and the market for finding solutions. A strong approach is contrasted, placing emphasis on local, democratic and collective approaches to community development. The authors then address the main components of the green economy (energy, consumption, production and jobs) and define each component in terms of strong sustainability.

The chapter by Ismet Fanany, Azwar Hasan and Sue Kenny argues that the relationship between sustainable livelihoods and community development is complex and sometimes tenuous. The authors investigate some of the ways in which sustainability has been conceptualized and practiced in Indonesia, exploring practices, principles and challenges.

Kelly Hamshaw, Shoshanah Inwood, Jane Kolodinsky and Melanie Needle connect engagement to planning for sustainability. To achieve the complex and multidimensional goals of community development including wealth creation and resilience, communities of all sizes and types are using a variety of planning processes. This chapter explains how the Environment, Community, Opportunity and Sustainability (ECOS) Project, for Chittenden County, Vermont is a model for developing and implementing a cross-sector planning process informed by knowledge drawn from community engagement and a community indicators program. Cutting across multiple sectors, the model partners a regional planning entity with academic and research institutions, federal, state and local government agencies, economic development organizations

and the private sector. The resulting sustainable, *living* regional plan was created with input of over 60 institutions and 600 community members.

Part IV: Culture and Creative Expression in Community Development

Artistic creativity and collaboration in community development is illustrated in Part IV. As the chapter by Crawshaw and Gkartzios on an art and rural development collaboration in a north east of England island community reveals, artists who engage and collaborate with communities offer distinctive perspectives and ways of working that enable a reflexive and dialogical approach to community and development. Using Ruth Liepins' (2000a) framework of community as constituted through practices, meanings, people, spaces and structures, the authors reveal the centrality of art to participatory processes within development. Art contains the power to probe and reveal tensions, assumptions, new insights and challenges in how to read community life. For development workers and agents, it is significant that this type of relational practice and way of understanding can allow communities to empower themselves and reveal those aspects of community life that may be taken-for-granted or not previously articulated. Through enlisting insights from ethnography and exploratory arts, this chapter prompts development work to widen the scope for how we read the dynamics and politics of community life.

Glecy Atienza and Robbie Guevara discuss challenges in using creative and culture-based approaches to community development in the Philippines. They argue that such approaches focus on technique and provide a rather superficial perspective based merely on celebrating the feeling of fun (*masaya*). This tendency can result in diminishing the political potential of community development. They propose a reconceptualization of culture-based approaches for the purpose of stimulating transformative community development. In similar vein, Meade argues that if pursued as a form of cultural democracy, art holds the promise of enriching community life through multiple and diverse opportunities for expression, collaboration and insights. Meade's analysis of a public art program in an Irish urban community illustrates how art can fuel the collective imagination and create a democratic public space. In a society saturated with social media, branding and narcissistic impulses, community art provides space in which to celebrate and showcase the sensory character and nature of community. As a form of inclusive community development, it seeks to cultivate the values of empowerment, participation and process. But, as Meade suggests, these values are threatened by instrumentality and rationality, where art is seen as an "add-on" or as an instrument for other development outcomes. Her cultural materialist analysis traces the power-laden demands, tensions, expectations and inconsistencies surrounding just how democratic community artistic endeavor can hope to be. The challenges facing community development more generally in Ireland and the UK—increased centralization and rationalization of programs as well as instrumentalism and target-driven culture (see Chapter 3)—are mirrored in the community arts domain and risk undermining practices that seek genuine collaboration, dialogue and conviviality through the arts. Meade's chapter alerts us to the underlying tension that exists in how we understand the purpose of community projects and the forms through which community development unfolds.

Next, Tom Borrup explores ideas around equity and resilience via cultural districts. He proposes that planners, community development practitioners and local policy makers concerned with equitable development and resilient communities must look beyond land uses, housing types, transit, jobs, walkable neighborhoods and other policy solutions. Additionally, the development of social capital and civic capacity must be included, and when in the context of thematic neighborhoods or cultural districts, effective partnerships can be forged with arts and culture

organizations using highly participatory and creative planning and community engagement practices. The idea of horizontal networks is explored, as a way to foster the creative sector and bring about equitable, resilient communities. The author then provides three case studies of communities that have implemented creative districts, using horizontal networks, and discusses considerations in each. The cases in Minneapolis, Los Angeles and Miami explore dimensions of creative and themed neighborhoods and districts, and serve as encouragement to other communities seeking to integrate creative arts-based approaches into their community development efforts.

Rounding out this section, Daniel Teghe uses the concept of cultural capital to explain how the Anakie Gemfields community in Australia recovered following economic decline. Within the field of community development, the need for greater awareness of the community's capacity to survive adversity and to prosper in a sustainable way is essential to long-term success. This chapter introduces the concept of community cultural capital as an additional means through which such awareness might be enhanced and drawn upon. The theory of cultural capital is described, both in the context of individual and collective capital. The chapter provides exploration of the relevance of community cultural capital to community development, in order to highlight its uniqueness and to distinguish it from other forms of capital which are more readily identified. The author provides a case in Australia to demonstrate how cultural capital can be integrated with community development approaches.

Part V: Identity, Belonging and Connectedness

Understanding the significance of identity, belonging and community interactions over a people's life course is important for community development practice. The chapters included in the section focus on these themes. In a world where youth voice and agency are very often undervalued and where young people encounter a myriad of pressures, initiatives that foster the development of community among young people are crucial. The next three chapters provide insights into issues around youth and their communities. Graciela Tonan explores perspectives from younger generations, using project-based work to explore three distinct age groups: young children, youth and university students. The author begins the chapter by explaining that the concept of community has undergone several changes during the last several decades, varying according to different times, cultures and geographical features. Using the case of South America, definitions of community were traditionally based on the interpersonal relations between neighbors, security and the solidarity that comes from living together. Now, perspectives have changed somewhat and include social space. The three projects included extensive surveying, and the results provide insight into children and youth perspectives on community. For example, it was found that the data revealed a strong affinity with public space that is usable and enjoyable. The connection to public space and sense of community (or identity with community) emerged as an important factor among those surveyed.

Next, Brad Olson and Mark Brennan continue exploring issues around youth and their interaction with community development. The authors explore how to better understand and operationalize citizen engagement in a new perspective, merging youth–community relationships via an interactional field theory approach to community development. The chapter begins with a discussion of engagement and the factors needed to effectively integrate youth engagement into local capacity building. The authors then present a conceptual framework and model for integrating youth engagement and community development efforts. This framework builds on theory and connects it to practice. Recommendations are included for educators, practitioners and local leaders to implement the model using a table of descriptive criteria to guide their efforts. Community developers will find the framework and model will aid in positioning specific

development initiatives (developed *in* the community) as well as in the context of wider capacity building (development *of* the community).

The chapter by Lisa Moran, Bernadine Brady, Cormac Forkan and Liam Coen hones in on the significance of community spaces—in the form of the youth café model—for fostering positive identities and belonging among young people in Ireland. The authors point out that insufficient attention has been paid to the role of youth within community development processes. Their recent research on the youth café model, however, illustrates the community development ethos and approach that characterize how the youth cafés are created and sustained by young people themselves as meaningful spaces and opportunities for interaction and participation. The emotional and psychological dimensions of community, in terms of belonging, acceptance and connectedness with others, feature strongly in the narratives of the youth concerning the significance of the café at this point in their lives. As an innovative and meaningful form of community development for youth, the model offers a range of positive outcomes in terms of informal social support, youth engagement and psychological well-being.

Martijn Hendriks, Kai Ludwigs and David Bartram look at belonging from a different perspective: that of immigrants. International migrants move in search of a better life. These authors explore why immigrants are not often happy in their new areas, primarily due to inaccurate expectations about life in the host country. Using community participation as the basis for development of their approach, the authors propose a way to build on immigrants' experiences collectively. The tool then provides input for evidence-based choices, more accurate expectations and the development of problem-solving resources among both potential and existing immigrants as a way to enhance satisfaction. Collaboration between researchers and immigrant communities offers opportunities to stimulate greater happiness in these immigrant communities, which in turn impacts overall community development processes and outcomes.

The final chapter in this section by Cheryl Kickett-Tucker and Jim Ife explains how family, kinship, country and culture are the foundations of “community” and identity for Australian Aboriginal people. They point out that unfortunately the Aboriginal worldview and the values attached to this are often overlooked, unappreciated and disrespected by non-Aboriginal practitioners and scholars of community development.

Part VI: Community Development, Human Rights and Resilience

In the section “Community Development, Human Rights and Resilience”, it is evident that particular countries, regions and groups face acute adversities, as a result of conflict, severe poverty, underdevelopment and natural disaster. One distinct context explored by Ted Jojola and Michaela Shirley provides deep insights into Indigenous planning and development in the US. Weaving in vignettes, this poignant chapter includes personal vignettes and perspectives which reminds us of the vital importance of culture in development (and in life generally!). As the authors explain, Indigenous planning is a paradigm that uses a culturally responsive and value-based approach to community development. A review of Indigenous planning is provided, and discusses the challenges faced by tribes in the US, given the impacts of public programs that were often ill-suited to their cultures. The chapter concludes by defining several lessons learned and insights gleaned through the practice and application of Indigenous planning principles and its tenants which can result in more positive community development processes and outcomes.

Of current concern globally is the fate of millions of refugees fleeing war-torn places in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region. The chapter by MacPhail, Niconchuk and El-wer proposes a framework for a trauma-informed approach to community development practice, particularly through the lens of profound stress and adjustment. The topics the authors

explore are critical, and especially in the context of sudden change that happens to communities, and the need to be able to respond effectively. The chapter by Briskman and Fiske discusses the sense of community among asylum seekers in Cisarua, a town in West Java, Indonesia, where, existing on the fringes of Indonesian society, with few rights, community members have utilized their own capacities to achieve minimal survival. Resilience is the theme underlying this chapter, and how to build it in order to maintain, survive and even thrive in the future.

The chapter by Elena Jenkin, Erin Wilson, Matthew Clarke, Kevin Murfitt and Robert Campain begins by pointing out how the achievement of human rights is often at risk for children in developing countries, and even more so for children with disability. Drawing on their research in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea, they discuss how the principles of community development can be utilized to support the attainment of human rights for children with disability through using participatory research methods, including new data collection tools designed to be both participative and inclusive of diverse disabilities.

Vaughn John's chapter is on post-conflict South Africa. His chapter focuses on a particular community adult education intervention in KwaZulu-Natal which sought to combine initiatives on human rights, democracy and development. With a strong emphasis on the transformational vision of adult education—through reflection, dialogue, action-oriented projects and relationship building—the project is located within the context of four key macro-systems that shape contemporary society in South Africa: poverty, patriarchy, power struggles and post-conflict status. Despite the democratic intentions of the project, John addresses the local power struggles through which local leaders sought to interfere with and control the project for their own interests, a feature well rehearsed in the wider development literature. A key message is the need to unpack the underlying systemic contours that can undermine development projects that seek to advance fundamental human rights and democratic principles.

Part VII: Engagement and Knowledge

The final thematic section addresses some of the ways in which community development is integrated at the local level via engagement, knowledge and collaboration. The section begins with an exploration of large-scale data and the implications for community development. John Green provides reflections on improving community organizations' capacity to conduct research and use data to inform decision making. His observations include that despite community participation methods used, the lack of accessibility to data is very apparent. If people are to make informed decisions and advocate for their own needs, then they must gain access to data. Given the growth in the volume of information, the ready availability of massive datasets and the tools and analytical methods is a critical component of community development. The author issues a call to action for community development scholars to help residents, diverse stakeholders and policy makers to better utilize data including with "data utilization facilitation". This entails building more participatory, engaging and empowering approaches to community engagement with data.

Collaboration is a key component of community development processes, as we have seen illustrated throughout the sections. Teresa Córdova takes us further into this area with an exploration of collaborative community development practice. Using a case in Chicago, the author describes a community economic development process to promote self-employment as a strategy to build community wealth via a small business incubator and commercial kitchen project. The chapter focuses on processes, including key relationships between local government, community development organizations and residents. Depicting reflective practice, insights and lessons learned are shared about effective engagement and collaborative approaches.

Kenneth Reardon continues the theme of engagement with exploration of a “town/gown” partnership which is to say the relationship between an institute of higher education and its surrounding community. Using the case of Memphis, Tennessee, the author reflects on a neighborhood revitalization strategy in an area with severe urban problems. A strong partnership was formed with a local faith-based community development organization and the University of Memphis, resulting in a process and a plan to help transform the area. The approach was decidedly “bottom-up”, driven by those most impacted in the neighborhood. This case of a community development planning process offers a compelling local example of the transformative potential of a more inclusionary, multi-party stakeholder approach to planning, design and development.

Philip Mendes and Fronica Binns discuss the complex relationship between community development and social work in which both areas of study share similar values and yet community-based interventions are often relatively marginal in social work practice, and negativity exists around the view of social work and social workers. In discussing the findings of two recent small-scale studies of Australian social workers who integrated community development values, skills and strategies into their practice, the authors argue for a closer partnership between the two areas of study and practice.

Belgin Kocaoglu and Rhonda Phillips explore direct public participation as a way to inform residents in local government processes. Using Turkey as the case in point, the authors illustrate concepts of direct participation (as opposed to representative participation) in relation to community development processes. Different levels of participation are discussed, from consulting, involving, collaborating to empowering. Various approaches to participation have been piloted in Turkey, with mixed results. Even so, the desire to include participation is considered a positive turn.

Conclusion

While the roots of community development have a varied and rich cultural and geographical context, the aims, values and methods of community development have global reach. The global reach, however, must be understood as subject to local conditions which can both constrain the scope and effectiveness of community development and provide spaces and opportunities for effective community development practice. We hope this book will provide the readers with both insights into the breadth of community development as well as inspiration to think about and act upon different ways of collectively organizing our lives for a better future.

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PART I

Governance and Community Development



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1

GOVERNANCE

Cornelia Butler Flora and Jan L. Flora

Introduction and Context

Church members in Ames, Iowa were alarmed. The Emergency Residence Project which they supported was full to overflowing. More people with low-wage jobs were coming to get their meals and food for the week at Food at First, a multi-organization effort based in First Christian Church to provide non-means-tested food to whoever comes. And many of their church members, even those employed as staff of Iowa State University, were moving out of town because they could not afford to rent housing in town. This put additional hardship on those who could not afford a reliable car, as bus transportation did not go beyond the city limits, and when it did run, it did not meet the shift needs of the local factory workers.

Many were part of a civil society organization, AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy) affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation. Their goal was to address the root causes of local social injustices. The lack of affordable housing seemed a clear root cause of the felt poverty of local people.

But a civil society organization, or even a *coalition* of civil society organizations, cannot solve complex local issues. Market-sector (private for profit) and public-sector allies must be found to address these issues in a non-partisan, win-win way. Market, state and civil society sectors have different roles in dealing with “wicked” problems. The market is a tool for allocating resources and provides signals regarding the relative monetary costs of different alternatives, but the market by itself does a poor job of reducing inequality or protecting the environment. In fact, left to its own devices the market is likely to exaggerate inequality and to negatively affect the environment. We see this in the growth of inequality in the US over the past three and a half decades and in the failure of the country to refocus our economic and political institutions on the greatest ecological threat of the Anthropocene era apart from thermonuclear war—that of global warming. This relates to the conundrum that Adam Smith sought to deal with in his *Moral Sentiments* book. He argued that there was a tendency for economic power to become concentrated and that there had to be a parallel moral economy—a values system—that would combat that system. In 1922, Max Weber called this moral economy *substantive rationality*: “the degree to which the provisioning of given groups of persons with goods is shaped by economically oriented social action under some criterion of ultimate values” (Weber 2013). Tocqueville, in his travels in the US in the mid-19th century, well before Weber wrote about it, had operationalized substantive rationality in the civil life and civic organizations through which Americans expressed their values. This net of civic organizations that existed in each small and

large community in this country is what sociologists and political scientists now call civil society. Tocqueville saw this web of organizations as a unique protector of democracy.

Today, we know that good governance involves the interaction of market, civil society and the public or government sector in a very specific way: governments are (or should be) an expression of the will of the people. That will is expressed through civil society: through political parties, but also through non-government organizations, religious organizations, sports teams and clubs, what Robert Putnam calls the animal clubs (Lions, Elks, Eagles, etc.), racial and ethnically based organizations (yes, including white supremacists), environmental groups, etc. As Tocqueville recognized, civil society is an expression of the values that Americans hold. When mobilized individually and in coalition, these organizations affect government, whether in selection of elected or appointed officials, supporting or opposing legislation, and in lobbying or persuading governments at all levels in the shaping of legislation. It is then the obligation of government, often at the behest of civil society organizations, to regulate and channel market forces and firms in accordance with the values expressed. This is particularly crucial in those areas in which the market is unable to function—in amelioration of inequality, protecting the environment and in provision of basic services to those who lack the wherewithal to purchase them in the open market.

Max Weber attempted to characterize a Modern Economy (the private for-profit sector), which would function under universalistic—what he called *formally rational*—criteria needed for capitalism to function effectively. These included such things as “free labor, freedom of the labor market, and freedom (by owners) in the selection of workers”; “complete absence of substantive regulation of consumption, production, and prices, or of other forms of regulation which limit freedom of contract or specify conditions of exchange”; “market freedom” by which he meant the complete absence of market control by individual owners; “complete calculability of the functioning of public administration and the legal order and a reliable purely formal guarantee of all contracts by the political authority”; and finally a rationally organized monetary system (Weber 2013: 161–162).

Governance determines how resources are deployed by creating policies to be implemented by market, state and civil society actors. Good governance is based on negotiations among and within the sectors and involves a combination of formal and substantive rationality. Governance includes civil society in decision-making processes from the beginning. The old model of citizen participation, where their involvement was expected to be that of a sanctioning body, brought citizens in at the end of the process.

Political capital is key in governance, but political capital is not the same as electoral politics. Governance involves identifying key institutional actors in all sectors, identifying shared desired future conditions and working at a variety of levels to move toward those changes. Sometimes these are called *advocacy coalitions* (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993; 1999; C. Flora 2000; J. Flora et al. 2006) or, less provocatively, *adaptation coalitions* (Ashwill et al. 2011). These coalitions may address “wicked problems” that cannot be resolved by one entity alone. Governance that helps determine everyday allocation of resources is often called public–private partnership. These everyday governance decisions obligate market, state and civil society actors to utilize their separate resources in distinct, mutually advantageous ways.

The difference between governance coalitions of market, state and civil society actors, and the so-called public–private partnerships (see Margulis et al. 2013; Dougherty 2015) that do not include civil society, is dramatic. These public–private partnerships are often worked out in secret between multinational corporations and governments. Civil society then can only be involved to protest. When governance operates properly, negotiations are transparent, and diverse interests participate.

Governance, according to Jean (2015), is the sum of traditions, processes and institutions that form a specific system of social regulation of power and of decision making concerning the collective outcomes of a community. It produces innovative institutional arrangements put in place by local actors who take decisions affecting the destiny of the community. He then discusses the *new local governance* as a way that local communities have found to organize their decision-making process on matters related to the socio-economic life of the community. New local governance reveals an innovative way to use the power (partnership) and take decisions where the three basic local “social forces” (political–economic–community group; what we would call state, market and civil society) interact positively altogether.

The inclusion of the voice of civil society is increasingly important, as governments are now valued most by (1) how much money they cut from their budgets and (2) how much wealth their community generates. This is a shift from concern for providing a high level of services and from concern about the distribution of the wealth generated. The *financialization* of the public sector is made more acute as there is continued pressure to *privatize* the provision of public goods and services, based on the myth that privatization will make them more “efficient”. But every private sector firm must make a profit and return “value to the shareholders”. To do this, often the staff of the privatized service provider is cut, asked to work longer hours at lower wages, or their shifts cut so they receive no benefits. And they keep their jobs based on the number of clients served in a specific time period, not the impact of the services provided on client or public well-being. Thus we see the privatizations of prisons, education, care facilities for vulnerable populations. Market and state sectors in the context of neoliberalization require a constant “nudge” from civil society in order to make it profitable—and politically acceptable—to be concerned about all community capitals: natural, cultural, human, social, political and built, as well as financial, capital (see Figure 1.1).

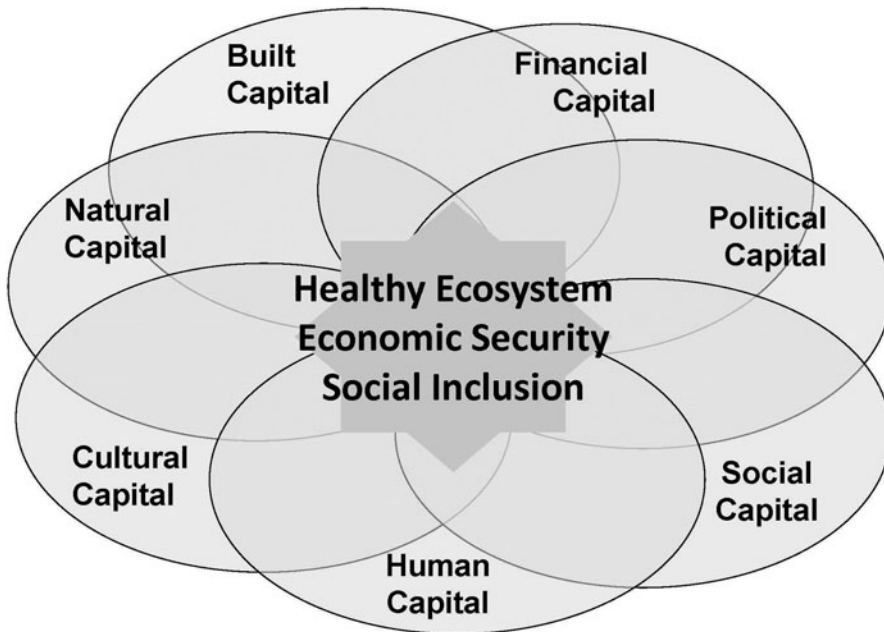


Figure 1.1 Community Capitals.

Diverse Local Governments

The many forms of government can be sorted into two types: general purpose and special purpose. *General-purpose governments*, as their name implies, are created to respond to the general needs of a geographic territory. They usually have the power to raise revenue and determine its use. State governments may restrict use of certain types of taxes or place ceilings on tax levels, as happened when taxpayers revolted in states such as California, which in 1978 limited property taxes to no more than 1 percent of the property's "full cash value", defined in terms of the assessed valuation. For people owning a California property two years prior to enactment of Proposition 13, "[t]he 'full cash value' means the county assessor's valuation of real property as shown on the 1975–76 tax bill" (California, State of n.d.). Those property owners received an immediate reduction in their property tax bill on homes, businesses and farms, estimated by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association (Jarvis was the intellectual and political author of Proposition 13) to have been 57 percent state-wide (Fox 2007). People buying a new or existing home after 1975, were to pay the assessed value based on its current full cash value. An annual inflationary adjustment of the assessed valuation is allowed that equals the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index or an increase of 2 percent, whichever is less. If the home declines in value, the assessed valuation "may be reduced to reflect substantial damage, destruction, or other factors causing a decline in value" (California, State of n.d.). No percentage limit was placed on the decline. These property tax restrictions greatly reduced all local governments' ability to meet the needs of citizens, and had serious repercussions for such special-purpose governments as school districts.

Special-purpose governments are created to respond to specific community needs, such as schools, water supply, or medical services. These special districts usually can raise revenue to cover their costs, generally through fees or property taxes. Their freedom to tax is often severely restricted by state governments, but they also can raise revenue by user fees, as do water districts.

Other special tax concessions in the name of economic development, such as *tax increment financing* (TIF), can limit governments' ability to support the services they offer. TIF is a tool used by municipalities to reduce or eliminate blighting conditions, foster improvement and enhance the tax base of every district that extends into the area. It provides for redevelopment that would not occur without the support of public investments. This tool allows a city to capture the increase in state and local property and sales taxes that results from a redevelopment. The city is required to prepare a redevelopment plan for each district that identifies uses for the TIF fund. However, the redirection of the taxes means that special-purpose governments, such as school or hospital districts, may be prevented from increasing funding during the period the TIF is in place.

The relative importance of any one type of rural government varies by region of the country and from state to state. In some states small municipalities are the most common type of general-purpose government. In the West and throughout much of the South, counties provide most local governmental services; villages and towns often are not incorporated. In the West, where counties are much larger than in other regions of the country, county government can be essentially regional in character. In the states across the midwest and Great Plains, small municipalities and counties vie for political prominence, often providing complementary services. In New England and across the northern tier of states, townships are the most important general-purpose government. Differences in political traditions and state law are reflected in the diversity of local governance. These differences can also influence the flexibility that local governments have to collaborate with other jurisdictions and market and civil society groups.

The climate of induced austerity since the official economic recovery has not allowed local governments to make up for the decrease in state and federal funding. In addition, states have

imposed limits on the ability of towns and counties to vote to tax themselves. State and local government spending in the US steadily increased from 1970 to 2009. While there was a short leveling off during the Great Recession, the rapid rate of increase continued to 2013, the last date shown. While during the Great Depression and recovery from it, the federal government invested heavily to meet local needs, that pattern did not recur in other recessions.

Most rural governments are funded by a combination of local, state and federal funds. In general, rural communities rely on local sources of revenue for about 65 percent of their budgets. That percentage has been increasing since 1977, more sharply since the onset of federal cutbacks in response to tax cuts and to fund US involvement in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Local governments typically rely on property taxes, often supplemented by a local sales tax. Business taxes, user charges and miscellaneous revenues such as fines and fees bring in lesser amounts. Very few rural counties or towns levy income taxes. When compared to state sources of taxes at the onset of the Great Recession, rural communities had less severe direct income losses because of their dependence on property taxes. However, as sales, income and corporate income taxes fell, so did the states' ability to pass through funds to local communities.

One reason that these taxes fell so rapidly is that they were relatively regressive by 2006, as tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations were put into place. Corporate tax revenue for state and local governments decreased 19.6 percent between 2007 and 2012. Individual income tax revenue increased 5.9 percent during the same period (Barnett et al. 2014).

Taxes represented the largest source of general revenue for both state and local governments. Taxes *can* be based on taxpayers' ability to pay. *Progressive taxes* mean that more wealthy individuals or firms pay a high proportion of their income or property value in taxes. Thus taxes to support the services on which the community depends fall on those most able to pay: the wealthy. *Regressive taxes* do the reverse, placing a disproportionate amount of the tax burden on middle- and lower-income taxpayers. Local taxes tend not to be progressive. Sales taxes are the most regressive of all. In contrast, real property taxes are more capricious than regressive. They are only loosely related to the ability to pay. For example, elderly people who own their own homes or small farms and are on a limited fixed income will pay a higher proportion of their income in property taxes than will a prosperous tenant farmer or wealthy banker. Because federal funds are derived primarily from income taxes, until 2000 they generally were progressive, although tax loopholes allow wealthy individuals or corporations with good lawyers to sharply reduce their tax burden. State funds come from a mixture of progressive and regressive tax sources.

Locally generated taxes depend primarily on property taxes. Since recent attempts to attract and retain businesses have given these corporations substantial property tax exemptions, property taxes tend to be on individual property.

The Community Setting

Ames is a college town in Story County in the middle of a state where industrial agriculture has a great deal of political power. It is in the interest of industrial agriculture that land values increase in the short term, with state intervention encouraged to deflect environmental concerns and artificially maintain the prices of the industrial crops of corn and soybean, which is then translated into ever-increasing land values. This is assumed to be good for the state, despite the low tax valuation of agricultural land. Iowa State University is a Land Grant university, which means its College of Agriculture is central to the university and increasingly dependent on powerful agricultural organizations for state funding and multinational corporations such as Monsanto for private funding, from building renovations to scholarships to research. The university, in turn influences how the local general-purpose governments (city and county) make

decisions. The neoliberal wisdom is that anything that keeps property owners from maximizing their short-term profits is interfering with the market, although offering market incentives to increase land values is viewed as good politics.

University enrollments and university-related businesses are expanding, and relatively well-off retirees are attracted who want intellectual and cultural amenities. But for the service workers, such as secretarial and custodial staff, retail workers and health paraprofessionals, wages remain constant in the many service industries and support business critical for their survival—and profitability. These workers and their families cannot live where they work. Rents for homes and apartments have increased dramatically, as have home prices. What can a civil society organization do to increase the availability of affordable housing?

In Ames, as in many other places around the world, property has been financialized. That means that the dominant approach to land is to make money quickly for its owners, whether individuals, corporations or pension funds. Other values of land within a community: to create and sustain natural, cultural, human and social capital for the collective good, are either forgotten or assumed to be served if property values are maintained. As governments implement neoliberal policies aimed at increasing the return to financial capital, it is more important than ever that civil society be involved in determining how resources are used and to keep track of the impact of investments on not only property values, but also on the other capitals.

Which are the actors that AMOS must engage to provide affordable housing? Before building the necessary action coalitions, a lot of research needed to be done to identify other agencies, businesses and organizations that shared their desired future of an inclusive community where all could live with dignity.

Lack of private capital investment in infrastructure and lack of public funds for investment in infrastructure

Governance can impact the rules and incentives that allow investment with goals other than financial capital to occur. Because of the negotiations among market, state and particularly civil society actors, decisions can include enhancing (or at least not damaging) natural, cultural, human, social, and built capital in local communities.

Market organizations are businesses, firms and international companies organized to make a profit. Local businesses often are more concerned about local communities than are publically held corporations or franchises, as they recognize that the health of people and the land will impact not only their long-term profitability but their own quality of life.

The US system divides power, including the power to tax, between two levels of government. As provided by the Tenth Amendment to the US Constitution: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States, respectively, or to the people”. Which powers are reserved only to the states is often in question, and the resulting flexibility enables the balance of power to shift back and forth between the two levels. This form of government is referred to as federalism.

Local governments are not mentioned in the US Constitution. They are, in fact, created by each state, thus making for a great deal of variation across the country. Local governments derive their power either from grants of authority in state constitutions, which are known as “home-rule provisions”, or by general laws or statutes passed by state legislatures.

In theory, local governments provide the mechanism by which participation, needs and responsibility are linked. They can allow for direct citizen participation in government, or they can provide representative government, in which local citizens elect officials to act on their behalf.

Under representative government, local residents elect a group of people (to a town council, city commission, school board or board of supervisors) who then make decisions. These decisions relate to (1) what services will be provided, (2) who will be hired to provide them, (3) how the revenue will be raised to pay for those services and (4) how land under local authority can be used.

Members of AMOS began by researching the situation of wages and housing and sources of investment to create affordable housing. Their research validated their experiences. Iowa State University experienced a 41 percent increase in enrollments between fall 2006 and fall 2015. As many as 200 children in the Ames Community School system are homeless or are doubling up in other families' homes, according to an Ames Community School District representative. In Story County, 12 families were evicted each month in 2012. The figure was double that in 2009 in the depths of the Great Recession.

They then analyzed job and income issues in Ames. They found the average earnings for all private sector jobs in Ames are about enough to cover the bare-bones spending for necessities for a two-child family with only one wage earner. The median wage for women living in Ames who work full-time, year-round is over \$35,000. Thus, more than half of private sector female workers living in Ames with full-time, year-round employment earn less than the amount needed by a single mother to care for herself and two small children (\$37,750 for Story County). Apart from temporarily poor college students, children under 18 are the poorest age group in Ames. In 2011–2013, on average, 40 percent of renters over 25 years of age paid more than 30 percent of their income on housing, up from 34.4 percent two years earlier. HUD (US Department of Housing and Urban Development) guidelines say families should not spend more than 30 percent for housing. There are four main options for making housing affordable:

- Increase affordable housing stock;
- Provide housing subsidies;
- Improve county-wide transportation; and
- Improve wages.

The next step to address the first issue was to learn from other communities what had been done to increase affordable housing stock. AMOS identified the following policy tools, which are not mutually exclusive and require establishing new coalitions for market, state and civil society governance.

Community Development Block Grants

AMOS learned that Ames, as a recently minted metro area, receives annual federal funding through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). AMOS then researched how money was spent. Most of the money was going to curbs, gutters and street improvement in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods. Through agitation at CDBG hearings and at city council meetings we got that changed. This year a significant portion is going to buy land for low-income housing (10 units on 3 city lots). In the course of the research and in conversations with city officials, they determined that CDBG alone cannot solve housing problems, which are too large and too complex for the amount of money and the flexibility in its use.

Local Housing Trust Fund (HTF)

The state of Iowa established this mechanism in 1995 to resolve affordable housing needs. It was initially federally funded, in response to a federal grant program initiated by Iowa's US

Senator, Tom Harkin. In the late 1990s, the state of Iowa began funding affordable housing around the state, administered by the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA). Currently \$6 million is allocated annually to be divided among local housing authorities across the state. Story County is eligible for a part of this funding, although local governments would have to provide a 25 percent match. To access state dollars, there must be an independent governing board. The Board must be made up of fewer than 50 percent elected officials. The work of the fund includes:

1. Education, research and planning, determining:
 - a. Who cannot afford adequate housing, what do those households look like?
 - b. What is the inventory of affordable housing?
 - c. Matching the need with available inventory.
2. Advocacy for affordable housing so the community understands its benefits.
3. Funding housing to make it affordable to resource-poor individuals and families.

Policy Mechanisms

1. Housing vouchers (federally funded) and other subsidies to renters (state and local funding).
2. Inclusionary zoning for other means of taxing high-end housing for developers to generate funds to incentivize construction of low-cost housing.
3. Modifying zoning regulations and code standards that unnecessarily increase housing construction costs.

Discussion

The Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) has identified three major components of governance (Stark 2017):

1. Collaboration, which includes crossing sectors (market, state and civil society, crossing political boundaries [jurisdictions] and recognizing regions)
2. Sustained citizen engagement, which includes welcoming new voices, especially those of underrepresented individuals and youth, and envisioning a different future
3. Regional resource leveraging, which includes multiple capitals from multiple sources to reach mutual ends.

Leveraging those resources means analyzing the region's competitive advantages (focusing on strengths, identifying potential advocacy coalitions, strengthening competencies of local elected officials, engaging key intermediaries and investing all of the local capitals while soliciting outside investments).

As more and more investments that used to be seen as improving life for all—the public good—are transformed into private good that should be individually supported (at a time of declining real incomes for the majority of the population), funds are cut particularly from state budgets for health, education, recreation and even infrastructure. There is devolution of responsibility for these services to localities, whose ability to fund them is increasingly limited by state laws limiting tax increases and declining pass-through funds from state and federal governments. These policies are viewed as “sound” because they limit public expenditure and privatize.

Governance means moving beyond the usual way of doing things and focusing on ends, not the rules that limit the means used. Often the rules and the means become ends in themselves, rather than means to an end. Governance means broader community participation and more flexibility on the part of state, market and civil society groups.

Conclusions

In the neoliberal context in which communities in the United States find themselves, governance though the mobilization of civil society via its organizations is critical. Such mobilization, based around norms and values outside the financial sphere, requires a great deal of volunteer time, intelligence and strategic organization. The US has a strong legacy of civic engagement for substantive rationality. But there is less history of negotiations with state and market actors to create situations where social justice can be the driving standard on which decisions are based. The case of affordable housing in Ames shows the degree of organization required for all those connected to a community to live with a degree of dignity and security.

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2

COMMUNITIES IN GOVERNANCE IN A NEOLIBERAL AGE

Marilyn Taylor

The year 1979 saw the publication of a keynote community development text that framed what was at the time a critical dilemma for community development in the UK. *In and Against the State* (LEWRG¹ 1979, 1980) grappled with the contradictions between having “no choice but to enter into routine relations with the state to obtain money, resources and services” (1980: 4), and yet seeking to support communities in having an autonomous voice, which might often articulate messages unwelcome to those in authority. Accountable to the state as funder and often employer, its authors wished also to be accountable to communities whose interests were often in opposition to state policy and practice.

At that time, Paul Waddington (1979) argued that there would always be a need for community development workers to manage the tensions between governments and those they govern. In that sense, community development would always have an ambivalent, and ambiguous, relationship with the state. But the nature of these tensions has undergone significant changes in the intervening period. Since 1979, community development has variously been supported by the local state to mobilize against central state policy, snubbed and left out in the cold, used as a vehicle for community responsibility, embraced enthusiastically as a partner in policy making, and employed as a means of encouraging citizens to take on what 50 years ago would have been seen as the responsibilities of government. In the UK and many other OECD countries, we have seen a systematic and ideologically driven shift in the way that the relationship between the state, civil society and the market is defined. Thus, the question of whether community development workers are “in or against the state” now has a very different flavor from that asked nearly 50 years ago.

This chapter will consider the way that the relationship between community development and the state has changed over this period and the implications for its role and practice. In doing so it will ask what its prospects are in its aim of championing human rights, social justice and self-determination. It will ask what the theme of communities in governance might mean at a time when the dominant discourse is that of the market and of rolling back the state. In doing so, it will focus on the UK, but draw on experience in other OECD countries where relevant as well as considering the relevance of different approaches to community development, from the radical to the communitarian.

The Changing Relationship between Community Development and the State

At the time that *In and Against the State* was written, the centrality of the state was taken for granted in the UK. In the previous decade or so, central government had taken responsibility for introducing a range of area-based initiatives to combat poverty and urban decline—including the Urban Program, Community Development Program and Inner Area Studies—and later research suggests that community development was often funded by the national or local state, even when based in the voluntary sector (Francis et al. 1985). Many of the issues raised in local communities throughout the 1970s were concerned with government policy, services and practice: community development was engaged with campaigns to improve services, to resist redevelopment policies and preserve local housing, to fill gaps in public service provision, to resist council housing rent rises, and so on. As the 1970s progressed, however, there was increasing criticism of the state, most notably from those within the state's own flagship Community Development Project program (Community Development Project 1976; 1977). But, while they and the authors of *In and Against the State* fought against the state as the instrument of capitalism, the role of the state in ameliorating the costs of capitalism and delivering welfare was taken for granted—criticism was directed at its failure to do this effectively or to address the wider structural causes of area-based poverty.

The year 1979 was in many ways a watershed. The new Conservative government that came to power in the general election of that year, under Margaret Thatcher, espoused a neoliberal agenda, with its commitment to rolling back the welfare state, which, in its eyes, had fostered dependency. The focus was very much on the market as the coordinating force in society and on the individual—either as a consumer with individual consumer rights, or as an individual “active” citizen—with a strong focus on responsibilities. As Craig et al. argue (2011: 12), “debates about the deficiencies of the social democratic state, which had been a constant theme in community development theory and practice, suddenly seemed almost traitorous as the state was dismantled and reformed . . . Those who had attacked the state for its paternalism found themselves in the unaccustomed position of defending it”. For a while, community development found allies among local authorities under the control of the opposition Labour Party: municipal socialism—or the “new urban Left”—sought to establish a “rainbow alliance” with trades unions and communities against Thatcher’s neoliberal agenda. However, this opposition was to falter later in the decade.

Some central government programs continued to fund community development—in particular the Urban Program, which had started back in the late 1960s. But while this still offered some flexibility, it was rebalanced away from social and towards economic objectives. Funding was available from a range of job creation programs. But here community development was in danger of being co-opted into a government agenda (Addy and Scott 1988) providing jobs and training on the cheap. Nonetheless, some anti-poverty programs initiated by the European Union and a number of local authorities still offered more promising opportunities to address poverty (Alcock et al. 1995).

The Rise of Partnership Working

The idea of partnership working with communities had been introduced with the Urban Program and the associated, but short-lived, community programs of the 1970s. It survived in pockets in the 1980s, but generally the Conservative government’s focus shifted to public–private sector partnerships to encourage inward investment, economic and physical regeneration. As the decade

wore on, however, community involvement came to be seen as an important factor in achieving and sustaining improvements in skills, jobs, housing and the environment (Hausner et al. 1991). And, as the Thatcher era came to an end, it became a much more explicit feature of Conservative government policy. By the early 1990s, voluntary organizations and service users were to be involved in joint planning in community care, while a new urban regeneration program—City Challenge, which was introduced in 1991—required local authorities to demonstrate that they were working in partnership with other bodies. The Single Regeneration Budget, which superseded City Challenge and consolidated a range of diverse government programs (including the Urban Program), also embraced the partnership principle and there were even examples where local community organizations led successful bids for funding. Meanwhile, housing investment through an Estates Action program was increasingly dependent on tenant involvement in management.

Partnership and participation were by no means only a UK phenomenon. Partnership had already been enshrined in the 1988 Reform of the Structural Funds in Europe (Benington and Geddes 2001) and was a significant feature of the US Comprehensive Community Initiatives introduced by philanthropic foundations in the late 1980s (Kubisch et al. 2010; Burns and Brown 2012). It was gathering interest in other OECD countries and was also increasingly required as part of the official aid system in the global South (Fowler 2000). As the 1990s progressed, therefore, the discourse was increasingly one of governance, with the state acting as enabler rather than sole agent, “steering not rowing” (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Rhodes 1997; Kooiman 2003). This reflected a recognition that, in the complex society of the late twentieth century, no one institution was in a position to understand and address societal problems alone. In order to govern effectively, state actors needed to be able to deploy the resources and expertise of a range of stakeholders, especially to address the “wicked” issues of policy (Rittel and Webber 1973), including poverty, economic development, social exclusion and regeneration. Communities—and hence community development—had an increasingly important role to play (Taylor 2011).

After 18 years of Conservative rule, 1997 saw the election of a New Labour government in the UK that was committed both to partnership working and community participation. Its “third way” ideology sought an alternative both to the state-dominated approach of the 1960s and 1970s and the market-driven ideology of the Thatcher years (Giddens 1998). Communities were to be at the heart of both its New Deal for Communities (NDC), a ten-year program launched in 1998, which invested significant funds in 39 localities across England, and of its National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR), launched in 2001 to tackle social exclusion in the 88 local authority areas with the highest deprivation scores. Community representatives were among those involved in extensive consultations to develop the NSNR and were required members of the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships that ran its programs. A National Community Forum was also established to advise central government on implementation. Similar developments took place in the other UK countries—partnership working was, for example, a particularly important element of the Northern Ireland peace programs (Greer 2001), of the Welsh Communities First Program and of the Scottish Social Inclusion Partnerships.

One of the NSNR’s commitments in England had been to close the gap between the most disadvantaged neighborhoods and the rest of the country. But as the decade progressed this gave way to an emphasis on local government modernization. Partnership working remained central, but Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships were replaced by Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) that now covered all areas across England (while in Scotland, Social Inclusion Partnerships were integrated into Community Planning Partnerships). But community and third sector

representation remained a requirement in these partnerships. Community participation was thus mainstreamed along with the community development to support it.

Under New Labour, therefore, community representatives were at the strategic planning table for policies governing their local authority area and often in the majority when it came to renewal programs. In England, funding was available to support their participation on LSPs through the Single Community Program (Taylor et al. 2005) and also for community development and resident-led projects. There was a strong emphasis on community and citizen empowerment, and resources were also invested in the “other” side of the equation through a Neighbourhood Empowerment Partnership program, promoting community participation at local authority level and building the capacity of public servants to involve communities in their plans and services. Community empowerment was also part of the suite of performance indicators introduced to govern the funding settlement between central and local government in England.²

A place at the partnership table might have been everything communities and community development practitioners could have wished for, after years on the margins. But criticisms had already begun to emerge. Some related to the nature of partnerships themselves and the imbalance of power and resources between communities and their partners (Greer 2001; Glendinning et al. 2002). The rules of the game were largely dictated by those with most resources, whether government or the corporate sector, and many community players found themselves on the margins (Taylor 2011). These were, as scholars at the Institute for Development Studies, phrased it, “invited spaces” (Cornwall 2004) as opposed to the popular or “claimed spaces” communities created for themselves. As such, partnership and community participation could be viewed, according to governmentality theorists, as being among a range of technologies and practices through which society is rendered governable and individuals come to govern themselves (Rose 1999; Taylor 2007; Carmel and Harlock 2008). In effect, Nikolas Rose argued, the “community discourse” hijacked a “language of resistance and transformed it into an expert discourse and professional vocation” (Rose 1999: 175). As result, the community voice was increasingly compromised and partnership processes were drawing representatives in, divorcing them from their constituencies. Most worrying perhaps was the disappearance of traditional sites of independent action and dissent as political parties and trades unions became increasingly centralized and other working-class mass institutions began to lose their salience in areas deserted by their traditional industries. As these spaces for dissent weakened, partnership was increasingly the only game in town for many communities (Taylor et al. 2010), especially those outside the main centers of population.

Meanwhile, the trend in government funding for the sector as a whole had been steadily moving away from the flexibility of grant-aid to more tightly specified contracts as market principles began to infiltrate public services. Funding was increasingly dominated by a “new public management” ethos of competitive tendering, targets and performance indicators (Newman 2001; McLaughlin et al. 2002), an ethos at odds with the principles of collaboration and trust which effective partnership required. At the same time, government was looking to communities and other third sector organizations to take on more responsibility for running public services. There was more and more emphasis too on social entrepreneurialism and social investment, as well as community asset transfer, transferring the ownership and management of public buildings and land to communities. Were communities to become *partners* of or *substitutes* for the state?

Even governmentality theorists recognize that control is not absolute, and there was a more positive side to partnership working at this time. Where there was attention to process and the time and facilitation required to establish trusting relationships, gains could be made, especially

for those most involved (Lawless and Pearson 2012). There is evidence of residents contributing to neighborhood strategies, influencing some decisions and being given the opportunity to run or co-produce the projects that they wanted for their areas (Coaffee and Healey 2003; Taylor et al. 2005; Richardson 2008; Mayo and Annette 2010; Recknagel and Holland 2013). However, an insistence on demonstrating outcomes over short timescales often frustrated these processes. Moreover, many—in the UK and beyond—echoed the critiques made of community programs in the 1970s by the Community Development Project researchers (CDP 1976, 1977), arguing that, while neighborhood organizations were achieving specific victories and small-scale changes, the partnerships in which they were involved were still not challenging the broader forces that led to social exclusion in the first instance (Greer 2001; Ball and Maginn 2004).

By the end of the New Labour era in 2010 therefore, community development risked becoming the instrument of a government agenda that was making communities responsible for addressing the social exclusion and other problems they experienced (Pitchford 2008; Craig et al. 2011; Taylor 2012). For critics, both partnership and the growth of heavily specified contract funding were stifling a distinctive community voice and advocacy and campaigning had been crowded out. It seemed that community development had forfeited the opportunity to be both *in and against* the state.

Big Society, Small State

The Conservative-led Coalition government, which followed New Labour in 2010, took pains to distance itself from its predecessor. However, some familiar themes were rebranded and further developed—notably those associated with localism, community rights,³ social enterprise, social investment and the ownership and management of assets. In contrast to the 1979–1987 Conservative-led government, when the Prime Minister—Margaret Thatcher—had famously stated that there was “no such thing as society, only individuals and their families”, this was a government committed to a “Big Society” and prepared to invest in communities—up to a point.

There was little interest in partnership between the state and communities, however. This was once more a government committed to a neoliberal agenda. Indeed it would go much further in terms of shrinking the state than the Thatcher administration of the 1980s. In the wake of the financial crisis that preceded its election, the Coalition embarked on an austerity program involving stringent cuts in public expenditure, which affected the most disadvantaged communities the most severely (Beatty and Fothergill 2013). So although the rhetoric was one of localism and devolving power to communities, these same communities were often hit by a triple whammy: welfare reform threw many families into poverty; essential public services were pared back; and the national and local state funding, on which many voluntary and community organizations depended, suffered heavy cuts (Bhati and Heywood 2013).

The impact on community development was mixed. Funding for community development on the ground was hit hard, no longer a priority for cash-strapped councils or affordable for local charities. Funding for the national community sector infrastructure was almost entirely discontinued, with the effect that the smaller national membership bodies collapsed and larger bodies increasingly acted as deliverers of government contracts and enablers of government policies. Even this strategy has proved tenuous—the Community Development Foundation, which would have celebrated its 50th birthday in 2018, closed in 2016. Community Matters, the longest-standing membership body for community organizations, which was more than 70 years old, followed shortly afterwards. Local intermediary bodies were also hard hit and sources of support for most small community organizations are now severely limited. A radical

oppositional voice—the National Coalition for Independent Action—flourished for a time on independent funding, but that too has now closed, although there are still spaces on the internet that allow for radical debate (see, for example, the National Community Activists Network (Natcan), nationalcan.ning.com).

The Coalition commitment to the market and neoliberal economics did not, of course, come out of the blue. Market-driven policies had continued, as we have seen, throughout the New Labour years. And, although the administrations in the other UK countries were of a different political complexion, community policies there followed a similar path—if perhaps less aggressively—introducing community rights to take over public assets and challenge public services and placing increasing emphasis on the transfer of service delivery, social enterprise and investment. Communities were increasingly *taking over* from a supposedly discredited state.

So what was available for communities? In England, government introduced a range of community initiatives, which, although they could not compensate for the investment that had been lost, provided some new opportunities. These included programs to encourage social investment, support small community groups in developing action plans (First Steps), influence and maybe co-produce local services (Our Place), to take up community rights and to develop neighborhood plans which had legal force. Some national charities too were investing in place-based initiatives—the Big Lottery Fund in all four UK countries; Lloyds TSB in Scotland; and Comic Relief through UK Community Foundations, for example.

The most significant programs in England in terms of size and investment were the Community Organizers Program (funded by government) and Big Local (funded by the Big Lottery Fund, a non-departmental body accountable to the Office for Civil Society in government). The Community Organizers Program undertook to train 5000 community organizers over four years, providing one-year training bursaries and some progression funds for 500 “senior” community organizers who would then train volunteer community organizers in their patches.

The support of a Conservative Prime Minister for a way of working associated with the radical oppositional politics of Saul Alinsky (Alinsky 1971) might be considered surprising. But Citizens UK—an English organization inspired by Alinsky’s methods—had been building its practice and profile for a number of years, mobilizing large numbers of people, putting together energetic coalitions in support of its campaigns and succeeding in putting community issues on the national agenda—notably in its campaign for a Living Wage. As such, it had attracted growing interest from politicians, as well as the trades unions and faith organizations that it recruited to its cause. It was an organization that had steadfastly refused to engage in partnership or accept government funding but was briefly linked to the new government initiative. However, in the event, the contract to manage the Program went to Locality, an organization whose approach—based strongly on one-to-one listenings with local residents—drew more on the work of Paulo Freire (1972) than Alinsky. In the community development world, the new Program was greeted with some scepticism (see, for example, Mills and Robson 2010; Chanan and Miller 2013). Critics were doubtful of the Program’s potential to develop any kind of independent, let alone challenging practice. The concern was that it would be a creature of government, supporting government intentions to cut public services and transfer responsibility for these to local communities—communities *instead* of the state rather than *in* or *against* it.

Big Local, meanwhile, was interested in the potential of social investment and social enterprise as long-term approaches to the problem of deprived communities. Its aim was to support local communities in making their area “an even better place to live”, through building informal partnerships at the local level and developing local plans to be implemented over the ten years. Local Trust, who administered the Program, did not train or employ community workers directly, although local partnerships might decide to use some of their money to support a worker or

be supported by a worker already operating locally. Instead, it provided “light touch” support through a pool of “reps” or advisers with relevant community work or associated experience (Local Trust 2015). Local authority politicians or officers might be involved in partnerships or as accountable bodies for the funding, but they were to be resources for the residents rather than dictating their agenda. These partnerships were not, therefore, to be the “invited spaces” of previous years or, if they were, it was to be local residents who were doing the inviting. The Big Lottery Fund also supported programs in each of the other UK countries, tailored to some extent to their different needs but with a strong emphasis on social investment.

Both English programs rejected “community development” as an approach, associating it with what they saw as the top-down practice of the New Labour years. They sought, instead, to be *resident-led*. A central tenet of the Community Organizers Program was not to do for residents what they could do for themselves; their entrée into the community was through local residents and not through local agencies, and they were to be primarily accountable to residents. In contrast to the New Labour programs, government set hardly any targets other than the numbers of volunteer community organizers to be recruited—the agenda was for residents to determine (Imagine 2014).

Big Local, for its part, put a commitment to being resident-led at the center of its approach, proclaiming on its website:

It’s NOT about your local authority, the government or a national organisation telling you what to do.

This commitment to a resident-led approach (Local Trust 2015) was supported by the “light touch” approach described earlier, and a willingness to take the risks associated with less formal programs. Neither the groups brought together by community organizers in the COP nor the Big Local partnerships are required to formalize, and where they are, it is likely to be the residents who are seeking a formal structure.

An emphasis on being resident-led does, however, raise questions about what this means? Which residents are leading? Who decides whether their community is “an even better place to live”? And is the resident perspective always going to deliver what local communities need? These are questions to which I shall return in the conclusions.

Meanwhile, alongside the focus on “resident-led”, three other trends are evident in current interest in community development. The first of these is the growing popularity of the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) brand (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993; Russell 2015). This was a response to the predominantly deficit models of community work of the past, which focused on problems and needs and often unwittingly reinforced negative stereotypes of the communities where community development was working. Indeed, although they didn’t adopt the ABCD brand *per se*, both of the programs described above adopted an *asset-based approach* in the sense that they focused on the positives of an area and the strengths of its residents.

The second of these additional trends has been that the discourse of partnership and participation is being superseded by an emphasis on co-production (nef/NESTA 2009; Pestoff et al. 2012), particularly in relation to public services. Although its roots undoubtedly lie in some of the partnership and service user involvement initiatives of previous decades, it has been given a new impetus in recent years, described by its advocates as “a radically democratic alternative form of policy design” (Durose and Richardson 2015: 1), as well as delivery. Its principles—of valuing people as assets, valuing work differently, promoting reciprocity and developing social networks—seek to transform power relationships between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbors—and to promote culture change among

professionals and public authorities. This is about communities leading change but has attracted interest from a number of local authorities despite, or perhaps because of, their diminishing resources. As such, it might be seen as communities *with* the state, especially where local authorities see communities once again as allies in trying to preserve public services against the advance of an even more profoundly neoliberal agenda than that which characterized the 1980s. However, the term has been used to cover a range of different approaches not all of which are as radical as that described by Durose and Richardson (2015).

The third of these trends is the interest in social investment and community enterprise, which is, of course, nothing new. Solutions to community problems are sought beyond the state through initiatives to transform local economies and keep money circulating locally. There has been a huge growth in community finance over recent years—the value of lending capital held by Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) increased by 22 percent between 2006/7 and 2007/8 (GHK 2010) and by 2013, CDFIs served 52 percent more customers than in 2012 (CDFA 2014). The state still has a role but it lies in enabling the market and the capitalist economy—it was state action that set up Big Society Capital in the UK, for example, which is drawing on dormant accounts and pledges from the largest banks to support social action and operating through local intermediaries. Much energy is also being invested in seeking ways of measuring social return on investment and commissioners are now legally required to take social value into account in awarding contracts.

What Does This All Mean for Community Development?

This account has focused on the UK, and within it, principally on England. But the trends it describes—the advance of neoliberalism tempered at different times and in different places, by an emphasis on partnership in governance—will be familiar to readers from many other OECD countries and beyond.

It is not a simple picture, however. At one level, since the oil crisis of the early 1970s, neoliberalism has tightened its grip on British society, with its emphasis on the individual, in particular, the individual consumer. Community development's role has been mainly to assist in the responsabilization of communities, so that they can take over key functions from an enabling state. Governance is increasingly left to the mechanism of market competition, in which communities are at a considerable disadvantage and which also risks setting community organizations into competition with each other. There is of course the option of banding together or entering into a consortium with larger providers, but the first takes considerable resources while the second risks leaving community organizations at the mercy of larger contractors.

In the neoliberal market, relationships with contractors and the state are vertical—those of contractor and client. However, over the years, a parallel interest in partnership has ebbed and flowed, offering communities a more horizontal relationship with the state. This has given communities the opportunity to participate in governance and policy making. Many commentators have become disenchanted with partnership as having compromised communities' independence and co-opted them into the agendas of the state and other powerful partners (see discussion in Taylor 2011, chapter 9). However, interest remains in pursuing forms of co-production that offer genuinely equal and reciprocal relationships between the different players, valuing communities' unique knowledge and skills. This is reflected to some extent in the Our Place government program that focuses on transforming the way that public services are delivered (mycommunity.org.uk/programme/our-place/).

At the same time, there has been a growing commitment to allowing communities to take a lead in addressing their concerns, through encouraging resident-led approaches, building on

assets and looking for ways to reinvigorate the local economy and reduce their dependence on external sources. Government funded a short-term program to support communities in taking up community rights and develop neighborhood plans, which was being delivered by the successor to the Community Organisers Program (www.corganisers.org.uk/news/community-organisers-mobilisation-fund). Social investment meanwhile remains central to Big Lottery Fund programs across the UK. Communitarian and asset-based approaches have been criticized for cutting communities adrift to manage their exclusion from the mainstream and failing to recognize or address the external causes of the pressures they face (Emejulu 2015). But while this can undoubtedly be the case, it has also been possible—for example in Big Local—for communities to invite external actors into the spaces for change they create, increasing the chances that co-production can work for communities in ways that allow them to draw on additional resources of knowledge and skills.

But what of the activist role in community development—campaigning to put community issues onto the agenda of external power holders, alerting them to their responsibilities, critiquing government policy, as well as protecting and extending community rights? The options above have given communities, as partners in governance a role in the state, as co-producers a role *with* the state, as contractors and volunteers a role *instead* of the state—as substitutes for a receding state. But have they thereby lost their dissenting voice: their potential to hold others to account, to address the external factors that affect their life chances and their capacity to make their places, in the words of Big Local, an “even better place to live”?

It could be argued that the end of the partnership era—along with the severity of the austerity agenda—presents an opportunity for community development to rediscover its critical edge and regain its soul. If the anchors of past dissent have disappeared, new ones have emerged since 2010. They range from the Occupy movement to online campaigning organizations, such as 38 degrees, avaaz and SumofUs. While traditional political parties have centralized over the years, new parties have emerged, making the UK’s traditional two-party system look increasingly outdated. A Scottish referendum on independence from the UK attracted turnout figures that have not been seen for decades, while the unexpected election of a left-wing candidate as Labour Party leader following this party’s defeat in the 2015 general election similarly confounded the predictions of the establishment. Both elections brought out the young voters that more mainstream elections have failed to attract.

Mention has been made earlier of the profile that Citizens UK has attracted in recent years. It continues to operate independently of the state, demonstrating its ability to engage state and private sector actors on its own terms, to the extent that, after the 2015 election, which returned a single-party Conservative government with an unadulterated neoliberal agenda, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stole the language of one of their most successful campaigns to announce a national “living wage”.

ACORN (the Association of Community Organisations for Reform Now)—another organization in the Alinsky tradition—has now begun to take root in England. Set up by some graduates of the Community Organisers Program working alongside trade unionists, it is beginning to achieve its own successes (Taylor and Wilson 2016). Indeed the trades union movement is itself adopting community organizing as a way of re-engaging with its membership and communities, in the UK and elsewhere (Whittle 2013; Holgate 2015).

The Challenges of Change

As Waddington suggested more than 30 years ago, it is not necessary to adopt a polarized position whereby community development is either “in” or “against” the state. Some have found, for

example, that neither communities nor their third sector colleagues have lost their ability or will to engage in campaigning (Cairns et al. 2010; Smith and Pekkanen 2012). Others argue that co-option is not inevitable when community development is working with the state or funded by it (Craig et al. 2004). Its attempts to introduce legislation that would restrict the capacity of voluntary and community organizations to use government funding to criticize government policy—however troubling in itself—suggests that government agrees with this view.

Advocates of co-production, meanwhile, are seeking to change the balance between the state, other professionals and community members, providing positive examples of state actors who are disrupting old practices in order to put communities at the center of change (Durose and Richardson 2015). The state is not monolithic and there are allies within it. In addition—as cuts bite further into local authorities—more may feel they have no option but to follow this path. The fact remains, however, that even the most ardent advocates of working with the state recognize the time and effort that is needed to change heavily embedded cultures and overcome the resistance of those threatened by change. New ways of working require a capacity to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty that traditional bureaucratic forms and models of representative democracy are not equipped for. This is a major challenge for community development and likely to be aggravated by the sense of threat that many in local government and the public sector professions experience under an aggressively neoliberal government.

In the UK, this chapter has charted the extent to which spaces for dissent have come and gone, strong in the 1970s, under attack in the 1980s, co-opted—some would argue—under New Labour, but reappearing in response to austerity and neoliberalism today. In previous cross-national research, colleagues and I suggested that the capacity of communities to maintain their independence in relation to the state, whether “in” or “against”, would depend on a number of socio-political factors at a country level: the extent to which basic needs are met, the nature of democratic processes and their political cultures (Taylor et al. 2010; Kenny et al. 2015, chapter 5). We found, for example, that in Nicaragua, strong historical links with social movements as well as the fact that, in a weak state, community organizations had a major role to play in meeting basic needs, meant that they had independent spaces into which they could invite state actors (although, in a clientelist state, their capacity for influence and agency depended very much on which political party was in power). There is an argument that communities are always going to be at their strongest in relationships with the state when they have alternative spaces to nurture them, support them and to which they have to be accountable (Taylor et al. 2010).

It would, of course, be possible to argue that the orientation of community development towards the state is outdated. As many governments across the world seek to shrink the state and look to the market as the principal mediating factor in society, is partnership with the state a meaningful option for community development and the communities it seeks to serve? Or should they be looking to the economy and the market?

There is certainly a pressing need to address the financial exclusion in many disadvantaged communities, so the growth of new initiatives in this field is welcome. The potential for further growth in the social enterprise sector remains to be seen, however. Small businesses have a high failure rate and viability in communities who have been abandoned by the mainstream market is a challenge. Certainly the market in welfare tends to go to scale, with smaller community-based organizations ill-equipped to compete. Enterprise is also often an individual endeavor and programs that try to address the lack of skills and economic opportunities in disadvantaged areas may simply find that those who benefit leave the area—or that new jobs go to outsiders. But Murtagh and Goggin (2015) defend the potential of social investment, arguing that it is necessary to work with the economic system and its structures in order to challenge it (in the same way, perhaps, as community development practitioners have written about working in

and against the state). Even so, encouraging community enterprise is about more than offering start-up grants and business advice—it needs to be part of a wider empowerment process and open up possibilities for new economic models rather than fitting into those imposed from outside.

A final challenge relates to the question raised earlier: what does resident-led actually mean? Yes, new ways have to be found of changing the power balance between residents and external players, whether in the state or the market. But a commitment to being resident-led has its own challenges. Who, for example, are the residents? There is not room here to grapple with the complex issues of representation, but many disadvantaged areas are super-diverse and residents of all faiths and ethnic origin often perceive threats from inside as well as out. The frequent emphasis in programs on “community leaders” often fetishizes leadership and fails to address the question of what effective leadership means or how to ensure that it is distributed. Romanticizing “the community”, as communitarian approaches tend to do, fails to acknowledge the “dark side” of community—its sometimes exclusive nature and its capacity to be oppressive. It sidesteps the very real challenges that engaging people across the community presents. It can also fail to recognize that, just as the state cannot solve complex problems alone, nor can communities be expected to do so. They need the resources of others and to be able to share the responsibilities of change.

What kind of governance is then required if communities are to play their full part in achieving their potential? And what role does community development need to play? This chapter has underlined the fact that no one sector can address the complexities of contemporary governance on its own, whether the state, communities or indeed the market. Complexity theory offers some ways forward. Complexity models of society emphasize the interconnectedness of life, suggesting that small-scale local interactions can result in major, unpredictable events (Capra 1996). They advocate the evolution of new solutions or emergent forms of collective organization rather than more linear explanations of change. These are the tools of those who advocate co-production—working with complexity and uncertainty (Durose and Richardson 2015). As Gilchrist and Taylor (2016: 70) argue:

Helping people to develop networks and to allow new groupings to emerge from these relationships creates an environment that can enable change and sustain community activity. It also reminds us that there are many ways to view, interpret and shape the reality around us and there are ambiguities and contradictions in any system that communities can navigate and exploit, even at neighbourhood level.

Community development has always involved one of the key roles for this practice, that of a boundary spanner. But we need to bring politics into this equation too and address the challenge that neoliberalism poses to effective governance and to the values of social justice, self-determination and social inclusion that community development claims to espouse.

However critical the community development world has been of the state, its role in advancing the interest of capital and its often sclerotic and disempowering practices, rolling back the state is unlikely to further the cause of social justice. As Kenny et al. (2015: 208) argue:

Rather than rolling back the state, therefore, what is perhaps required is a revitalisation of the notion of the democratic state and the public sphere, based on a shared understanding that an effectively democratic and genuinely accountable state is the responsibility of us all.

In the face of the advance of neoliberalism, this is an urgent requirement. To play its part, community development needs to work with residents and their allies across the sectors to find

ways of stepping out of the bunkers into which austerity drives them and to negotiate the tensions that will always be present in its practice, working in and against the state, in and against traditional economic models, and bridging cultural and religious divides.

Notes

- 1 The London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group (LEWRG) described itself as A Working Group of the Conference of Socialist Economists. Its members were: Jeanette Mitchell, Cynthia Cockburn, Kathy Polanshek, Nicola Murray, Neil McInnes and John MacDonald.
- 2 In the mid 2000s, as part of its performance management framework, the New Labour government introduced Local Area Agreements which were signed off between central government, local government and other key partners. These were supported by a suite of national indicators, which included community participation and voluntary sector activity. NI3, for example, was “Civic participation in the local area” and NI4 “the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality”.
- 3 In England these rights, enshrined in the Localism Act 2011, include rights to bid, build, reclaim land and to challenge existing public services, as well as to develop local neighborhood plans, which have legal force. The right to bid is extended to Wales and has also been introduced into Scottish law.

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3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Reviving Critical Agency in Times of Crisis

Mae Shaw

Introduction: Community Development in Context

It is now well established that community development is a historically situated, ideologically contested and contextually specific practice, which cannot be considered meaningfully outside of the material conditions in which it operates and is produced and reproduced (e.g. Shaw 2008). This is especially important amid growing concerns that the ethical and democratic project which made community development distinctive has been significantly ‘hollowed out’ in many parts of the world, despite its re-emergence in global public policy debates (Shaw and Mayo 2016).

In general terms, a number of rationalities can be identified which have been deployed, historically, to justify community development in theory and practice: As *policy intervention* (performing particular functions for diverse state agencies); as *social and political practice* (with a particular commitment to cultivating democratic engagement among marginalized communities of place, identity or attachment); as *professional identity or occupation* (legitimized by certain ethical values within particular institutional frameworks and codified in associated training courses); and as *approach or process* (based on a participatory methodology) (Taylor 2011). These meanings, and the balance and overlaps between them, play out differentially across time and place, producing different arguments, subjects and audiences for the supposed “benefits” of community development.

In fact, one of the perennial difficulties associated with community development is the way in which competing justifications can be deployed interchangeably, so that lines of coherence and distinctiveness become blurred. For instance, policy interventions that may actually undermine democratic engagement and empowerment are routinely justified by reference to professional discourses that assume such values as given; or a “community development approach” is employed under conditions that may actually obscure or ensure predetermined outcomes. As Meade et al. (2016: 1) point out, one of the causes of such slippage is that those who lay claim to community development are both “united and divided by a common language”, with ample scope for key claims and distinctions to be lost in translation. As a pragmatic response, some practitioners have learned to engage strategically in “doublespeak”—presenting one version publicly, while practicing another—in order to preserve some sense of professional and personal integrity (Marston and McDonald 2012). Notwithstanding the recurrent challenges of maintaining some semblance of conceptual coherence, its potential for interpretation explains why community development is continually claimed with equal enthusiasm from left to right

of the political spectrum. Certainly, appeals to the “medicinal” properties of “community” continue to provide “a discursive resource of almost limitless potential” (Schofield 2002: 664). In austerity-driven contexts, for example, it can supply a plausible alibi, or vindication, for a declining public welfare system (De Fillipis et al. 2010; Beresford 2016; Meekosha et al. 2016).

The starting point for this chapter then is that community development is intrinsically—even, constitutionally—ambivalent and contingent. Historically, and in diverse contexts, it lies at the intersection of a number of competing demands and interests: from government, to strengthen or legitimize policy-making through democratic engagement; from state institutions, to deliver policy within political and budgetary parameters; from professional bodies, projecting and protecting established values and practices; from diverse community interests, some expressed, others latent. As a consequence, it hosts a complex combination of democratic aims and managerial objectives.

On the one hand, and over time, community development has been popular with governments of different political persuasions as a response to particular changes and crises: nation-building (Poppo 2015); reconstituting civil society (Bilon et al. 2016); fiscal, legitimation, law and order (Butcher 1993), security and representation (Jessop 2015). On the other hand, it has also provided a valued public space in which ordinary people “act together for the purpose of influencing and exerting greater control over decisions that affect their lives” (Kenny 2016). Of course, changing political, economic, cultural and social conditions played out locally and globally mean that the problems and prospects for communities alter significantly and differentially over time, thus reconfiguring the parameters of what constitutes community development.

Since the 1960s “the community solution” has been an important component of the policy repertoire in the UK—and elsewhere—partly or precisely because of its utility in addressing a range of policy problems, either as a distinct strategy itself (i.e. *as* policy) or attached to other relevant policies such as housing, health, education or social care (i.e. *in* policy). Its popularity arises from its general potential for responding to wider changes that require a new set of social relationships between the state, the economy and civil society, and its particular potential to solve pressing social problems in both the short and longer term. Broadly speaking, therefore, it can accommodate a range of different, sometimes competing, rationalities. This enduring capacity to adjust and respond to diverse and changing demands has granted it a “survivability” which remains both an asset and a liability.

Table 3.1 highlights a number of common aims for community development in UK policy, which have operated independently or together over time, and the broad strategies deployed to address them. These aims and strategies have acquired different degrees of validity in specific contexts.

Table 3.1 Community Development Deployed in the “Invited Spaces” of Policy

<i>Rationale</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
Improving decision making	Consultation
Improving service delivery	Consumer research
Reducing public expenditure	Resource provision
Legitimizing policy	Endorsement and consent
Incorporating local politics	Franchised democracy
Managing civic engagement	Disciplinary control
Building community resilience	Self-help

Improving decision making over matters that affect people's lives is a standard justification for community development interventions in many places, and *consultation* has become a common strategy at global and local levels. For example, people are endlessly invited to "have their say" on matters as amorphous as global climate change or as specific as local budget priorities, through a range of media. Aside from practical questions about who participates, on what basis and with what level of understanding or power, this kind of approach also tends to foreclose on wider political questions as to how problems are framed, alternative readings of them and indeed potential challenges to them.

At its best, *improving service delivery* could signal genuine collaboration or, indeed, co-production: "part of a communal solution to public problems" (Durose et al. 2015: 139). This would take into account those well-developed critiques of existing welfare models that have consistently failed to address demands by user groups for "recognition" and "redistribution" (Fraser 2000), and arguing for a more participatory model of social policy (Beresford 2016). On the other hand, "improving service delivery" can simply become a code for cost cutting and rationing in times of austerity. In any case, the normalization of certain kinds of targeted "need" in policy formation tends to favor a particular distribution of power, thereby ruling out alternative definitions which may emerge from a genuine exercise in *consumer research*.

Community development as a *means of reducing public expenditure* relies on participation as a *resource*, to facilitate changing relations between the state and civil society. For example, substantial reductions can be achieved through the provision of voluntary labor to replace public sector jobs in a variety of services—from libraries, to health centers, police services and schools. Such strategies rely to some degree on seeking *community endorsement* for policies that may not otherwise be popular. Conferring legitimizing status upon "the community" can be a very effective means of progressing political programs, adding value to service-delivery outcomes by enrolling public support. In effect, the logic of empowering volunteers may also disempower and de-legitimize professional expertise, further justifying reductions in public expenditure. In this sense, a narrative of empowerment and participation can be projected in order to advance a policy agenda which is actually "designed to reduce state welfare services and deprofessionalize workers" (Needham 2013: 101). An effective *legitimization* strategy can also involve the *incorporation of local politics* through the co-option of key actors, the creation of "consultative elites", the manufacture of consensus or the facilitation of *franchise* arrangements through which all important terms and outcomes are already set, with little room for negotiation or change—a form of "localism without politics" (Davies 2016: 18).

An interest in *civic engagement* strategies can signal "citizen-led spaces . . . for democratic enhancement: autonomous from government, yet accountable" (Durose et al. 2015: 146). However, potentially democratic spaces are eroded when strategies are framed in such a way as to shift the balance of responsibility from the public to the private spheres, recruiting the "good community" as social entrepreneurs or volunteers while disciplining the "bad community" through various forms of punitive surveillance and management. Such deficit models operate more or less covertly as a form of discipline by normalizing personal responsibility as the dominant moral and political imperative, irrespective of wider structural explanations. *Disciplinary control* may also be reinforced and internalized through strategies for *building community resilience* so that individuals and groups engage in *self-help*: "empowered to realize their potential, through their commitment to play a part in the self sustaining community" (Schofield 2002: 668). And in the move towards privatized solutions, the promotion of asset-based community development can actively reinforce this model by translating legitimate political questions such as "what do we need and how should it be provided?" into the merely personal question "what can we offer?"

It could be argued then that contemporary conditions pose existential challenges for those practices such as community development which were conceived within a social democratic framework that validated critical forms of professional and democratic knowledge, and whose normative orientation was to social solidarity and justice. Transposed to neoliberal times, and stripped of much of its traditional social purpose orientation, it is hardly surprising that community development struggles to maintain its political legitimacy and professional coherence. Contemporary debates about the status and locus of community development need to take account of these new and complex reconfigurations of policy and practice.

Kenny (2016: 49) highlights prevailing tensions between “those who advocate for professionalization of community development” and those who argue for a more “organic” practice. In a period of austerity, it is not unexpected that professional interests and bodies are keen to reassert the distinctiveness of community development values and argue boldly for further consolidation of professional status (e.g. Crickley and McArdle 2009; McConnell 2015). Others consider whether the enforced de-centering of professional expertise might not have something to offer in (re)imagining a more equal and democratic form of community development (e.g. Meade 2012). Some advocate for a “new professionalism” (as distinct from professionalization), with greater downward accountability through enhanced user participation (e.g. Banks 2004). In parallel, there is an increasing move towards differentiation and deregulation of community development within and between different contexts, the implications of which are not yet clear. For example, community organizing models, predicated on more “organic” models of practice imported from the US and elsewhere, may unsettle the status of professional practitioners in new and interesting (and potentially alarming) ways (De Fillipis et al. 2010).

Notwithstanding the longer-term outcomes of such debates, in a context of professional vulnerability there is evidently a strong temptation to project an “imagined identity” which asserts progressive professional agency, despite constant evidence to the contrary. Marston and McDonald (2012) argue that such “naïve conceptualisations” of professional identity in the face of significant challenges reflect a “triumph of agency over structure” simultaneously depoliticizing the field of practice and reifying the “heroic agency” of the professional practitioner. As Meade et al. (2016: 2) contend, however, community development is characteristically “situated somewhere between rhetoric and reality, actuality and aspiration” and its intrinsic ambivalence needs to be accommodated in debates about professional identity, whatever the particularities of context.

In this section I have argued that community development is not a singular or exclusive set of concepts and practices, but has been associated with different political projects, policy rationalities and professional claims. The choices and dilemmas this poses for practitioners in the current context are explored in the next section.

Changes and Challenges for Community Development in the 21st Century

Across all of our engagements most practitioners reported that they are operating within a top-down environment, with externally determined outcomes and short timescales for CD interventions. They reported that there is little space to nurture independent community activity or to analyze implications of decisions, programs or policy directives and that grassroots holistic approaches are rare. Practitioners felt that their CD skills are underutilized, with key processes missing and that they are often driven by fear and job insecurity. In addition, practitioners feel that there is a general lack of

understanding of the complex skills involved in community development. Practitioners feel undervalued, under-resourced and over-stretched.

SCDN 2015

These are the principal findings of a survey of over 300 community development practitioners across Scotland conducted by the Scottish Community Development Network (SCDN 2015). It echoes similar findings elsewhere in recent times (e.g. Henderson and Glen 2005; Tett et al. 2007; Community Work Ireland 2015; Bilon et al. 2016) and suggests a growing disjunction between “professed virtues” and “real behavior” (Bourdieu 1998). The situation described above certainly presents significant challenges to a practice so heavily predicated on the skilled agency of the practitioner, however designated. If community development is to revive a sense of critical agency, there needs to be a candid assessment of how and why it has become so seriously compromised. One of the most critical shape-shifters of community development has been the localized impact of global structures and processes of power.

It is claimed that neoliberal globalization has come to constitute the “context of all contexts” (Peck and Tickell 2002) and is now pervasive across the world, albeit in different forms and with different effects in different contexts. In a sense, therefore, national and local contexts are to a significant degree secondary or subsidiary to the logic of the globalized economic order. Dominant discussions of globalization, for example, emphasize the limited power of nation states in comparison with the hegemonic power of international corporations (Beresford 2016). This is neither to suggest that governments are completely powerless, nor that neoliberalism is deterministic in any simple sense. Clearly not all currents and developments can be attributed to a singular motive force. But it does direct attention to the way in which “turbo capitalism” has transformed the field of practice across difference and distance in previously unimaginable ways.

A characteristic of neoliberalism is its fluid, multidimensional and hybridized nature: its extraordinary versatility in working with the social, cultural and institutional grain of diverse contexts in order to enact and reproduce itself. Neoliberal governance regimes within liberal democracies, for example, tend to operate through relatively open and democratic networks more or less strategically and invisibly as “vehicles for the construction of new governing rationalities” (Davies and Pill 2012: 2202). In modern welfare regimes, the introduction of market “solutions” has in some cases been the unwelcome and unintended consequence of democratic struggles by user-groups over “choice” in welfare (Beresford 2016), and “the commodification and outsourcing of welfare and social services to the market” (Meekosha et al. 2016: 144). In large parts of Africa the emergence of the “green economy” has facilitated a withdrawal of the state from environmental management and protection “backed by neoliberal reforms that normalize market-based approaches for effective environmental governance” (Westoby and Lyons 2016: 65). In all corners of the “developing world” neoliberal reforms have helped fuel unprecedented levels of global investment in the extractive industries, with profound consequences for local populations in the global North and South (Maconachie and Hilson 2013).

Within this still unfolding global trajectory, the distinction between “concrete and abstract neoliberalism” seems especially relevant to community development in many contexts (Lauermann and Davidson 2013). In the UK, and elsewhere, concrete neoliberalism is seen, and lived, through the market-disciplinary and regulatory field of practice: the domination of market-based rationalities, the competitive contract culture in the voluntary sector, intense performance and measurement regimes, and the commodification of community engagement. Abstract neoliberalism, on the other hand, refers to the way in which such precepts actively

construct a neoliberal subjectivity, or common-sense view, which acts to foreclose on any other way of understanding the world, thereby further reinforcing its reach and power.

The symbolic importance of abstract neoliberalism lies in the extent to which it manipulates how different aspects of social reality are imagined, framed, described and discussed. For example, “delivering democracy”, “community branding” or “streamlining the deliverables” may appear to be unwelcome but relatively innocent expressions of various kinds of concrete policy imperatives. But, crucially, they also constitute a symbolic process of enacting power: simultaneously calling it into being and reinforcing its validity by delegitimizing all other ways of talking and thinking. There is increasing pressure within diverse community development contexts to identify with neoliberal ways of being: to use the language of the boardroom and the advertising agency even when it is totally inappropriate or potentially injurious to the expression of diverse democratic concerns; to facilitate market competition when it would make more sense to cooperate over limited funding sources; to comply with managerial regimes people know are harmful to their work; to relate to those they work with as “customers” with “choices” they know to be fictitious.

Lauermann and Davidson (2013:1285) describe this intensive managerial turn as “the performativity of fantasy”, arguing that the work of maintaining the fantasy, together with the implicit silencing or denial of real alternatives, is as important as the fantasy itself. In community development terms, such maintenance work comes, over time and imperceptibly, to dominate the practice environment to such an extent that active educational engagement on open-ended and respectful terms with marginalized communities around a range of relevant issues may come to be unconsciously normalized as an optional extra, a minority interest, even a guilty secret—not the *real* work (e.g. Tett et al. 2007). The consequences of this for professional identity are clearly significant at both personal and institutional levels.

Perhaps the ultimate significance of the “performativity of fantasy”, however, is that it acts to preclude economic analysis and depoliticizes the market as the key (f)actor in determining people’s material conditions, and the choices available to them. In this process, certain kinds of decision are reframed as merely technical rather than as serious “matters of contestation between values in the political process” (Durose et al. 2015: 140). This sundering of the economic from the political also has a decisive impact on the conditions for democratic participation, rendering the demand for community development ideological in the strict sense of “masking the real economic relationships and conflicts that exist” (Levitas 2000: 190).

It is apparent that power works at and through different levels—from the macro to the micro, the political to the personal, the global to the intimate—and that it operates in diffuse ways through culture, language, identity formation, relationships and behavior as much as through politics and the economy. Gramsci, Foucault and others have taught us that we are not only *objects* of the exercise of power but also, and critically, potentially *subjects* in the exercise of hegemonic power (e.g. Foucault 1980; Gramsci 1981). Governmentality, for instance, has become a key theoretical construct for understanding a form of power that sets out to structure the action of others, to control “the conduct of conduct” as it were (e.g. Rose 1996). The uncomfortable truth may be that in some critical ways these managerial technologies of power have actually conferred a renewed legitimacy on community development in facilitating, regulating and enacting the new neoliberal governance regime, invoking progressive community development tropes such as “empowerment” and “participation” for its expression.

Drawing upon actor network theory, McGrath (2016: 3) highlights the ways in which this field of action is constructed not only by human behavior but also by non-human elements or “actants”. The role of “evidence”, for example, is often decisive in constructing “what counts as knowledge and its influence on policy and practice” as a formidable absent presence. Such

“neosocial” techniques of government come to name, frame and regulate the parameters of practice with little or no discussion or debate, becoming instantiated and projected as the dominant narrative. In this sense:

good practice guides, transferable models and evaluations are not simply neutral tools but governmental techniques that represent and help constitute governmental spaces and subjects in particular forms. Such [forms] help enroll residents into the programmatic aspirations of government and its agents.

McGrath 2016: 6

At the same time, information management systems, many incorporating algorithmic elements which are calibrated in favor of particular outcomes, collect and project standardized forms of knowledge which enable central control of multiple and diverse local projects and contexts, thereby “managing the risk associated with having varied stakeholders involved in governance relations” (McGrath, 2016: 13).

From his analysis of key government policy documents in his own practice, Schofield (2002: 665) further concludes that “community” has itself become a key construct in the formation of such managerial processes. He examines how managers, in particular, “are actively constructing and mobilizing the discourses of community and making these conducive to the political aims of government”. His critical point is that, far from government responding to the voices of communities, as envisaged in progressive versions of community development, the contemporary “community” of policy is largely constructed to conform with particular government strategies. Perhaps the greatest contemporary challenge to progressive community development, therefore, lies in its renewed legitimacy as a “soft technology” of power.

Such strategies have coincided with the rise of “networked governance” in public policy, specifically “the differentiated policy model” (DPM). This model focuses less on structural power and more on the mechanics of “co-ordinating resources, empowering citizens and/or enrolling them in new political subjectivities” (Davies and Pill, 2012: 2202). This approach has obvious attractions for addressing the range of rationalities identified in Table 3.1 in an era of retrenchment, since it reinforces the case for efficiency savings by making “residents’ own destinies synonymous with the programmatic aspirations of government” (p. 679). So, for example, while “participatory budgeting” may appear to offer a more democratic process of claims-making at local level, there is typically no means by which to challenge overall budget levels, the role of the state, inequalities in wealth distribution more generally, or the politics which have created them. This is a good example of a franchising model of community development that acts to incorporate or neutralize any democratic potential for contentious politics; in which communities are invited to make their own “incisions”, often against their own interests.

As Allen and Cochrane (2010: 107) argue, it has become increasingly difficult to pin down the “institutional geography of power and the decision making processes that shape political outcomes”, never mind influencing or challenging them. On one hand, power has increasingly been centralized upwards so that what remains begins to resemble a kind of zombie-governance while, on the other, a downwards retreat to competitive privatism has acculturated citizens into a form of self-help which may disempower them in democratic terms. What is integral to these re-scaling processes in the UK in particular is the “reframing and recalibration of the welfare state” and “the blurring of public-private boundaries” in the context of “crises, crisis-management and post-crisis recovery” (Jessop, 2015: 485).

This section has argued that, as community development becomes officially inscribed into a form of disciplinary technology, practitioners are at risk of becoming silent, invisible instruments

of state power with limited potential for professional agency. This fear is palpable in the findings of the SCDN research cited above, and in much anecdotal evidence. And concerns about the diminishing critical agency of practitioners and communities in this parallel and alien universe of performativity are well grounded, not least because, as programmatic images of community proliferate and penetrate further into policy, any alternative democratic imaginary recedes rapidly from view. It may even be that, as Davies and Pill (2012: 2202) argue, the space for an “authentically inclusionary and democratic collaborative governance movement may be passing” while the institutional architecture remains stolidly in place. If this is the case then it clearly poses serious challenges, but it may also offer new possibilities for the future. Actively identifying with communities who legitimately feel alienated from uninviting local democratic processes could be one very concrete expression of a renewed community development paradigm.

This is not to suggest that political control that is exercised so extensively from the center can simply be wished or negotiated away, but rather that, where the active cooperation of a diversity of actors and groups is central to the dominant political project, this presents opportunities for unsettling or disrupting its power. In addition, if power is negotiated in dispersed and myriad places, then this may open up new democratic spaces in which to contest existing arrangements, as social and political movements have demonstrated over time. These struggles and the “dangerous memories” they hold may offer some important “resources of hope” for the possibilities of reviving or cultivating a more democratic disposition (Williams 1989).

Reviving the Democratic Disposition

The increasing impact of neoliberalism across the globe means that the complex interplay of democratic, economic and managerial rationalities described above now defines to a greater or lesser extent the parameters and practices of community development. It is, historically, within the interstices of such competing rationalities that practitioners have sought opportunities to establish some coherence between ethical values and everyday practices (Banks 2004). While community development in many contexts has been largely contained within the “invited spaces” of policy, it has also emboldened diverse populations to make claims in the “demanded” or “popular” spaces of politics, often at odds with policy (Cornwall 2008). Arguably, it is within the dialectics of this position that community development as an expression of the democratic disposition is at its most effective (Shaw and Martin 2000).

This chapter has argued that community development has been *subjected* to the “modernization” processes associated with neoliberalism which have hollowed out its democratic potential, that it has been the *subject* of such processes, active in facilitating and reinforcing their power, and that it has to some degree been *subjectified* by a web of relations, including economic interests, political priorities, policy frameworks, professional models and influential texts, documents and management systems. Seeking out opportunities to “work the spaces of would-be hegemonic projects” of the sort described above in order to pursue more progressive goals of development or democratization may begin to offer scope for practitioners to become *active subjects* in challenging the inevitability of reductive models of practice (Clarke and Newman 2016).

Community development has always been a contested field and, as such, requires a skeptical outlook in order to keep that contestation alive: a state of mind which is always ready to question the taken for granted and to articulate and engage with the distinction between progressive and regressive traditions, models and purposes. Such conscious skepticism, however, can easily slip into unconscious cynicism or demoralization unless it is informed by sustained critique: a methodical habit of doubt, which systematically interrogates practice by reference to theoretical

understanding, and vice versa. To do this in the company of like-minded others begins to form a basis for rebuilding collective confidence and potential resistance.

Community development is always most hopeful when it is animated by the experiences and insights of diverse activists, groups and movements struggling for social justice. The focus of such movements tends to reflect or anticipate the changing political culture of the time, constituting potentially incendiary elements that can ignite alternative imaginaries from below. New antagonisms and sources of solidarity are produced while others appear to decline because of changes in material conditions, political contexts and wider social and cultural developments—and these elements are inextricably linked. In some vital respects, for example, democratic life has become significantly enlarged in recent decades by struggles over identity and difference: around gender, race, sexuality, the body, the mind, the emotions (e.g. Anthias and Yuval Davis 1992; Campbell and Oliver 1996; Butler 2011). At the same time, mass labor struggles have generally been less in evidence. In particular, the struggles for social and democratic inclusion by previously excluded groups—for the right to claim rights—has extended our understanding of the relationship between the personal and the political; between demands for recognition, redistribution and representation; between horizontal and vertical political ambitions; between the cultural and economic spheres of production and reproduction. Such struggles could also be said to have enlarged the community of equals in significant ways, and amplified the potential sources of solidarity in community development contexts.

However, moving from the margins to the mainstream creates new dilemmas in relation to potential co-option and manipulation, as many groups historically involved in struggles over welfare have found to their cost (Beresford 2016). For example, in the UK, arguments on the basis of equality are cynically deployed to justify savage welfare cuts to services for disabled people which will severely restrict their capacity for the kinds of social and political agency so intensely fought for by the disability movement and its allies (Campbell and Oliver 1996). In mental health, similarly, progressive developments that emerged from the anti-psychiatry and user-involvement movements, such as “well-being” and “recovery” models, are in danger of being appropriated and instrumentalized for economic purposes (Hanlon and Carlisle 2009). Nonetheless, such groups continue to “work the spaces” of policy—both the “invited spaces” and the “demanded spaces” of their own making. The Disability History and Mad History movements, for example, have sought to show how material circumstances and conditional rights are directly connected to historical subjugation and exclusion (O'Donnell 2008). Inevitably, these efforts in turn produce new tensions and real challenges, as the political and practical support required in order to realize their democratic potential can at any time be withdrawn on the basis of a spurious self-help rationality.

Although we have been made more aware over the preceding decades by the actions and insights of such movements that different social divisions of power intersect and interact in ways that mediate people's everyday experience, it has also become increasingly clear that material position continues to have the most decisive effect on life chances (e.g. Piketty 2014; Savage 2015). The obscene levels of inequality that currently persist within and between countries depend upon low-wage/low-public expenditure economies, leaving increasing numbers of people in poverty, demonized in public discourse and virtually excluded from public and democratic life (Wacquant et al. 2014).⁰ The re-emergence of social class as a primary explanatory framework for analyzing inequality, and now enriched in some vital respects by the politics of difference and identity, is therefore a necessary and welcome development (Shaw and Mayo, 2016).

Notwithstanding such advances, and the alliances they have forged, it has become clear that for community development there is a widening gap between the *position* it occupies within

the wider politics of contemporary state power and the democratic *disposition* it aspires to. It is also apparent that the growing set of contradictions described above is unlikely to be resolved (and may even be exacerbated) by ever-louder assertions of professional status and values alone. Alternatively, working *with* such contradictions as a key resource for understanding the choices and dilemmas of practice could begin to form the basis of a renewed paradigm. For example, anticipating problems with managerial versions of democratic participation *in advance* of community engagement would suggest the necessity of working with communities to seek spaces in which to engage strategically towards genuinely democratic ends in “invited” spaces or to strategically withdraw (see Table 3.2).

Enacting a politics of agency in key policy environments may give some groups the kind of leverage that could tilt the balance of power, however marginally, in their favor, and help to build the democratic disposition to demand genuine engagement strategies, or to seek alternative means of making democratic claims upon the state. An informed assessment of local political opportunity structures—enabling political programs, policies, actors or allies—would be crucial to this process (DeFillipis et al. 2010). It should also be obvious that strategic participation or withdrawal are not mutually exclusive, and at best may enhance democratic voice by connecting horizontal democratic processes and vertical structures of power in ways which strengthen both (see Shaw and Crowther 2014). In any case, the active practice of negotiating such spaces can, in itself, offer a form of critical agency, which is positively reinforcing. The development or renewal of models of practice, which assert and inform critical agency, emphasizing social solidarity over individualism is also an important intellectual, educational and political task (e.g. Popple 2015; Ledwith 2016).

Table 3.2 Spaces for participation

<i>Strategic participation: the invited spaces of policy</i>	<i>Strategic non-participation: the demanded spaces of politics</i>
Making structures work more democratically and effectively	Strengthening democratic processes outside of governance structure and mechanisms
Holding politicians and institutions to account	Encouraging and resourcing community engagement based on local issues/interests (arising from or raised in invited spaces as appropriate)
Ensuring processes have grassroots support: maintaining contact with “constituency”; broadening support base	Challenging the ways in which democracy is framed in policy and practice
Challenging manipulative or tokenistic procedures	Making demands on the state to resist the market
Capacity building for influence in challenging problem definitions and articulating alternatives	Developing counter-information which challenges dominant narratives; constructing new forms of knowledge
Sustaining a core representative group; supporting group and individual interactions with officials; preventing burnout	Providing a convivial forum for making relationships, building collective support, solidarity and identity
Testing the claims and limits of policy	Developing and articulating alternative points of view where and when appropriate

Conclusion: Practicing a Politics of Translation and Solidarity

It is apparent that community development as a progressive practice is experiencing a crisis of confidence, as a direct result of the various crises around which it coalesces. However, as Jessop (2015: 487) reminds us, “crises are moments of both danger and opportunity, for political contestation and learning as well as policy learning”. As we have seen, the dangers are manifold, but there is a strong case to be made for a form of community development that focuses on the potential for democratic contestation and challenge, and which it is still in “a pivotal spot” to catalyze (Ledwith 2016: 6). This potential can only be realized, however, if there is a willingness to stretch the boundaries of existing models of practice and to insist, as far as is feasible, that democratic engagement is treated as an open-ended political process rather than a tightly managed procedure. This will require a degree of engaged reflexivity that is realistic about the limits of community development yet open to its possibilities. The capacity to think critically and act politically is mutually reinforcing, and the community development role could be significant in encouraging and supporting marginalized groups to pursue their interests democratically.

It is also important (and potentially enlivening) to become alert to those moments when the contradictions of policy become markedly manifest, and to create the conditions for turning them into opportunities for learning and action. This readiness, or predisposition, to think and act democratically, could be decisive in generating opportunities for communities to “work the spaces of hegemonic projects” to their advantage (Clarke and Newman 2016).

Paradoxically, then, it could be argued that community development workers have become both more prized and more derided in public policy: vital in some respects to “refiguring the territory of government” through the political and economic enrolment of community (Rose 1996), yet highly circumscribed by managerial forms of democratic engagement that severely restrict the exercise of professional autonomy. In this sense, they have been subject to increasingly contradictory messages. This chapter argues for a dialectical approach to these complex reconfigurations of practice: reasserting the relationship between structure and agency (the way in which agency is always embedded in structure and vice versa) and between macro and micro relations of power. Such an approach arguably (re)positions the practitioner as the educational agent in a creative and critical process, and opens up the possibilities for a more coherent and convincing practice (Shaw and Martin 2000).

Practicing a Strategic Politics of Translation

Such an approach also suggests a pivotal role for practitioners as “translators”, mediating between policy and politics. As Clarke and Newman argue (2016: 39):

the idea of translation requires us to consider how policy is multiply reinterpreted and enacted in specific settings as it moves from national to local governments, from senior to front-line managers, from clients to contractors and so on.

This is not to suggest that translators or mediators are neutral agents, but rather that they occupy a strategic position at the interface of policy and politics which provides “a potential training ground for democracy” (Durose et al. 2015). Not least, such a position can afford privileged access to “the rules of the game” that constitute the contemporary governance regime, which can be “played” to the advantage of marginalized and embattled communities (Hastings and Matthews 2015). In addition, governance arrangements can offer routes through which particular constituencies gain vital access to political resources and experience.

Practicing a strategic politics of translation may also mean acquiring renewed fluency in translating between different levels and scales of action. Community development is arguably in a prime position to help project political values onto a bigger stage. For example, daily experience of exclusion and dispossession through benefit cuts, housing or employment at the local level can become emblematic if translated effectively into wider debates about “fairness”. At the same time, practitioners may find that they have to expand their own vocabularies in order to translate between the rational and the emotional: to hear and amplify those voices speaking to the moment, and to deep concerns and dissatisfactions, and to make the necessary connections.

Practicing an Inclusive Politics of Solidarity

Fluency in translation also calls for a renewed commitment to an inclusive politics of solidarity. This concerns the extent to which community development identifies with, and remains open to being animated by, the concerns, aspirations and interests of the people it is meant to serve. Of course this will depend at least to some degree on the extent to which practitioners are willing and able to carve out and facilitate convivial and creative spaces for people to come together in ways which allow them to explore collectively their own concerns and aspirations.

Eleanor Jupp (2012) is perceptive in suggesting that in order to practice a politics of solidarity, practitioners need to distinguish between inward- and outward-looking forms of engagement—and do both. On one hand, sustaining community groups through “sociability and care” (p. 3035) by cultivating collective identity and capacity: building skills, establishing relationships of mutual support, creating solidaristic bonds, developing creativity and critique; on the other, engaging with policy imperatives and “talking with officials” which demands tenacity and perseverance—“the politics of patience” (p. 3038). Her point is simply that people are more likely to sustain interest in challenging power in the long term if they are sustained personally in the short term. Such sustaining practices are probably more necessary than ever to counteract the politics of fear which permeates much mainstream debate.

It is clear therefore that both more expansive and more nuanced conceptions of activism need to be accommodated: more expansive in the sense of looking beyond the bland and restrictive forms which are envisaged in official engagement strategies, and more nuanced in acknowledging that people “do” resistance in different ways (Scott 1990). As Meade and Shaw (2011: 13) argue: “rather than assuming that communities and individuals . . . are pathologically apathetic or disengaged, we need . . . to grasp what captures people’s imagination” and to resist what deadens it.

Finally, in rethinking community development, I would argue that it is vital to resist professional protectionism and, instead, to seek new alliances which can consolidate and amplify the sources of solidarity available in difficult times. Interested allies from diverse backgrounds, professions and disciplines can extend or generate new imaginaries, sustaining a solidaristic form of “intellectual connectivity” which can support and enrich community development in theory and practice (Durose et al. 2015). It remains the case, however, that no other profession is explicitly charged with the task of facilitating democratic participation in community settings, however restricted or manipulated that process may have become. This strategic position still gives community development a distinctive and legitimate role in translating between policy and politics, enlarging and amplifying solidarities, and reviving the disposition for democracy, which politicizes practice. This chapter argues that such an approach may also be decisive in the continuing struggle to ensure that community development survives as the progressive, democratic practice it aspires to be.

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4

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

An Australian Example

Jennifer Onyx

Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship between grassroots action on the one hand and the response by the state on the other. The relationship is complex and shifts with time. The thesis of the argument here is that community development-driven social change may be highly productive within a supportive governance environment, but that the underlying rules and principles of community development are non-commensurate with a neoliberal-driven bureaucratic regime of the state, such as currently exists in Australia. Grassroots demand for participation in the development of social policy is a cumulative process, which takes time and persistence, and which may score a success in the right governance context, within a supportive political climate and a reforming government in power. Such success provides the protagonists with a seat at the table. However it also means that the protagonists of new policy must enter negotiations within existing structures. They must play by the rules of the existing government policy structure and protocols. Inevitably the grassroots protagonists are not trained or skilled in the terms of the game, and as such must become professionalized in order to play the game competently. This requires gaining the technical skills and knowledge, with appropriate formal qualifications. Perhaps more importantly, government policy is likely to change over time and the underlying rules and values of government and the community development process are often quite different and at times non-commensurate. The results of negotiation may, with good will on both sides, prove successful in creating significant advances in policy, but they are also likely to require considerable compromises in the form of the community development action. Over time the cumulative effect of these compromises is to weaken the force of the new pro-community development policies and procedures and ultimately to “tame them”, that is to incorporate the new policy within existing bureaucratic guidelines and in doing so to mute their effect. At that point there will be a need to start a new cycle of community-driven activism and demands.

This chapter adopts the following structure. The first section provides a brief overview of a major case study that illustrates the rise and final closure of one of the most significant community development programs in Australia’s history, that of the Area Assistance Scheme (AAS) in the state of New South Wales (NSW), which lasted for 30 years—from 1979 to 2009. Section two then analyzes the core features of community development in Australia as enacted in that case.

The third section provides an overview of the NSW State Government bureaucratic practice as it increasingly embraced neoliberal principles during the 1990s. The final section then discusses the implication of the interaction of these two quite different paradigms.

The Area Assistance Scheme

The Area Assistance Scheme (AAS) was arguably one of the most successful community-based schemes in the history of Australia; it was created by the NSW State Government and repeated evaluations recommended its continuation. It was responsible for the creation of hundreds of local social services of various kinds, including many local community centers with a specifically community development brief. It entailed a deep engagement by local organizations in both the policy planning and the funding of local services. However, despite its acknowledged positive results, successive NSW State Governments through the 1990s attempted to dismantle it. The case study illustrates both the promise, but also the difficulties of engaging in a community development program involving a partnership between community and state.¹

The Historical Context

Australia provides three levels of government: First, the Australian Commonwealth Government, which provides overall governance from the capital, Canberra; the second comprises six State Governments (of which NSW is the most populous), as well as Australian territories, including the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. The third level comprises a great many local governments under the control of their State or Territory Government. These local governments, being “closest to the people” are the most accessible to local citizens. However, until the period discussed in this paper, local governments everywhere were primarily concerned with “roads, rates and rubbish”, that is with formal material infrastructure but not social services. The years 1972–1975 saw the reforming Commonwealth Whitlam Labor Government for the first time acknowledge that urban development in Australia was a concern for the Commonwealth Government.

Two Commonwealth initiatives provided the ground in which the state-based AAS would be planted—the establishment of the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of (local government) Councils (WSROC) and the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP) with its Regional Councils for Social Development (RCSD). These regional councils were community based with a strong community development orientation.

Local government is the oldest form of democratic government in Australia and is modeled on the English system but with more limited responsibilities. The Australian Constitution in 1901 did not provide an independent base for local government, which remained subject to control by the respective State Government. However, under Prime Minister Whitlam, the Commonwealth Government encouraged local government to take a central role in the development of social services. Local government would be largely limited to a facilitator or catalyst, as local government itself had limited resources. In 1975 the Commonwealth Government of Whitlam lost power, and with it the broader social vision seemed lost. However, when the Australian Assistance Plan was dismantled, the new NSW State Labor Government picked up the momentum in relation to urban development and planning. The new State Department of Planning implemented the first NSW Area Assistance Scheme (or what was called the AAS in western Sydney at the beginning of 1979), having been intensively lobbied by the newly formed local government peak body WSROC. The focus of the following discussion is the AAS.

The Scheme (AAS) had some features of the AAP and sought to address some of the same issues, but this time local government provided an already established structure through which to operate immediately, unlike the RCSDs which were community based and took time to establish. Like the AAP it placed local and regional community development at the center of its design. In the mid-1980s the scheme was extended to several other regions of NSW where rapid urban development was taking place.

The Western Sydney AAS was a funding program but it was a good deal more than that. It aimed to provide a multifaceted attack on social disadvantage in the rapidly expanding urban areas of western Sydney. By supporting the development of community organizational infrastructure and local government social planning capacity, along with the funding of services, it also set up a platform for the ongoing planning and development of facilities and services into the future. The processes whereby funding was allocated and services established were crucial in meeting the broader and longer-term objectives of the Scheme.

The AASs, operating in nine jurisdictions, had a number of innovative features, including the provision of professional support by Community Project Officers (CPOs) in local government councils; a regional planning and funding committee (RRC); the direct participation in the planning and funding process of State Government, local government and community representatives from across the region; and a holistic approach to planning and service delivery that went beyond the brief of any one government department.

The original *Principles of the AAS* specifically included the following; all but one remained much the same throughout the life of the scheme:

- Promote the better use of local and regional resources both physical and organizational, to meet priority needs;
- Aid cooperation and coordination between all agencies involved in community development;
- Aid the review of restrictive regulations that prevent low cost, private sector solutions to improving social services (this was later dropped);
- Develop community organizational skills;
- Increase an awareness of local and regional needs and promote regional resource planning and coordination;
- Aim at the equitable distribution of resources within the region.

The governance, or decision-making process in each region included three main steps:

- A local government ranking of projects was based on the priority needs of the Scheme, project applications, local community demographic and social profiles, feedback from local consultations and knowledge of community groups.
- Recommendations for funding were made by a tripartite *regional* committee (RRC) based on the applications, community profiles and a presentation by local government representatives. The RRC was made up of one third State Government representatives from relevant departments, one third local government representatives (selected through WSROC in western Sydney) and one third elected community representatives.
- The ultimate authority for all AAS decisions rested with the State Minister for Planning. For most of the life of the AAS, the Minister accepted the recommendations of the RRC. On only one occasion did the Minister interfere with this, ignoring the RRC recommendations and inserting his own funding decisions. This event triggered a major reaction

across the western Sydney region, triggering a “save our AAS” campaign, which was in part responsible for a subsequent election loss of several seats in the region. What this event demonstrated was that while the State Government had ultimate decision-making power, nonetheless “people power” could prevail.

The Role of the CPO

The role of the Community Projects Officer (CPO) was seen as critical in the success and uniqueness of the AAS on a number of levels. Subsidized by the NSW State Government, embedded in local councils and responsible for operationalizing the AAS in local communities, the CPO was uniquely placed as a conduit, facilitator, advocate, resource and monitor. For the NSW State Government, funding CPOs represented a small investment for a significant return in terms of responsive service provision, engagement and planning buy-in with local councils. For councils, the funding represented some resourcing of community development work which was just beginning to be adopted by local government, and participation in decision making about the allocation of funds at a local and regional level. For local communities the CPO acted as a unique local contact and resource to support and guide projects towards funding. Linking the subsidy to the coordination of the AAS created a mechanism for state and local government to converse and share planning priorities, and for the community to access a new and locally focused resource pool. This relationship was not always a friendly one, but it was one which worked effectively for 30 years.

As community development workers, CPOs facilitated the AAS process on the ground and they were ideally placed to engage with community groups and organizations trying to navigate the development of projects. In many cases CPOs were involved with projects during their formative stages, with some working with groups for up to 12 months before a project was ready for an AAS application to be submitted. Once projects were running, the CPO provided ongoing support and had detailed knowledge about the operation of projects. This relationship-based approach to project development and implementation meant that in addition to working with applicants ready to submit proposed projects, extensive and broad-based community development work was undertaken with a range of community groups. This work may or may not have led to a successful AAS grant, but made an impact in relation to overall community infrastructure and service development. For example, several organizations could be linked to each other and to external networks, where alternative resources may exist. For funding applicants, the relationship with the local CPO was seen as critical.

A key part of this community development role was the development of extensive local knowledge and a detailed understanding of the origins, aims and potential benefits of grassroots projects applying for AAS funding. During ranking committee deliberations, CPOs were often able to draw on this knowledge to answer questions or provide background information about each project and its relationship to local community life. Ranking committees were able to utilize this knowledge in decision making, and community groups and organizations felt a high level of trust in the process because of their trust in the CPO.

As the AAS established itself and became more widely supported by councils, CPOs were often able to act as catalysts for developing better relationships between council workers and elected representatives, where previously there had been little or no contact. As councillors were representatives, alongside community members, on local and regional ranking committees, CPOs were able to engage in discussions and provide information to council about community needs and priorities directly.

Reactions by the State

The AAS was initiated by the state, with strong support from Western Sydney Regional Organisation of (local government) Councils (WSROC). Initially State cabinet and the Department of Planning, which had responsibility for the scheme, regarded the AAS as having great potential to solve increasing social infrastructure gaps in new urban areas. However, despite the repeated positive evaluations the AAS received over time, and despite formal endorsement by State cabinet, nonetheless there was at first disinterest, then increasing resistance to the scheme by those mainstream State Government service departments most closely associated with it, and ultimately the Scheme was folded into existing state programs. On the other hand, individual local government councils at first responded with some skepticism, but ultimately became strong advocates for its continuation and extension.

In the initial years of the scheme, some State Government representatives on the regional council showed little interest in the scheme. Mainstream departments showed no commitment to picking up the funding of those successful projects requiring ongoing funding. However, following the evaluation of the initial three year pilot, in 1982 the State cabinet determined that the scheme should continue in an expanded format, and that the appropriate mainstream departments should be required to pick up ongoing funding of successful projects. Until the “pick up” funding decision, most State departmental personnel had not understood the potential of AAS to shift priorities and resources. Although the Department of Community Services (DOCS) had a place at the decision-making table through membership of the RRC, its officers strongly objected to the influence this had on their own policies and programs. The relationship between the Scheme and that Department remained uncomfortable.

The 1990s saw a succession of changes made to the scheme, in which the DOCS achieved greater control. Eventually, after a number of changes from the original format, in 2005 the government transferred the remains of the Scheme from the Department of Planning to the DOCS. It was widely perceived that DOCS narrowed the funding to meet its own departmental needs, statutory responsibilities and priorities rather than the needs and priorities of residents in new estates and disadvantaged areas. Recommendations from revised regional committees were increasingly ignored in favor of funding for community-based social entrepreneurship projects. In 2009 the program was closed.

The Nature of Community Development in Australia

This section identifies the core principles of community development in Australia, but also explores the ways in which the concept has been used differently within government policy. Community development as a concept is somewhat contested, mainly because its nature is viewed quite differently, whether from the perspective of the citizen/practitioner on the ground, or from the perspective of government policy.

Viewed from the perspective of the citizen, the principles and practice of community development (McArdle 1989; Kenny 1994) can be articulated as:

- Decision making by those most affected by outcomes of the decision: the subsidiarity principle;
- Personal empowerment and control by individual citizens over their own life: the empowerment principle;
- The development of ongoing structures and processes by which groups can meet their own needs: the structural principle.

Community development is therefore about shifting power to confront and challenge inequality and disempowerment (Rawsthorne and Howard 2011). Community development seeks to give people “power over”: personal choices and life chances; need definition; ideas; institutions; resources; economic activity; and reproduction (Ife 2001).

The values of community development from this perspective involve working in ways that create an environment and processes for fairness to be enacted. The values are those of respect, human rights, voice and inclusion of people at the margins as much as those at the center. The processes are those of shared information, participation, negotiation and collaboration by those affected by the decision.

Empowerment is more than a set of values. At a practical level it entails an increase in skills, knowledge and confidence, the capacity for collective action to confront discrimination, to enable learning and to create organizations and groups that are open and democratic. In this way, it is possible to link and build bridges across differences and enable communities to influence decisions affecting their lives (Rawsthorne and Howard 2011). Necessarily this process entails social change driven by grassroots action. It means that the action of citizens will guide policy at the broader level. Citizen-driven institutions or organizations become the vehicle through which citizen-identified needs are addressed, assuming that the necessary resources are available.

From the perspective of government, community development can look quite different. As Kenny (1994) notes, community development itself is open to manipulation in the hands of powerful elites, and is susceptible to redefinition by state funding bodies. From the perspective of government, it is not about devolution of control of the planning or policy environment, but about devolution of responsibility for its enactment (Herbert-Cheshire 2000). Framed within a neoliberal political position, community development is about personal responsibility, self-help and competition. Both community and state perspectives emphasize the development of local-level capacity, skills and initiative, but in the case of neoliberal government policy this capacity building is aimed at self-sufficiency and reduced reliance on government resources. While the rhetoric of empowerment remains, there is in fact no intention on the part of government to relinquish power. Rather the emphasis shifts to one of governance, an indirect form of control in the Foucauldian sense (Foucault 1980), in which state power is exercised not through coercive force, but by governing through community (Herbert-Cheshire 2000). Individuals and groups are encouraged to become entrepreneurial to achieve their needs, but all within the context of enacting existing government policy.

However, the reality on the ground is not likely to reflect either perspective in pure terms. Given a sparsity of resources, there is likely to be ongoing contestation for desired outcomes, both between various interests within the community itself, but also between the collective community voice on the one hand and government policy on the other. The final outcome is never assured.

Social Capital

Social capital is a key concept underlying community development, both as the major resource enabling its formation, but also as one of the most important outcomes of such community development. In recent discourse, both government and grassroots perspectives on community development emphasize the importance of creating and strengthening existing levels of social capital. Social capital is seen as an essential ingredient in community cohesion and well-being. Studies indicate that regions and groups measuring high in social capital also have a variety of positive outcomes, beyond economic advantage, such as improved health and well-being, reduced levels of crime and better educational outcomes (Onyx and Bullen 2000; Putnam 2000;

Halpern 2005). Social capital was defined by Putnam as “those features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (1993: 167). From this perspective, social capital is a basic resource used to maintain and enhance community cohesion and collective action in promoting community-wide civic health. The central focus is the productive aspect of social capital; working cooperatively and collaboratively, in the construction of active citizenship. Not all scholars have agreed with this perspective however. For Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), social capital was a core strategy in the struggle for dominance within a social field. His focus was not on collaborative action but on the struggle for power and wealth, in particular the strategies adopted by elite groups to maintain their relative advantage. Other scholars occupy the middle ground, acknowledging the capacity of social capital to be both a productive resource and a strategy that could be used by marginal groups in their struggle for economic survival and human rights (Woolcock and Narayan 2000; Halpern 2005; Onyx et al. 2007).

Despite these different approaches, there is consensus that social capital must be defined in terms of interlinking networks that are durable and mutual, with norms and sanctions to enforce their interactions. Social capital bonds and bridges embed individuals and organizations within the broader community and act as a resource and enabler to generate action beyond the individual or organization. One further central characteristic of social capital is a sense of personal and collective efficacy, or *social agency*. The development of social capital requires the active and willing engagement of individuals within a participative organization or community. Social capital refers to people as creators, not as victims.

While Bourdieu privileges economic capital as the primary source of wealth and power, other scholars are more interested in the interdependencies between capitals. In particular, Schuller argues for the interdependency between social and human capital, where human capital is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for example, as encompassing skills, competences and qualifications (Schuller 2007). The value of social capital depends largely on its linkage to other capitals, especially human capital, just as human capital requires access to social capital in order to actualize its potential. Both are important individually but are enhanced by the presence of the other.

The Role of Community Organizations

Third-sector, non-profit, community organizations have been held up as exemplars of sites and processes for nurturing active citizens (Kenny et al. 2015). This is partly because as mediators between state and business, they have the capacity to “give voice” and encourage initiative, or collective agency. They are seen as key to the development of social capital. But whether or not these community-based organizations are able to fulfill that potential will also depend on the kind of resourcing and support provided by various levels of government, as well as other sectors including the informal networks of family and friends. In this context it is important to realize that these community-based organizations, within the Australian context, are normally contracted to provide services, usually on behalf of State or Commonwealth Governments. Those funded under the AAS were also able to further initiate their own actions as approved by their respective Boards of Management.

A key contribution of local community organizations is the provision of services and support that might otherwise not be available. Indeed governments routinely fund organizations to do just that. However, it is now widely recognized, including by government, that grassroots organizations do much more than that, by generating and preserving the social capital of the community, capital that is instantly drawn on in times of emergency such as bush fire or flood

(for example Onyx 2014). A cohesive and effective community is one that has adequate economic, human and social capital. An organization with effective social impact is one that begins with a welcoming culture, one that involves participants in its activities at all levels, one that generates citizenship values, wider social networks and individual skills of its members (Onyx 2014). However, no organization is truly self-sufficient; inevitably, if local organizations are to fulfill their mission, they need support from external sources, and in particular from governments at various levels. But dependency can create a power imbalance. Of crucial importance therefore is the kind of control governments impose in return for nurturing support. Or put another way, is genuine partnership possible in a context of resource imbalance? Does the community's social and human capital balance the government's legal and financial capital?

Community Development and AAS

In terms of community development principles, the role of the AAS can be summarized as follows:

The Subsidiary Principle: How were Decisions Made and by Whom?

Fundamental to a participatory planning process is the belief that local people, those who experience the need, or the deprivation of necessary services, should be the ones to best articulate those needs. Several published studies of the AAS, involving interviews with participants (e.g. Bamforth et al. 2016) confirmed the argument presented by Chaskin and colleagues that "local residents represent sources of information and insight unavailable to outside professionals" (2012: 869). Within the AAS decisions were made at multiple levels, involving an extended process of dialogue and negotiation with many and diverse stakeholders. The emphasis was on collaborative processes, sharing of information and resources, in an attempt to come to as wide a consensus as possible.

The decision-making process began within the community itself, as individual groups developed an initial proposal, and then shared these within a community consultation process. As some participants noted, the political nature of this process was well acknowledged, with some community groups coming with a specific project idea and then influencing the process in support of their idea. Regardless however, the aim of the community consultation was to identify shared local priorities. The CPO played a key role in facilitating and coordinating this process, but not in actually making decisions.

The Empowerment Principle: Development of Skills and Capacity of Citizens to Control Their Own Lives

As the scheme developed over time, there was a marked increase in capacity within local government and the community to organize. This involved increasing sophistication in skills of lobbying and negotiation as well as formal skills of management. As services developed, ordinary citizens were increasingly able to meet their diverse needs.

The Structural Principle: Development of Ongoing Structures and Processes

The structural principle was evident in two ways within the AAS. The first was the way the AAS itself was structured. The second was the kind of projects and organizations that were funded.

The structure and processes embedded in the AAS enabled diverse participation and democratic practices across the region. The first level of structured decision making occurred within the local community, supported by the CPO as noted above. The next level occurred within local government where the local priorities were debated and decided by a committee usually comprising elected community representatives and elected councillors. Again the CPO played a facilitating role in this process.

At the regional level, overall priorities and funding recommendations were decided by the Regional Rating Committee (RRC). Each funding round began with a day in which each CPO would present an overview of the needs and statistical database from the local area profile. Following discussion of the information and emerging priority needs, the RRC examined each application for funding. As the RRC itself was a tripartite body, no single stakeholder could dominate the decision-making process and the only way forward was a rational decision based on the available evidence. Conflict at times occurred and was dealt with reasonably openly, sometimes with negotiations behind the scenes as facilitated by the Scheme coordinator, sometimes within the meeting itself.

The structures and processes of AAS facilitated the establishment of particular types of projects and organizations—those interested in building community capacities, facilitating community development and contributing to social capital reserves. The foundation of organizations and projects in communities enabled this social capital to “value add” on to government funding. Community participation was a way of demonstrating *care*, informed by trust and reciprocity (Rawsthorne and Howard 2011).

The Key Principles behind the State Reaction

This section traces the paradigm shift during the 1990s when the State Government moved from a relatively open, supportive governance role for the provision of social services, to an increasingly focused neoliberal approach paradoxically involving not less but more tight control of the form of service contracts.

In 1979 the Department of Planning, which initiated the Scheme, was not particularly interested in maintaining tight control over the way the Scheme worked, as long as it did indeed appear to meet its objectives. Community development, as defined by the state, was seen to be a useful method of achieving essential services at minimal cost, by mobilizing the efforts and resources of citizens. However, the mainstream service departments, and particularly the Department of Community Services, strongly objected to the way the AAS operated, and its continued criticism of the scheme gradually over time had an increasing influence on the way funding decisions were made. In part these criticisms arose because the operation of the AAS violated deep-seated bureaucratic rules. Formal government bureaucracy required the Weberian principles of hierarchy, based on line-management and rational, impersonal decision making removed from personal influence (Weber 1978). The lack of hierarchical authority within the AAS sat uncomfortably with these requirements. In particular, the strong involvement of CPOs was seen as producing an inevitable conflict of interest.

However, the greatest threat to the AAS came with the strong ideological shift by all major political parties to a neoliberal economic agenda during the 1990s. Increasingly this ideology drew on the logic of the market, and was based on the assumption that market choices were based on individual self-interest. That is, the consumer chooses the best service to suit their needs while the best service survives on competition with other services. Where the consumer is not in a position to purchase a required service, the state acts as surrogate purchaser. What is crucial is a separation between purchaser and provider.

The purchaser–provider split is intended to achieve several advances. One concerns the reform of the public sector itself, and the belief that government should become smaller, outcome focused and efficient. The second is the greater capacity of the purchaser to monitor the provision of services at a distance and hold the provider accountable. Vested interests of the provider can be subordinated to the needs of the consumer. The purchaser is thus in a better control position to ensure maximum return for money expended, quality control of services, and equity of provision (Blundell and Murdock 1997).

This new managerial hegemony pervaded the third sector in many OECD countries, including the United Kingdom (UK) and New Zealand (NZ), as well as Australia (Kenny et al. 2015). There were several key elements to the new policy direction, including:

- A move to tighter specification;
- The increasingly legalistic nature of funding agreements;
- A perceived increase in competition for state funding within and across sectors (including for-profit organizations);
- Pressure to adopt business values and practices.

In NZ, a very similar process was underway, with major shifts in policy-driven funding process, as outlined by Smith (1996):

The resulting changes which have had an impact upon the funding of voluntary sector organizations are a heightened interest in various forms of contracting; the pervasive expectation that explicit agreements for performance of agreed objectives at specified standards of quantity, quality, and cost will underpin all funding relationships; the disaggregation of government departments into autonomous businesses, including those with explicit purchaser roles; efforts to make all businesses, including voluntary sector ones, more responsive to their consumers, and the introduction of the financial management system for government departments with its emphasis on output and outcome reporting leading to increased transparency of the effects of funding decisions.

Smith 1996: 8

With the expansion of community services during the 1990s (partly as the result of successful lobbying through the AAS and other grassroots actions), there was a concerted effort to bring non-profits under the control of these new government policies (Butcher and Dalton 2014). Funding became increasingly constrained by contracts for specific services that were required under what is known in Australia as competition policy. In addition, the basic tenets of neoliberalism in Australia have been translated into bureaucratic regulations that emphasized standards of efficiency, performance and accountability to the state. Typically, the department determines the types, levels and location of services through its own planning/political mechanisms, usually without consultation with service providers, and awards contracts for the provision of services according to a competitive tendering process. Competition favors the more efficient over the less efficient. Larger organizations gain efficiencies of scale, and from the funding bodies' point of view are seen as more reliable, with firm business risk management protocols in place. Organizations are thus driven to grow or amalgamate to survive. Engaging with a few larger providers is also thought to reduce transaction costs to government (Butcher and Dalton 2014).

The community funding schemes that replaced the AAS were marked by several contrasting features:

- While the AAS operated holistically across departmental jurisdictions, new projects were required to meet narrow social service specifications as defined by the department.
- There was no guarantee that any organization would receive recurrent funding, and indeed most projects were required to demonstrate the capacity to become self-sufficient within the foreseeable future.
- Funding decisions were made within standard competitive tendering processes, requiring separation of the submission (provider) and funding allocation (purchaser) process. That meant that all tenders were treated as “commercial in confidence” and not subject to any professional advice or collaboration prior to funding decisions.
- Funded services were required to meet the specifications of particular departmental service outcomes. Such services were required to have universal application, preferably for a large geographical area and a generalized target population (for example, for all homeless people rather than specifically for women or youth). Small, local, targeted services were not supported.
- Accountability mechanisms were strengthened, requiring often onerous reporting to the funding body relating to financial expenditure and also program performance. This was an extreme version of principal/agent form of accountability.

Since 2005, state policy moved even further in this direction, with an increased emphasis on encouraging social enterprise in which ultimately organizations can make sufficient profit to sustain themselves within the market (Paredo and McLean 2006). While the emphasis is on business practices and profitability, some community organizations were able to develop hybrid programs using social enterprise as part of a larger community development program, particularly where some alternative funding was also available (Kenny et al. 2015)

The Effects of Non-Commensurate Rules

These State Government rules for determining funding priorities sit in stark contrast to those based on community development principles, such as those underpinning the AAS. The essence of the AAS scheme process rested on collaboration and cooperation between all stakeholders. It deliberately fostered a climate of mutual support, a sharing of information as widely as possible, as well as of resources. It involved diverse and multiple levels of decision making. It also involved key stakeholders working and advising across levels of decision making. In particular, CPOs were required to work with community groups to develop applications, with elected local government councillors to prioritise applications, and with the Regional Rating Committee (RRC) to assess regional priorities. They thus held a crucial coordinating and gatekeeping role. However, it is also true that every decision at every level rested with a number of people, having collective influence on the outcome.

By contrast, for the state, market models of planning and funding depend on competition. In particular, when a government program is to be provided, tenders are called for and assessed on an objective basis with all submissions being treated as “commercial in confidence” according to strict probity protocols. That means for example that department workers at the coalface may not assist or advise applicants because that would represent a “conflict of interest”.

Indeed, one of the recurrent criticisms of AAS in the latter years was the prevalence of perceived or actual “conflict of interest”. Both potential and perceived conflicts of interest were seen to occur in relation to the proximity of those participating in decision-making processes, both to each other and to the projects potentially funded, and in particular the role of the CPO in relation to the ranking committee, project development and support.

The notion of “conflict of interest” needs to be unpacked. It may in its worst face reflect corruption and fraud, whereby one person or a small cartel influences the decision-making process to their private benefit, and against the public interest. In the case of AAS, there was no evidence of this occurring at any level or time. There was, however plenty of evidence of deliberate collusion, between parties and across levels of decision making. That is, in the interests of collaborative processes and in order to achieve the best possible outcome, people openly and deliberately worked together. This sometimes produced conflict, but nearly always a mutually acceptable outcome for the community. There was not a “conflict of interests” but a “conversion of shared interests”, and one reason why the scheme was regarded so highly by the participants. However, in the interests of probity, both the process and the outcomes of all deliberations and outcomes must be transparent and open to public scrutiny.

The increased emphasis on reporting mechanisms within neoliberal state models also created vastly increased and onerous administrative requirements for local organizations. It became increasingly important to use sophisticated tender application formats to compete against large for-profits or charities. Financial and performance management also required professionalized management skills. This led to an increase in managerial training for project coordinators but made it more difficult for ordinary citizens to “enter the market”.

As a direct consequence of the application of neoliberal funding rules, a number of contracts that were formerly held by small local organizations within the AAS were transferred to a few large, state-wide charities which were managed from outside the region, and which provided standardized services not necessarily appropriate to the local context.

Reflections

Looking back on the history of the AAS we can see several outstanding features that may be generalized more broadly to other similar movements of the time, and which suggest important lessons for state–community relationships.

First, like several other major Australian social movements of the 1970s, the strong and concerted push for citizen participation in planning and funding of community services finally found a sympathetic and supportive partner in the State Labor Government of the day. Other major Australian social movements of that time similarly were able to gain real traction through that reformist government, notably the push for Indigenous land rights (Norman 2015).

This movement was extremely successful in stimulating a rapid influx of resources, huge enthusiasm and engagement by citizens, and many new services which have grown and remain strong today. They made a big difference to the communities concerned.

Part of this success entailed “a seat at the table” of government deliberations. Those involved in the AAS process were taken seriously. This marked a shift in local politics which also remains to this day; citizens expect to be consulted and to be part of the negotiations for new programs. However, there is an important distinction between “popular spaces” for negotiation and deliberation set up and controlled by citizens themselves, and “invited spaces” set up by state actors at which citizens are invited to participate (Cornwall 2004). In these invited spaces the rules are those of the state; the relevant government department sets the agenda, determines the language used, what behavior is acceptable and who plays (Taylor 2011; Kenny et al. 2015). Over time, participatory practices are likely to lose their power as they gradually become incorporated into existing state practices (Cooke and Kothari 2001).

This is what happened to the AAS. Citizens were able to enter some invited spaces. But with this success came a caveat: if you are accepted as part of the game, then you must play by the rules. The rules were those of the public sector, and set within an increasingly neoliberal

bureaucratic frame. The new rules emphasized accountability for taxpayers' money, an emphasis on universalism, effective and efficient provision of services, strong probity rules, all subject to evidence-based evaluation. In practice, the rules of competitive tendering for public funds required a separation of those allocating funds from those making submissions. Competitive tendering disallowed any potential conflict of interest in the form of collaborative advice given to competitors or between competitors.

Unfortunately, in the beginning few in the community were trained in the skills required to ensure such due diligence. Indeed, the values of grassroots collaboration actively challenged these bureaucratic rules and management practices. The result was a clash of cultures, and accusations of mismanagement, special interests or even potential fraud.

As the AAS matured it came increasingly under the control of state requirements for good governance, as defined by these rules. Nonetheless those involved in the development of community services became increasingly well trained and skilled in playing the game by those rules. But in the process, much of the original vision and passion of the founding years of AAS became muted or lost, at least among the newer players.

Ultimately, the new merged with the old and the AAS, as we knew it, ceased. It was not destroyed by "evil" bureaucrats or the increasingly pervasive neoliberal ideology. Rather it became incorporated into the larger state apparatus. Much that was achieved remains as a permanent marker of good community development practice in community services. But that era is over. This of course is not the end of the story. A new era of grassroots activism is now emerging, one that is now more sophisticated and skilled in negotiating a space to be heard (Kenny et al. 2015). These activists can use their place at the table to continue negotiations, even to change some of the rules. But they also need the courage to move on their own initiative, collectively, with integrity, to find new ways of meeting the needs of the community. The AAS has provided many lessons, and good role models for how to do that.

Note

- 1 Material for this case study was drawn from the author's experience as evaluator of a pilot scheme, together with material compiled with a team of researchers in preparation for a book on the subject (Bamforth et al. 2016).

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5

DID PUBLIC POLICY KILL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Garth Nowland-Foreman

This chapter traces the foundations and growth of community development in Aotearoa New Zealand, including its particular historic engagement with government support and sponsorship. Does this necessarily promote a more passive or collaborative style of community development? When public policy turns and becomes inimical to community development under a neoliberal ideology of New Public Management, what does this hold for the future?

A Fertile Ground

There are around 100,000 non-profit organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand. While service provision through a non-profit entity should not be conflated with “community development”, it is of note that 90 percent of these organizations do not employ any staff and are totally reliant on volunteers (Sanders et al. 2008: 13), suggesting a significant proportion of “flax roots”—local, bottom-up, self-organized—action by people. Each month, a third of New Zealanders over the age of 14 years volunteer through an organization, and two-thirds do some unpaid work outside their immediate household. Sixty-four percent of New Zealanders belong to a club, voluntary group, church or *Marae* (Māori¹ meeting house for religious, ceremonial and community gatherings), with 6 percent belonging to four or more such groups. One in five is involved in organizing or attending these groups’ committee meetings. Most contact with fellow group members is face-to-face (75 percent), and most members had frequent contact with fellow group members (at least once a week for 59 percent) (Statistics NZ 2001, 2015). The proportion of volunteers in the non-profit workforce (at 67 percent) is unusually high compared to other countries—50 percent higher than for Australia, and for a 41-country average, even 15 percent higher than the Nordic countries (Sanders et. al. 2008: 13).

Furthermore, the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project categorizes groups of non-profit organizations into those primarily offering:

- *Service* functions, which involve the delivery of direct services such as education, health, housing, social services and the like, and;

- *Expressive* functions, which involve activities that provide avenues for the expression of cultural, religious, professional or policy values and interests. Included here are civic and advocacy; arts, culture and recreation; environmental protection; and business, labour, religious and professional representation.

Based on the size of their full-time equivalent workforce (paid and volunteer), “expressive organizations” comprise just on half of the non-profit sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. This is a third bigger than the proportion in Australia, and than the proportion in a 39-country average (for which data are available), only surpassed by the Nordic countries where 57 percent of the non-profit workforce is in “expressive organizations”.

Sixty-nine percent of New Zealanders also express high levels of trust in others—putting Aotearoa New Zealand in the top third of OECD countries, 8 percent higher than Australia and 17 percent above the OECD average (OECD 2014: 45). This important indicator of social capital is widely accepted as crucial in developing strong communities. The deep indigenous heritage of *Iwi* (tribe), *hapū* (sub-tribe) and *whānau* (extended family) also makes for strong communal bonds, which facilitate *whakapapakari a-iwi* (development of the peoples). Thus it is no surprise that Māori do voluntary and other unpaid work outside the immediate household at significantly higher rates than non-Māori (Statistics NZ 2001).

Aotearoa New Zealand clearly offers fertile territory for “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems”—the United Nations definition of *community development* (Retrieved December 2015 from <https://unterm.un.org/UNTERM/Display/record/UNHQ/NA/bead44b0-ac66-48f8-86b1-f78c6c334da>).

“With Silver Bells and Cockle Shells”—Taking Stock of the Range of Species

Loomis (2012: 8) has modified Marshall Ganz’s typology of different community development models with the Aotearoa New Zealand context in mind. It is based on a two-by-two matrix. One axis relates to the “product” produced or its *purpose* (either to produce an identifiable service/community activity at one end or address an injustice/policy/structural change at the other). The other axis relates to who initiates and especially the *locus of control* (either within the particular community at one end or from outside the community at the other end; Table 5.1).

As illustrated in Table 5.1, this generates four quadrants that equate to the four types of community activity that Ganz also identifies from the literature, and which he calls:

- *Community development*² (initiated/controlled within the community and producing an identifiable service/community activity);
- *Community organizing* (initiated/controlled within the community and campaigning on an issue);
- *Service delivery* (initiated/controlled outside the community and enlisted to produce an identifiable service/community activity);
- *Professional advocacy* (initiated/controlled outside the community and enlisted to campaign on an issue).

Quadrants A and B could be considered “empowerment” approaches; while C and D might be considered “engagement” approaches. At the same time, Quadrants A and C could be considered ‘collaborative’ approaches; while B and D might be considered “confrontational”

Table 5.1 A Typology of Community Development Practice

	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Community Service or Activity</i>	<i>Address Injustice or Policy Change</i>
Locus of Control	Inside the Community	A. Community-Led Devpt: <i>community building, voluntary group activities, neighbourhood projects, and marae development.</i> For example, Victory Village, Project Lyttelton, Tamaki Inclusive Engagement.	B. Community Organizing: <i>protests, legal test cases and direct action campaigns.</i> For example, Kaipara Ratepayers Revolt, Quake Outcasts, Save Hamilton Pensioner Housing, Auckland Action Against Poverty.
	Outside the Community	C. Service Delivery: <i>government/outside agency initiated or dominated community engagement, collaboration.</i> For example, Porirua Village Planning, Project Twin Streams, Social Sector Trials, Whānau Ora.	D. Professional Advocacy: <i>civic protest movements, reform campaigns enlisting community support.</i> For example, Child Poverty Action Group, Anti-fracking campaign, People's Climate March, Hikoi of Hope.

(The Aotearoa New Zealand examples primarily come from Loomis' (2012) analysis, supplemented in a few cases from the author's experience.)

Adapted from Loomis, 2012: 8, based on Ganz described in Hess, 1999: Chapter 2.

approaches. Like most two-by-two grids, each dimension is probably more a continuum rather than just two distinct approaches. While some might argue that only Quadrants A and B represent “proper” community development, as it is a continuum there will always be greater and lesser degrees of initiative and control within a community. Thus there is value in considering community development practice across all four quadrants.

The Seeds Sprout

While community development was not recognized as a distinct practice in Aotearoa New Zealand until the 1960s, its origins were much earlier—both in the communal activities of Māori prior to colonization, and in the models the new settlers, primarily from the United Kingdom, brought with them. The latter included not only the “charitable” models of care, but also the “self-help” approaches that railed against the Elizabethan ‘Poor Law’ approach. Aotearoa New Zealand was settled at a time when voluntary associations were “breaking out like measles over the face of Britain and the rest of Europe” (Colley 1992: 88, quoted in Tennant et al. 2008: 6). Some of these, the missionary and emigration societies, actually powered the colonial task. Trade unions, friendly societies, cooperatives, mechanics institutes, sports clubs and a vast variety of hobby and interest groups also proliferated—perhaps explaining the relative dominance of “expressive” organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand today, and providing the seeds for *Pakeha* (non-Māori) community development.

While church and other charities provided services for the indigent, clubs and associations looked after their members, and Iwi, hapū and whānau exercised their mutual cultural obligations for whakapakari a-iwi. It was not until the first Labour Government came to power in 1935 that the Physical Welfare and Recreation Act 1937 and a unit of the same name in the Department of Internal Affairs offered “the first concerted attempts to establish a formal

community development programme within government departments”, as part of constructing a “cradle to grave” welfare state. Its Physical Welfare Officers “were the first group of statutory community development workers with a variety of roles combining policy development, project implementation and funding support for community organisations” (Chile 2006: 411). While the Unit later also was involved in programs for the settlement of new migrants and refugees, it was best known for promoting and funding community centers as local community focal points—with 131 centers erected by 1956, and around 350 by 1970. Between 1937 and 1950, the Unit’s capacity-building programs also helped plant nearly 500 clubs and organizations across more than 220 communities, trained 1,480 community and youth leaders and over 900 sports coaches (Chile 2006: 412).

Loomis (2012: 13) reminds us that as a relatively young nation with a small population, few major cities and no urban ghettos, and an historic tendency to rely on central government to provide in times of need, that same central government has had at various times a key role in providing community development advisory services and funding for community and voluntary organizations. As a result we might also expect that *collaborative* (rather than *confrontational*) approaches to community development could dominate. Stoecker (2001: 4) similarly observes that for Aotearoa New Zealand (much like Canada and Australia), the historic strength of government and the relative trust in government is in stark contrast to the United States. As a consequence, community development here is as often practiced *through* government rather than *against* it, and there is much less separation between community organizing, community development and social work. Sometimes all three are referred to as “community work”.

However, the landscape is more complex and multifaceted than this might suggest. From the establishment of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union in 1885, its very active temperance and suffrage campaigns established many “dry” areas across the country, and won the vote for women in 1893 following mass citizen petitions; through the work of the Dunedin Tailoresses’ Union, set up in 1889 and the campaign against “sweated labour”; to the 1947 Grey-mouth Beer Boycott and the establishment of cooperative Working Men’s Clubs on the West Coast, a wide variety of social change practices were employed from the early days of the colony—many exhibiting features of Ganz’s Quadrants B and D, as well as Quadrants A and C.

Colonization especially brought serious development challenges for Māori, who were soon marginalized and effectively stripped of 90 percent of their assets either through forceful confiscations or arranged land sales, within a couple of decades of signing the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 (which provided the legal and moral basis for European settlement). In response to rapid European population growth and increasing pressure to sell their land, various tribes came together to discuss the idea of appointing a single king, with the coronation of the first king, Potatau Te Wherowhero, in 1858. Strategies ranged from direct confrontation to attempts at collaboration and working within the Pakeha system. The second King, Tawhiao, led the Kingitangi movement during the Waikato Land Wars of 1863–1864 and the land confiscations that followed, taking his people into exile into the area now known as King Country to keep the movement together when it was treated as a direct threat to the authority of the colonial powers. Meanwhile the third king, Mahuta, working for change within the Pakeha system, became a member of the Legislative Council and the Executive Council (Cabinet).

In the 1870s and 1880s Te Whiti-o-Rongomai famously demonstrated tactics of non-violent resistance at Parihaka in the face of aggressive military confiscation of tribal lands. These included civil disobedience through ploughing and fencing, and baking bread for the enemy. There is evidence that Gandhi heard about his peaceful struggle from two Irish visitors who had visited Parihaka, and from reports in the British media, which may have inspired Gandhi’s own approach.

In 1918, the charismatic Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana experienced visions that led to establishing the Ratana Church. Its leaders sought economic development and modernization, and ratification of the Treaty of Waitangi. In the 1920s Ratana formed a political wing and attracted popular support. By the mid-1930s it entered into an alliance with the Labour Party, and by 1943, Ratana Labour candidates had won all four Māori seats, gaining a much stronger voice in governing circles, until Labour lost power in 1949. This was reflected in the 1945 Māori Social and Economic Advancement Act, which set up tribal and district committees that had the opportunity to enhance Māori development and provide a framework for *tino rangatiratanga* (Māori self-determination). These committees had a list of responsibilities, which referenced “self dependence”, the promotion of a range of well-beings, cultural maintenance and “full rights, privileges and responsibilities of citizenship”. However, in practice, the strict control of funding by the Department of Māori Affairs did not allow tribal committees the resources to undertake developmental programs except those approved by government schemes.

“Pretty Maids All in a Row”—Flourishing in a Riot of Colour

Alongside a growing youth population in the 1950s, rapid urbanization—especially by Māori—and growth of immigration, particularly of Pacific Islanders, highlighted new and complex social issues. In the decades that followed it also led to a new emphasis on human rights, empowerment for marginalized groups, and self-determination (“nothing about us, without us” as the disability rights movement coined and other groups soon echoed). Community development was a good fit for such an ethos, and came into its own as a field of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand by the 1970s, having just become a paid professional activity in Britain in the 1960s. It was described as a “boom industry” at this time, and became a “catch phrase” to solve society’s problems for people working in local communities, as well as both central and local government (Craig 1991: 45–46 quoted in Chile 2006: 414).

Māori anger over loss of sovereignty, land, culture and recognition by Pakeha-dominated institutions also reached a critical juncture in the 1970s. The decade saw the rise of *Ngā Tamatoa*, “The Warriors” (an activist group inspired by international liberation movements, promoting Māori rights, fighting racial discrimination and confronting injustices, particularly violations of the Treaty of Waitangi), the iconic land rights *hikoi* (march) led by Dame Whina Cooper, and the Bastion Point occupation.

Around the same time, and not unrelated, “Halt All Racist Tours” rose to prominence opposing the 1981 Springbok (South Africa’s racially selected) Rugby Tour, when more than 150,000 people took part in over 200 demonstrations in 28 centers and 1,500 were charged with offences relating to the protests.

From the 1960s, New Zealanders had consistently protested against nuclear testing in the Pacific, and from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s two key issues emerged: opposition to French nuclear tests on the Pacific Island of Mururoa and to American warships’ visits to Aotearoa New Zealand. The sinking of Greenpeace’s protest ship, *Rainbow Warrior*, in Auckland in July 1985 was a defining moment in this period, and shortly afterwards the 1987 New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act was passed.

In 1962 a group of gay Wellington men established the Dorian Society—primarily as a social group, but in 1963 its new legal sub-committee, the Wolfenden Association, was arguing male homosexuality should be decriminalized (sex between women was not illegal, but many lesbians suffered the same social discrimination as gay men and were supporters of the reform movement). By 1972 there were Gay Liberation groups in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Attempts at law reform continued, but the movement also encouraged “community-building and

revolutionary consciousness. According to this approach, homophobia and social authoritarianism were the problem, and ‘coming out’ was a solution. . . . Gay communities led [New Zealand’s highly effective] response to AIDS, and the New Zealand AIDS Foundation was established in 1985 . . . Gay lobbyists argued that a climate of openness would prevent new infections” (Brickell 2014: 2).

There was a complex interplay between government and this frenzy of community organizing for social change—sometimes resisting, sometimes responding, sometimes even taking the initiative. These rapid social changes also (briefly) served as a catalyst for local authorities to take on a new community development role. The 1974 Local Government Act (Sec. 598–601) provided a mandate for involvement in community development and recreation. Although Auckland City Council is credited as the first local authority to create a community development unit in 1970, Manukau City Council, facing the rapid growth of two new state housing suburbs (Otara and Mangere) with few amenities or services, had previously appointed a Social Services Officer in 1966 to promote greater coordination between the services provided by the voluntary and community organizations, to build community resources, and administer the relief distress fund.

According to local authority community advisers from that era, they were commonly involved in:

- Organizing and running Citizen Advice Bureaux with local volunteers;
- Setting up community houses and community centers and organizing programs and activities with local people;
- Establishing school holiday programs;
- Coordinating local services and liaising with government agencies;
- Promoting recreation programs with local people;
- Working with and strengthening the capacity of local groups;
- Undertaking research on social issues and social needs, and advocating to government on relevant issues;
- Creating and supporting networks of local people able to debate and promote social issues in their area (Haigh 2014: 88).

One of the most significant turning points for local authorities was the sixth National Community Development Conference in Manukau in 1988. Thirty local and regional authorities were represented at the conference, which emphasized in its communiqué the centrality of community development as the key to effective local government that empowers and enhances the quality of life within communities. The conference re-emphasized the purposes and functions of local government articulated in the 1974 Act. This, and specific recommendations of the conference, significantly influenced submissions to the local government restructuring process of 1989, and in the aftermath of these changes the New Zealand Local Government Association issued in 1993 a Charter for Local Government on Social Justice Issues, Community Development and Social Services, which restated the centrality of community development to local government.

In this vein the 2002 Local Government Act made even more explicit the purpose of local government in promoting what became known as the “four well-beings” (social, economic, environmental and cultural); challenged local authorities to shift decision-making to more consultative, bottom-up approaches that built on community-based initiatives; and required local authorities to develop long-term council community plans incorporating “community outcomes” that communities prioritize in order of relative importance. While the extent to which these

provisions actually translate into community empowerment very much depends on the practices of each local authority, the Act offered some very real opportunities for community development staff, communities and community groups (Chile 2006: 417–419).

A few community advisers in local authorities faced political opposition in their roles, and even bullying. Others noted that support from elected members protected them from bureaucratic opposition and controls. It is of interest that support for the community development role came primarily from liberal conservative councillors, not those on the left of politics—who were, perhaps, more inclined to see these activities as the responsibility of national government, not to be abdicated to local communities (Haigh 2014: 91–93).

As well as through empowering legislation, local authorities' involvement in community development was supported by national government grants for employment of community advisers and recreation officers. At the national level, with mounting concerns about the engagement of young people, high unemployment and the numbers being recruited into gangs, a Youth Services Branch was added to the Department of Internal Affairs, and Youth Service Workers were appointed across the country to develop youth-focused programs, with resources of the Youth Initiatives Fund and Detached Youth Worker Funding Scheme. The first detached youth worker funded under this scheme, Denis O'Reilly, pioneered work with gangs creating the first labour cooperative that became a model for government-subsidized Special Work Schemes in the late 1970s. The Department of Social Welfare, established in 1972, was responsible for coordinating social welfare activities, funded the Community Volunteers program in 1972, and set up a community development unit in 1982 to support community-based service delivery. Nonetheless, the “primary motivation may not have been community development as much as a monitoring mechanism to ensure financial accountability so that organizations' contracts meet the department's key performance indicators” (Chile 2006: 416). Nevertheless, the Department had up to 1991 adopted as its first main purpose:

All people in New Zealand are able to participate within the communities in which they belong.

DSW 1991, quoted in Higgins 1997: 10

Locally based *Te Kōhanga Reo* (*whānau*- or family-based, early-childhood, total-immersion “language nests”) were initiated in 1981 with support from the Department of Māori Affairs in response to the aspiration for the survival and revival of *te reo Māori* (the Māori language). The first Kōhanga Reo, Pukeatua in Wainuiomata, was opened in 1982, and such was the excitement that one hundred were established by the end of the year. Today, there are over 460 Te Kōhanga Reo established around the country, all self-managed, catering for over 9000 *mokopuna* (representing five percent of all children in early childhood education).³

The Department of Māori Affairs employed community development workers since the 1945 Māori Social and Economic Advancement Act. And its community development focus was further reinforced by the 1977 reorganization, which created *Tu Tangata* (Standing Tall), the new philosophy that actively engaged district officers in local community-based Māori development, promoting cultural and economic advancement through “encouraging self-reliance and self-determination” (Hill 2009: 191).

Community development approaches, or at least aspects of them, were also evident in other central government programs of the time. For example, the Ministry of Health in its health promotion and community health projects; Ministry of Justice in its crime prevention and Safer Communities programs; as for the Community Employment Group in the Department of Labour.

Chile (2006: 417) does, however, wryly warn: “While many of these statutory agencies make claims to community development principles, it is often difficult for some of their workers to distinguish where their practice is empowering communities towards social change and where they function as agents of social control”. This is perhaps a general risk of operating in Ganz’s Quadrants D, and especially C.

“Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary”

Just as community development (across all four of Ganz’s quadrants) was blossoming in one of its most vibrant eras, along came one of the biggest shifts in public policy in this country. In 1984 the new Labour government, as an early and bold adopter of the neoliberal political framework, radically rebuilt the system of public administration on market-oriented strategies, such as: deregulation, privatization, outsourcing, the structural separation of purchasers and providers, an enhanced emphasis on performance management, a shift from input- to output-based funding, and the delivery of public services by third parties under contract. No other country had implemented the New Public Management ideology as thoroughly (further, harder, faster) as Aotearoa New Zealand (Schick 1996: 1).

If we see this new approach as just a shopping list of radical prescriptions, we are missing its important philosophical underpinnings. Its various components directly flow from agency theory and public choice theory, which ruthlessly apply “rational” (some might say simplistic) economic tools to deal with people, politics and public policy. Under such an approach, everything is conceptualized as a series of “contracts” between principals (“purchasers”) and agents (“providers”), best kept at arm’s length but held tightly accountable, as people (or more precisely the mythic Rational Economic Man) are expected to always promote their own (selfish) interests above all else. Thus both the key risk and challenge become one of control and accountability—how to ensure the agent acts in the principal’s interests. This led to, what iconoclastic British accountant Michael Power (1994) referred to as an “audit explosion”. It derives from the two powerful but contradictory public policy trends from New Public Management: pressure for less government delivery, but with more controls.

Although foreshadowed, full implementation of all that this implied for community organizations did not come till just as the Labour government was being replaced by a National government in 1990, which gave a further boost to New Public Management and the neo-liberal reforms.

We see, therefore, from 1989, staff in the Department of Social Welfare taking an increasing regulatory role, and from 1991, the “evolution of the Department’s role away from community development to a focus on the ‘key activities of planning, service development, approvals, funding and information provision within specified output areas’ (DSW 1991)”.

Smith 1996: 11, quoted in Higgins 1997: 3

Essentially, the purchase-of-service contracting ideology required a shift from seeing government as a partner with voluntary and community organizations, to an arm’s-length “purchaser” of tightly specified outputs for which “providers” would be accountable to the purchaser, with “contestability” among potential providers wringing greater efficiencies for the purchaser. Under such a conception, the customers are now those government purchasers, and the people and communities served become little more than the “raw material” in the transaction. The shift to purchase-of-service contracting is also a shift from conceptualizing voluntary

and community organizations as autonomous representatives of the community, towards being treated merely as convenient (often cheap) conduits for provision of public services to the community—as “little fingers of the state” (Nyland 1993). This might also be considered a shift from a broad approach that included *developmental relationships* (how a community or its organizations could be invested in, supported or developed) to narrower and more specific *extractive transactions* (how communities and their organizations could be used to achieve government objectives).

Likewise, accountability and “responsiveness” are sucked upwards. Increased competition undermines collaboration (as much, indirectly, by squeezing out any space for sharing or networking, as direct pressure to compete for contestable contracts). “Outputs” that were less predictable, or harder to count, or which may only result in diffuse longer-term changes were treated with suspicion (as just trying to avoid being accountable), and largely not funded. Power (1994: 95) refers to such a process as being “colonized by the audit”—where the demands of monitoring or reporting requirements (most commonly the need for ease of measurement) spill over and corrupt what work is actually done, or how it is done.

Under such hostile public policies and funding patterns, community development was isolated, losing both funding and political traction during this period.⁴ The initiative or locus of control shifted upwards from communities and clients to government (and other) funders. Volunteering and fund-raising were reduced to mere inputs, as encouraging active participation and developing wide leadership is no longer of concern. Reliance on “messy” volunteers, “cumbersome” democratic membership structures and consultation or engagement that “slowed down” quick decisions was seen as an anathema to efficient delivery of predetermined outputs. A system designed on Theory X (assuming the worst in people) soon begins to breed that very attitude and undermine trust, while cooperation is squeezed out by the drive for “efficiencies” that leave no room for networking, building relationships or anything other than frantic service delivery (see, for example, the case study documented in Nowland-Foreman 1998: 108–111).

Disenchantment with the excesses of contractualism grew beyond disaffected voluntary and community organizations, spreading even to one of New Public Management’s international proponents, when Schick (1996, and especially 2001), reviewed for Treasury and State Services Commission the actual impact of the “New Zealand model”. The department mainly responsible for implementing many of these reforms with non-profit organizations was soon itself warning its incoming minister (in typical public servant understatement) that “current arrangements with the sector based on purchase-of-service contracting may not, in themselves, be sufficient to maintain a healthy not for profit sector” (Department of Social Welfare 1996: 22).

Political support for some change in policy direction, including some recognition of the importance of building strong communities, began to emerge towards the end of the National government, following the visit of Bob Putnam to Aotearoa New Zealand—which was sponsored by a number of community activists to promote the emerging concept of “social capital”—which might be conceived as community development in business language.⁵

As part of its extensive policy platform, a new Labour-led government was elected in 1999 with a commitment to replace the “contract culture” with a revived culture of “partnership” with community organizations. There was an initial flurry of significant, though largely symbolic, changes in machinery of government arrangements and some moderation of some of the contracting excesses,⁶ and over time a number of small initiatives were introduced which took alternate approaches (often under the rubric of “capability building”), but mainstream funding arrangements were left largely intact. Despite three terms in office, the momentum to undo the pervasive mechanisms of principal-agent contractualism effectively stalled.

Why this happened still remains unclear. Perhaps a whole generation of public servants had grown up believing “there is no alternative” (the war cry of the neo-liberals). Perhaps Schick (2001: 3) gives us a clue when he suggest that:

in contrast to other countries in which reform meant adding peripheral elements to the pre-existing [public] management system, in New Zealand the reforms are the system. There is no other managerial system. This means that dismantling the reforms would require the government to divest itself of the ways in which it prepares and administers the budget, runs departments, links ministers and managers, and decides what to do.

In 2002, a paper developed by Department of Internal Affairs in discussion with the Ministry of Social Development, Child Youth & Family and the Community Employment Group, acknowledged:

A large portion of government’s community building efforts have also been targeted at the direct service delivery or “front end” of the value chain: provision of information and funding and overseeing service contracts. In effect, these forms of support, while ensuring some immediate service delivery, are often short-sighted and deplete rather than build the capabilities of communities and Iwi/hapū to carry out their own development. The emerging interest in partnership between government and the community and voluntary sector, and with local government and Iwi/hapū, provides an opportunity to shift government’s efforts back to the developmental end of the value chain.

DIA 2001: 20–21

As discussed above, the 2002 Local Government Act had made an explicit acknowledgment of local government’s role in community development, through its emphasis on the “four well-beings”, and expectations about community planning and consultation. This had potential to significantly strengthen the enabling environment for community development, but was reliant on how it was taken up by each local authority. Meanwhile, in areas that the central government directly controlled there was little roll-back from the dominant purchase-of-service contracting approach.

When the (current) National-led government was returned to office in 2008, even these modest adjustments were, over time, almost all reversed.⁷ Perhaps most significantly, local government legislation was rewritten again in 2011, focusing on operational efficiencies, cost cutting and debt reduction, and significantly weakening local authorities’ roles in enabling civil society and promoting participatory democracy. The “four well-beings” were removed and emphasis instead was put on local government’s role as regulator and property services provider, even prohibiting involvement in some wider roles. In many ways citizens were reduced to customers of local land services agencies.

Another wave of funding reforms was also implemented, in more recent years, including:

- New purposes and guidelines for most Ministry of Social Development (MSD) funding, first as “Investing in Services for Outcomes”, and currently as “Community Investment Strategy”.
- “Trialing New Approaches to Social Sector Change Project”, an inter-agency service delivery to young people.⁸

- A 3-year “Streamlined Contracting with NGOs” project in the Government Procurement Branch of a new super Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.
- Trialing Social (Impact) Bonds, initially through the Ministry of Health.
- Commissioning an inquiry by the Productivity Commission into “More Effective Social Services”.

Each of these makes even greater use of market mechanisms wherever possible, including for example: an “investment approach”, which results in even tighter targeting towards a tiny few percentage points of the most “at-risk” individuals (those most likely to incur the highest lifetime costs for government) for just three priority target groups; standardized, outcome-based agreements; and, even more tightly predetermined priorities (what’s done), methods of working based on a narrow set of “evidence” (how it’s done), target groups (with whom), reported against standardized measurable results. While much of this push is still within the realm of intentions and policy ambitions, it would essentially “turbo-charge” the above-documented negative impacts of purchase-of-service contracting for community development, and for the wider civil society role of community organizations.

There are some small contradictory forces, perhaps no coincidence often within the portfolios of Māori Party ministers. For example, while regularly under attack, the *Whānau Ora* (well-being of the extended family) program initiated by *Te Puni Kokiri* (Ministry of Māori Development) in 2010 to provide more flexible and holistic, family- and community-centered social support and development, still survives. In 2011, the Department of Internal Affairs transferred a chunk of funding from the Community Organisation Grants Scheme (which itself supported small, locally identified community initiatives) to fund the trial of a community-led development approach in five disadvantaged communities. While its purpose is formally to “assess whether the community-led development approach achieves sustainable outcomes for communities, hapū and Iwi”, it is hard to see it being significantly expanded as a mainstream approach in the current hostile policy environment.

Perhaps the starkest symbol that it is no longer a fashionable concept for government, however, is that they literally took “community development” out of the manual. While the 2003 version of a Department of Internal Affairs’ web resource was called the Community Development Resource Kit, in the 2006 update, not only was the word “development” dropped from the title, the whole Community Development section also disappeared (Aimers and Walker 2009: 3).

“How Does Your Garden Grow?”

Reports of community development’s death in Aotearoa New Zealand may, however, have been exaggerated. It has survived *despite* an often hostile public policy environment over at least the last 30 years, and there is no reason to suspect that the coming years will offer any less arid an environment for its cultivation. While we may not expect an early return to the flourishing heyday of the 1970s, community development in Aotearoa New Zealand has demonstrated it has a future. Even in the current parched policy environment, Loomis (2012: 36) is able to identify numerous promising examples of local residents’ groups and community organizations taking initiative, sustainability movements (like Transition Towns and Ecovillages) pioneering locally based development, and creative Iwi-based developments sparked by Treaty settlements. In each case, while occasionally supported by outside resources, these promising patches of new growth do not depend on it.

Furthermore, Inspiring Communities (www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz), mostly supported from private philanthropy, has provided a national network since 2008 promoting the concept,

and linking local groups involved in community-led development (especially that equating with Ganz's Quadrant A). A new journal, *Wanake: The Pacific Journal of Community Development*, was launched in 2015, after a highly successful national community development conference in Auckland earlier in the year, for the first time in many years. These are all useful signs of an enabling environment for community development, regardless of hostile public policy settings.

Ironically, the withdrawal of public funding and government personnel from much (though by no means all) community development practice may, in fact, end up doing the field a favor, giving it an easier ability to be critical of government policy, more genuine local initiative and control, and more room for confrontational tactics and direct action where necessary.

The following, while based on the above analysis, represents less strict conclusions and more personal reflections and unsolicited advice from the author to help the community development garden grow.

In the lopsided power dynamics of fund-raising, *funders* have an important role and the potential to wreak havoc in a delicate ecology. Humility and a commitment to "first, do no harm" never go astray, but there are also some specific changes needed if funders are to harvest better impacts with their dollars:

- *If "purchasing" services, pay the price.* If we are using purchase-of-service contracting, expecting to determine 100 percent of the outcomes and holding the group 100 percent accountable for what it achieves, then we should also pay 100 percent of what it costs to run the program, not just make a "contribution". This enables communities and their organizations to flexibly use their own self-generated and untied funds for their *own* needs and priorities, to take risks and test out new ideas. (Alternatively, greater use could be made of untied operating grants towards the general work of a group, which is an even better way of enabling flexibility, innovation and responsiveness.)
- *Dare to be different, to make a difference.* As a result of a constellation of unique circumstances, private philanthropy (from both individuals and non-government trusts) represents 1.1 percent of GDP in Aotearoa New Zealand—an unusually high figure, more than twice that of Australia and of a 38-country average (Sanders et. al. 2008: 21). But that's of no significance if philanthropy is just mimicking the dominant government funders. We should be skeptical of funding fads and fashions, keep space to fund boring but crucial things like "core costs" and operating expenses, make a point of funding unpopular causes and important initiatives that government can't fund (especially social change campaigns and movements), take risks, and be patient (private philanthropy can think beyond the electoral cycle) as most important changes take time. That way we can really make a difference.
- *Invest in learning, to learn how to invest.* We should not expect every little project to reinvent the evidence and evaluation "wheel" (to "prove" their approach works). This is neither efficient (proportionately there are much higher evaluation costs for small or stand-alone projects) nor effective (given the inherent problems with sample sizes, control groups, attribution and so on). Instead we should draw on the literature to discover what is already known about different approaches and (especially where little research exists) rely more on defensible "theories of change" or "program logics". Furthermore we need to encourage and support groups to do their *own* learning (and share lessons learnt), rather than impose a particular "flavour-of-the-month" monitoring tool or data collection system. It's about getting better results, rather than getting better *measures* of results.
- *Use accountability of a thousand eyes, rather than a thousand tick boxes.* While compliance costs mount, the accountability literature (since Kearns 1996) is pretty clear that paper-based reporting systems are costlier for both parties, less efficient and less effective than relational

accountability. One low-cost way this can be done is through “crowd-sourcing” transparency—letting local communities and other community groups know who has been funded, how much, for what, in their area. This also can help reduce the risk of distorting what is being funded, by gravitating towards the more easily measurable rather than what is most needed. In a similar way, we need to avoid being too rigid about predetermined outcomes, lest we risk the group achieving what they planned even after they learn something else would have been more useful.

As well as encouraging funders to move on some of the above-suggested shifts, *community groups and activists* can also take action themselves to encourage a more fertile environment for community development.

- *Gang up against the problem, rather than each other.* Ganz’s four quadrants can box us in, if we see it as a competition for who is doing the “real” or the most ideologically correct community development. Stoecker (2001: 1) uses the different terminology of “program” and “power” approaches to refer to similar concepts as Ganz’s two vertical columns. Some (e.g. Callahan et al. 1999) argue for organizations to simultaneously use both these strategies in complementary ways. However, this is not as simple as it sounds. As Stoecker (2001: 7–9) points out, while certainly complementary, in that the weaknesses of one almost exactly fit the strengths of the other, they are also each rooted in fundamentally different if not contradictory views of how society works. They are also fit for different purposes: the “power” approach, emphasizing conflict, is much better suited to stopping bad things and gaining access to decision making, and for attacking the structural barriers that prevent poor communities from lifting themselves up. The “program” approach, emphasizing consensus and cooperation, is better suited to the next steps of keeping power, and starting new things. While it may be difficult to contain both approaches in the one group, this doesn’t mean that different groups taking different approaches can’t respect each other and even collaborate to maximize the respective advantages of different approaches around achieving the same goals.
- *The revolution will not be funded.* A number of authors (Larner and Craig 2005; Shannon and Walker 2006; O’Brien et al. 2009; Aimers and Walker 2015) identify the growing divide between larger non-profit organizations providing government-contracted health and social services, and smaller, usually local community groups that have trouble to find any funding. The challenge for the larger non-profit organizations is “funder capture”. Without independent funding, activities like advocacy and any political activism, or even any focus that doesn’t fit the purchaser’s current agenda, are curtailed; missions risk being compromised or diverted; and accountability is dragged upwards to the purchaser, making it more difficult to be responsive and accountable to the communities served. The challenge for smaller, marginalized community groups is subsisting, when it is difficult to attract any outside funding. The lesson for both parts of an increasingly bifurcated sector is that we need to stop seeing government contracts as the organizational “holy grail” (which, you may recall, promises eternal life and even the power to bring life back from the dead). Instead we need to invest time and energy in developing sources of untied and self-funding, to maintain independence and also incidentally increase leverage on negotiating any contracts. This includes the power to say “no” to funding. As a member of one local group reported: “actually money doesn’t solve your problems . . . if you are able to mobilize your community, then you can do stuff on the smell of an oily rag” (Aimers and Walker 2015: 10).
- *Be the Captain Ahab of vision, mission and values.* A group is better able to avoid being diverted or tossed around by the winds of change and public policy fashions if it is clear and agreed on its *vision* (the long-term difference we want to see in society), *mission* (our particular contribution to that change) and *values* (how we do things, and what we would never do).

These are the group's non-negotiable "bottom lines", and should be relentlessly pursued, constantly visible *and* put to use, for example, in orienting new people to the group, in constantly guiding governance, staff, volunteer and member meetings, and as the criteria for making decisions of significance, and any tough prioritizing.

- *Keep a double set of books.* If funders or other external agencies still insist on imposing inappropriate or predetermined outcomes and measures on a group, care is required—because, even among those of us with the best of intentions, there is a tendency to give more attention to, and to do more of, whatever is measured and/or reported on. Some time ago, Bernstein (1991) identified, in a small but important ethnographic study of non-profit organizations, that those most successful in coping with the (then) new purchase-of-service contracting regime had two distinguishing features in common. As well as having a relentless organization-wide focus on the group's vision, mission and values, the most successful not only monitored and reported on what funders wanted, but also kept their own parallel set of records for monitoring and developing what they knew was important for achievement of their vision, mission and values. Most groups stop as soon as they have fulfilled any external monitoring and reporting requirements—especially when these are onerous—and have no time or energy left to collect and then monitor the information important to them. However, this exposes us to the risk of being captured by others' agendas and diverted away from our own deep intentions and from accountability to the communities we serve.

Notes

- 1 Māori are the *tangata whenua* (indigenous people) of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 2 We might instead use the term "community-led development" (as is the current terminology in Aotearoa New Zealand) to distinguish this particular approach from the broader field of community development practice.
- 3 See www.kohanga.ac.nz/history
- 4 It is interesting to note that although this shift led to a squeezing out of funding in Aotearoa New Zealand for developmental activities—such as leadership development, prevention, advocacy, network building and so on (Higgins 1997: 11; Nowland-Foreman 1998: 120)—this wasn't necessarily the case in all jurisdictions. For example, in the UK community development continued to receive ongoing government support, albeit as a key driver for neoliberal-oriented ends (MacLeod and Emejulu 2014, quoted in Aimers and Walker 2015: 2). Perhaps this reflects the more thorough-going consistency with which New Public Management reforms were embedded in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 5 Social capital was popularized by Putnam (1993: 2) as describing "features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions"—which clearly has great resonance with key concepts of community development practice.
- 6 These changes included two hard-hitting reviews conducted jointly with representatives of the sector, establishment of a Minister and an Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector; a Prime Minister-endorsed *Statement of Government Intentions for Improved Community-Government Relationships* (affectionately known as the SOGI), a cross-government program to promote "good practice" in officials' dealings with nonprofit organizations (based on the principles of the SOGI); and piloting various initiatives to promote "joined up" funding, reduce compliance costs, establish more long-term and stable funding; and (potentially the most expensive if not the most significant, if it had been fully rolled out) plans to progressively address part-funded contracts.
- 7 For example, the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector and Charities Commission were effectively gutted, the SOGI was unilaterally replaced with an even more anodyne *Kia Tūtahi Relationship Accord* and the moves towards full funding of "essential social services" were reversed.
- 8 Ironically, this is only one of a number of competing frameworks sponsored by different "silos" all "seeking to work in partnership with, and empower, communities, improve service integration and build community capability" (Loomis 2012: 29).

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PART II

Place and Community Development



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6

SAEMAUL DEVELOPMENT¹ AND GLOBAL SAEMAUL UNDONG FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Choi Oe-Chool

Introduction

Saemaul Undong, also known as the Saemaul movement, gave rise to a successful development model in South Korea. In the 1950s and 1960s, Korea was one of the poorest nations in the world, though now it is a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with the 13th largest economy in the world. Behind this success was Korea's rural development strategy. The Saemaul movement supplied the policies and strategies for community development in Korea and can best be understood as a national community development model.

Community residents, mostly villagers at the outset, engaged in grassroots residential environmental improvement projects as the basis for their development. Their activities were integrated into a national framework that aggregated improvements in pursuit of national poverty reduction policy goals. Residents had initiated these projects on their own and the government encouraged them by providing resources, support and administrative cooperation. Civic officials and community leaders encouraged the residents in their efforts, and the government rewarded success by allocating greater resources. As a model for community and national development, the Saemaul movement has been advocated as a model for global poverty reduction and prosperity. This chapter briefly introduces select processes and strategies for sharing the model.

Korea's Saemaul Undong was a nationwide modernization movement that combined federal (central government's) support with labor and contributions from local residents. Then-president Park Chung-hee inaugurated the movement on April 22, 1970 as a national development model for economic advancement and civic consciousness. While there are many factors behind Korea's economic development, Saemaul Undong was key (Choi 2008). The Asian Development Bank recognized the importance of Saemaul Development Movement (SDM) in income growth, poverty reduction and regional empowerment, especially with regard to improving the status of women as key agents in economic and social development (Choi 2015). In 2009 Korea became the first nation to transform from aid-recipient to aid-donor when it created the Official

Development Aid Committee (DAC) (*The Economist* 2014; Choi 2015). SDM and the Saemaul Spirit have been found to be one of the drivers behind Korea's compressed economic growth (Moore 1985; Haruo 1989; Collins 2012; Choi 2015). In 2013 the archives from the 1970s Saemaul Undong were entered into UNESCO's Memory of the World Register to serve as case study and as an official development aid model for developing nations.

Saemaul Undong's Background

SDM started as a rural development project for poverty reduction using communities as the base unit that employs traditional values of cooperation and civic consciousness. Community development in Korea started in 1958, with the Presidential Proclamation on the Rural Community Development Board in response to the international aid the nation was receiving following the end of the Korean Civil War. Community development was promoted in 1962 with rural construction projects, but residential participation was low and the results were poor. Despite training, pilot projects and related support, the development projects failed to show meaningful results. As of 1970 more than 80 percent of residences relied upon straw roofs and 50 percent of all villages had no external vehicle access roads. It was under these circumstances that SDM was developed as a new policy. The process behind the formation of SDM is intimately connected with the political, social and economic background of the poverty and hardship in rural areas. The federal government had become interested in rural agricultural development as a means of closing the growing development gap between the rural and urban sectors. Farmers had been leaving rural areas and seeking employment in cities in order to escape poverty, and so economic development efforts to improve their conditions and slow this exodus were considered a priority. Farmers and residents in rural areas had dismal prospects—no work could be found and no income growth could be realized. The response to this problem was Saemaul Undong (Korea Rural Economic Institute 1999: 2082).

Saemaul Undong's Goals

Saemaul Undong has been defined as a campaign to build a more prosperous country by improving conditions and residents' lives in local communities through cooperative development projects (Ministry of the Interior 1980). Edward Reed (1980: 267–268) suggested the federal government and citizens' participation in the movement was characterized by environmental improvements led from the bottom up by residents and vertically integrated with federal support structures. The movement consisted of educational planning, local administrative support and rural development planning in pursuit of national modernization.

The goals of the movement are as follows, based on arguments laid out by then-president Park (Ministry of the Interior 1974: 13–20). First, Saemaul is a movement for better living.² The movement is not about individuals in self-pursuit, but about neighbors working together for mutual co-prosperity and the betterment of subsequent generations. Second, Saemaul is an exercise in modernization, to achieve social and economic transformations with values appropriate to the new mode of living.³ This involves working hard toward difficult-to-realize civic goals and cultivating a mindset of industriousness, self-help and cooperation. Third, Saemaul has economic, social and cultural development based on democratic principles.⁴ The promotion of the movement relies upon collecting the opinions of residents and implementing desired projects that run cooperatively and democratically. Fourth, Saemaul seeks to foster patriotism. Patriots work towards mutual co-prosperity and quality of life in the nation.⁵ Therefore, the goal of Saemaul is a mental revolution so that people participate voluntarily and work hard in

Table 6.1 Comparison of Urban to Rural Household Income in Won (Currency)

Year	Urban Household Income	Rural Household Income	Variance
1970	338,160	255,804	75.65
1971	400,080	356,382	89.08
1972	456,960	429,394	93.97
1973	484,560	480,711	99.21
1974	573,360	674,451	117.63
1975	786,480	872,933	110.99
1976	1,059,240	1,156,254	109.16
1977	1,270,920	1,432,809	112.74
1978	1,734,120	1,884,194	108.65
1979	2,336,988	2,227,483	95.13

Source: National Office of Statistics—http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1L60003&conn_path=I3, and http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1EA0031&conn_path=I3

improving their residential environments, ensuring their social welfare and raising their per capita income (Ministry of the Interior 1973–1979). Fifth, Saemaul is a movement in which the residents push themselves to succeed (Ministry of the Interior 1975: 37–38). The basic unit is the community, and government workers are there to provide support while residents themselves carry out the operations.

The operational direction of the movement was autonomy and flexibility. Residents participate by specifically setting each project's goals, the results being focused on income growth, reducing urban–rural gaps and improving residential environments. In terms of the income gaps between urban and rural areas, the seriousness of the issue and how it was reduced during the movement can be seen in Table 6.1. These reductions are why developing nations have expressed interest in SDM.

Evolution of the Saemaul Movement

In practice the movement established specific indicators that could be met with step-by-step progress as residents learned voluntarily through systematic training. As a movement for living well, Saemaul had implementation strategies for poverty reduction using the village as the base unit. It achieves income growth based on changes in residents' values and environmental improvements (see Figure 6.1). In practice, residents are able to prioritize projects that fall into the following areas: improving individual bathrooms and kitchens, developing village wells, widening village roads, and other community maintenance and improvements. Voluntary residential participation in these projects was the beginning of regional development.

The purpose of these projects was to stimulate the desire for voluntary participation among residents as the first step in reforming their mindset and values. Residents would select projects through general assembly meetings where they could also learn how to execute those plans and establish business operations. Throughout this process, the government supported residents with the necessary materials while administrative support were provided by local officials. Project planning and implementation advice and support were provided through officials working in collaboration with Saemaul leaders elected by residents. Project indicators were set according to community type (dependent village, self-help village, self-reliant village) even for the standard project types. Projects proceeded by taking into account each community's resources,

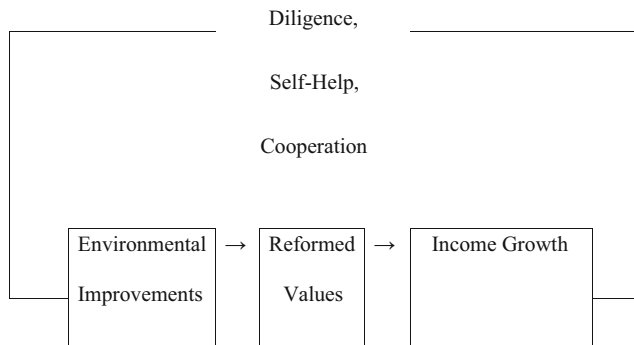


Figure 6.1 Stages of Advancement in Saemaul Undong.

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1974: 26)

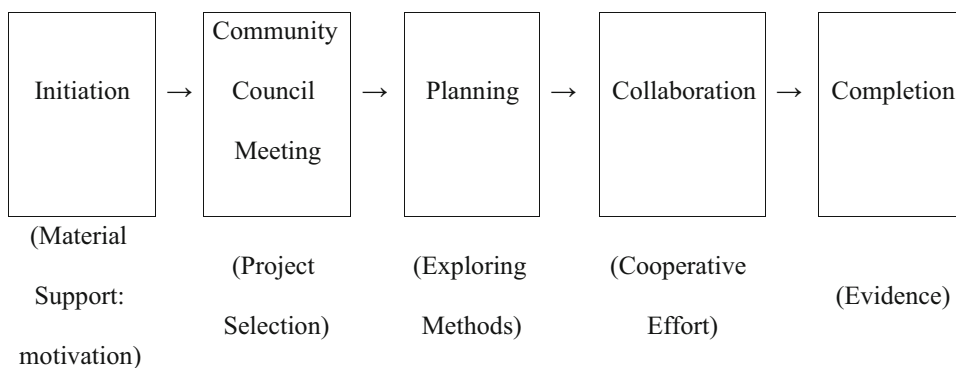


Figure 6.2 Stages of Saemaul Project Development.

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1974: 27)

participation and capacity. Decision making was encouraged to promote cooperation within and between communities (Figure 6.2).

Saemaul projects were implemented via introduction of competition schemes at the community level, providing access to official and material support systems. All communities around the nation were classified into one of three types (dependent, self-help and self-reliant) in order to ensure that they more efficiently developed incrementally in terms of support. In 1973 there were 34,655 villages across the country and the federal government began classifying them accordingly (Ministry of the Interior 1980). In the beginning of the movement, 33,267 villages were each allocated 335 bags of cement to be used in development projects. To incentivize participation, support was increased for villages that successfully completed projects. This led to competition between communities. The evaluation of projects featured a system to identify shortcomings and successes in project implementation so that residents could feel that they were directly involved in the development experience (Figure 6.3).

As the federal government classified the villages according to their level of performance and tied it to competition for enhanced support, it promoted cooperation within villages and competition between them. The movement has not been a “one-size-fits-all approach”, so communities

were free to establish the conditions for their projects' success and the government differentiated between them based on how they met their self-designated plans. This allowed rural development carried out by the movement to reflect the differing conditions between villages while still having benchmark targets based on model or best practice communities.

Saemaul Spirit

The basic principles of the movement are the mindsets of: "We can do it" and "We can make it happen!" This was to move people past fatalism and resignation through sharing a positive and active mindset, enlightening them through the pursuit of community development. All residents came to embody the movement's values of diligence, self-help and cooperation in a mindset that encouraged collaborative success. This came to be known as the Saemaul spirit.

Step	1: Launch (1971–73)	→	2: Develop Self-Help (1974–76)	→	3: Complete Independence (1977–81)
Future Direction	Incite the Saemaul spirit Promote environmental projects		Improve rural living conditions Expand production base		Income parity Expand non- farm income
Goals	Basic Villages 30% Self-Help Villages 60% Self-Reliant Villages 10%		Self-Help Villages 60% Self-Reliant Villages 40%		Self-Reliant Villages 100%

Figure 6.3 Stages in Saemaul Advancement.

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1975: 49–51; 1978: 562)

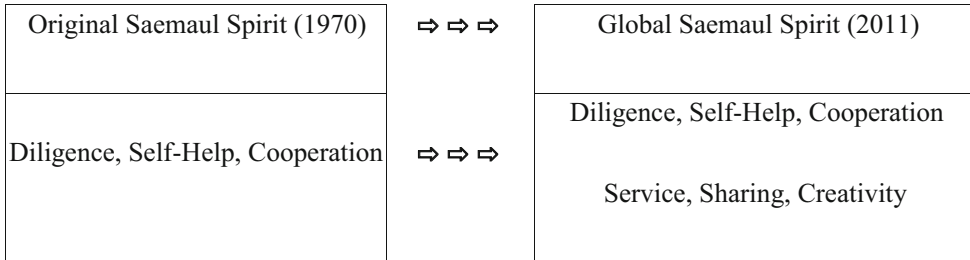


Figure 6.4 Saemaul Spirit and Global Saemaul Spirit.

Residents were trained through a handbook in 20 factors related to practicing diligence, self-help and cooperation so that they could better implement these values in their community life. Diligence involved undertaking productive and industrious work with an eye towards surpassing expectations, by doing more than others in the same period of time (Ministry of the Interior 1975: 44–47). Diligence also involved productivity as learning more technical skills and acquiring greater knowledge relative to others. Increasing performance would be of little importance without promoting planning and frugality. The details on how to practice diligence are presented in the handbook. Self-help involved doing one's best as a form of self-sufficiency without regard to commitments of help from others, without blaming others, and irrespective of the circumstances. While self-help is a duty or responsibility at the heart of voluntary effort, it also values saving as a virtue (Ministry of the Interior 1975: 47–51). The government included means of practicing self-help ideology in the handbook in order to help residents feel empowered. In other words, there were behavioral guidelines.⁶ Cooperation involves working together towards a common goal. Cooperation is more than simply combining forces as it compensates for a lack of power by increasing efficiency through the division of labor. Cooperation is not waiting for others to offer help first, but people pooling their efforts first in order to help themselves. The handbook included practical guidelines for fostering cooperation among its 20 factors (Ministry of the Interior 1975: 51–54). Diligence, self-help, and cooperation have been joined with sharing, service and creativity in the formation of a new global Saemaul spirit (Figure 6.4).⁷

Promotional and Management System of Saemaul Undong

SDM has been evaluated positively as a model for regional community development for several reasons. First, administrative support extends from the local to federal levels. Second, it has systematic steps and operations for building upon successes. And it has a system for organizing and promoting partnerships with the private sector.

The movement was involved with five related ministries at the federal level to create an administrative system that would reach down to the local level. Figure 6.5 shows the offices participating in the movement for education, income growth and inter-level administrative units. And so any work related to the movement could move between the federal and village leader levels.

The federal government explained the entire process for conducting the movement through the manual. The manual was a single handbook to provide knowledge and skills to residents, and it carefully recorded details for practice in planning and executing community development projects. This included: (1) the whole process for Saemaul projects; (2) overall planning; (3) material (cement) support status; (4) material documentation; (5) guides for the storage and transport of materials; (6) daily materials accounting statements; (7) invoices; (8)

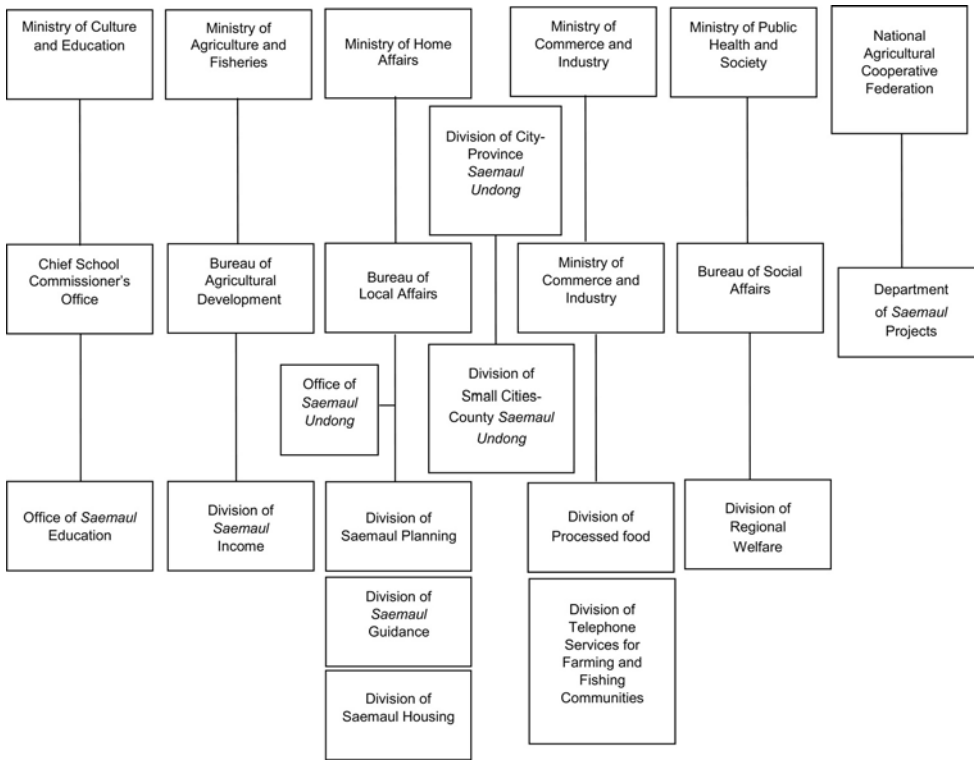


Figure 6.5 1970s Saemaul Organizational Structure.

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1975: 142–143)

material arrival information; (9) land transportation and distance charts; (10) seaborne transportation and distance charts; and (11) business classification templates. The handbook served as a guide for Saemaul leaders that had no previous management experience to manage the life-cycle of projects. It also included federal guidelines for model development standards. It basically gave residents specific information for everything from storing materials and using new technology, to effective management operations that residents could practice.

Saemaul Consultation System and Operations

The community management unit at the local level was an operational committee that linked government representatives with residents who publicly participated in Saemaul councils. While overseeing regional operations at the village level, each village was not just considered a single unit but part of a lattice of integrated parts extending up to the national level. In order to promote stepwise development among villages, a national planning system was used to promote essential projects. As a development model each community was administratively integrated with larger units so that their projects remained structured and scalable. Moreover, unlike previous development approaches the movement created an organic relationship between the highest levels of government all the way down to the basic community unit so that careful project planning and cooperation were ensured throughout.

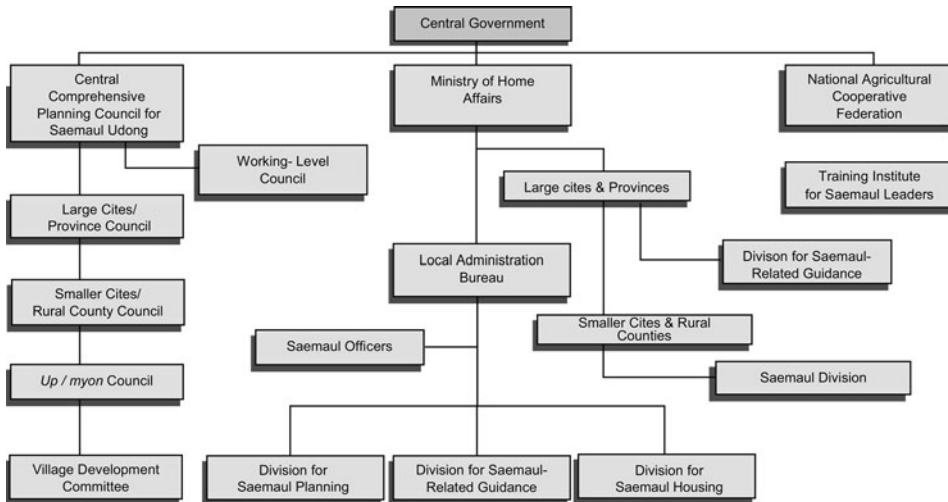


Figure 6.6 Saemaul Undong Discussion System.

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1980: 169, 177), Korea Development Foundation (2009: 55)

As shown in Figure 6.6, at the village level there were development committees comprised of Saemaul leaders and 15 members from the local area, steering committees at the next highest administrative level, then councils at the county or city level, and then up to the federal ministries so that consultation and coordination remained structured.

Saemaul Civil Organization System

The federal government operated administrative systems that promoted public-private cooperation. The collaboration between the government and the private sector allowed for the harmonization of both top-down and bottom-up approaches to development with the flexibility needed to adapt projects to local needs. In villages the administrative line included the leaders and 15 member councils organized in youth group committees, women's committees, public relations and so forth. The level of private sector participation in this process was mostly connected to Saemaul leaders, and the leaders cooperated with government officials. These leaders played a critical role in the movement as they were responsible for ensuring the democratic consensus among community members with regard to income growth development projects and implementation processes (Figure 6.7).

Saemaul Projects

The movement enabled rural economic development in order to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas.

The movement was based on standard projects that would improve essential commercial infrastructure in rural areas and stimulate income growth. Thus in the 1970s Saemaul projects carried out during the movement focused on business growth in rural economies. There were around 40 different standard projects (seen in Table 6.2) that included business operations, increased production, income growth, forestry conservation and environmental welfare.

Saemaul Development

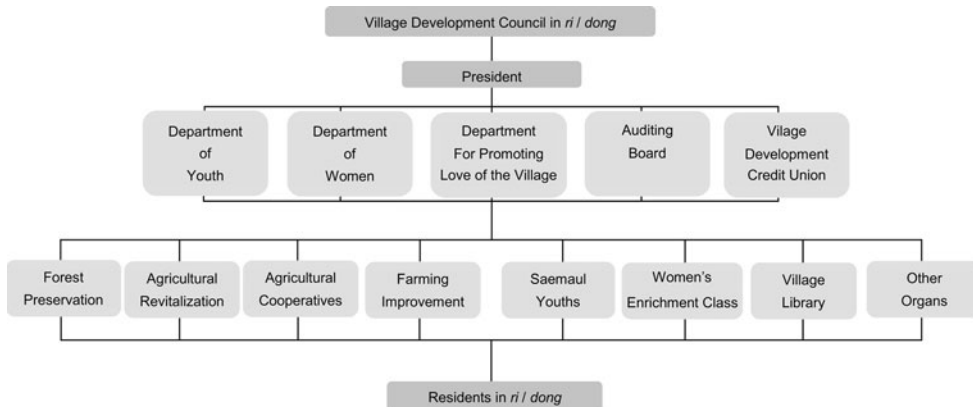


Figure 6.7 Administrative Units, Developmental Council and Private Organizations.

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1980: 165)

Table 6.2 Guide to Basic Saemaul Projects

Sector		Projects
Production Based	Rural Roads	interior roads, farm roads, bridges, transportation
	Agricultural Structures	cleaning levees, cleaning grounds, agricultural facilities, agricultural mechanization
	Telecommunications	electrification, village phone lines
Income Growth	Business	composting, annual farming, cooperative farming, income projects
	Extras	cotton production, gardening, multi-use, village support
	Textiles	factories, crafts
Forest Ecology	Income Afforestation	mountain conservation, village water safety, slash-and-burn maintenance, fuel
	Afforestation	erosion prevention, establishing grasslands
	Fuel Measures	methane gas facilities, improved exhaust systems
Welfare and Environment	Housing	improved roofs, home improvements, sewer maintenance, general maintenance
	Sanitation	simple water supplies, sanitary wells, mobile clinics, district hospitals
	Shared Facilities	town hall, warehouses, shops, baths

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1978: 77–78)

Table 6.3 Standard Examples of Project Objectives

	<i>Basic Village</i>	<i>Self-Help Village</i>	<i>Self-Reliant Village</i>
Rural Road	main road started	main road underway	main road complete
	access roads	maintained access roads	at least 20m complete
Housing	improved roofs	greater than 70%	greater than 80%
	improved sewers	sewers maintained	more than 80% fenced
Farming	maintained rates	greater than 70%	greater than 85%
	early modification		village maintained
Cooperation	hall, warehouses	interior facility	at least two facilities
	village fund		greater than ₩1,000,000
Income	business income	more than 1 joint business	Non-agricultural income
	household income	greater than ₩800,000	greater than ₩1,400,000

Source: Korea Development Institute (2009: 32)

These 40 projects were to be carried out according to the circumstances of each community by setting relevant targets for improvement. Table 6.3 shows how roof improvements were segmented according to basic villages, self-help villages and self-reliant villages.

This differentiation between goals according to regional circumstances was limited not to just villages, as the movement needed to be flexible and adaptable at all levels. By accounting for local variation, the movement could present communities and regions with more

Table 6.4 Village Types of Project Guidelines

	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Development Direction</i>	<i>Example Business Focus</i>
Foothill Village	50% arable slopes (1,733)	develop forestry income	– fruit trees – grasslands, parks – alpine herbal, vegetable cultivation
Mountain Village	20% arable slopes (18,895)	development of agricultural transfer	– cooperative livestock
Plain Village	80% arable plains (8,104)	agricultural mechanization	– prepare farmlands – machine shop – processing facilities
Fishing Village	more than 30% fishing (1,583)	modernize fishing facilities	– coastal treatment – improve facilities – breakwater docks
Suburban Village	more than 30% non-agricultural income (4,330)	develop urban agriculture	– increase horticulture – vegetable cultivation – cottage industries

Source: Korea Development Institute (2009: 34)

Table 6.5 Regional Expansion Plans for Saemaul Projects

	<i>Village Level (Single Area)</i>	<i>Joint Ventures (Two Areas)</i>	<i>Regional Facilities (Three or More)</i>
Example Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – main access road – clean sewers – village warehouse – village repair shop – village facilities – village afforestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inter-village farms – land cleanup – intermediate joint production – shared repair shops – shared rivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – national-regional access roads – comprehensive agricultural centers – multi-stage processing facilities – regional repair facilities – exterior rivers – afforestation banks

Source: Ministry of the Interior (1975: 75–78), Korea Development Institute (2009: 35)

highly applicable goals that could feasibly be reached through participation. This stimulated a virtuous cycle in which increased participation followed each successful stepwise achievement (Table 6.4).

Again, cooperation was stimulated by accounting not just for village type but also the applicable economic and social characteristics. This eventually led to cooperation, within villages expanding to neighboring communities in pursuit of regional goals (Table 6.5).

Saemaul Development

The Saemaul movement has been presented in various studies as a Korean model of economic development, a rural development model, a poverty reduction model and a rural income growth model. Such studies have endorsed the movement as a compressed development model that operates by extending outward from the rural community level; hence there has arisen a need to share research with the international community to support the use of this type of model (Choi 2008).

In particular this suggests potential favorable outcomes for developing nations that adopt SDM based on its success in Korea. Several principles can be extended in this manner: (1) national leadership philosophies; (2) consistent policy implementation; (3) public empathy and active participation; (4) targeted level-appropriate education; (5) leadership training for gender equality; (6) motivation and dedication among volunteer leaders; (7) routine recognition of success stories and awards; (8) pan-governmental promotion; and (9) appropriate use of the principles of cooperation and competition.

Accordingly, the following suggestions are made for sharing flexible good governance systems based on the contents and achievements of SDM with the international community. The main idea is to introduce fundamental areas that will lead to improved development.

First is residential participation. All projects within SDM worked by creating an atmosphere that fostered participation by giving residents discretion over their efforts, a key factor in leading them to autonomously engage in development projects. This type of planning also linked residential leadership to the public and private sectors and enlarged the sphere of cooperative interaction. Second is rural community education. Such programs were not limited to income growth but also included health, welfare and reformed values that encouraged advancement

towards a better quality of life. Third is the Saemaul spirit of diligence, self-help and cooperation. This is a process of social transformation in which residents are enlightened through the development experience of voluntarily improving their living conditions and income. These reforms in values allow residents to build their confidence and rational thinking through the successful completion of projects that better their lives while culminating in national development. The movement is based on changes in civic consciousness and community spirit that come about through voluntary cooperation in projects with practical benefits for residents (Choi 2009: 126). Fourth is the public-private partnership in governance. The federal government addressed the issue of resource gaps and incentivized partnerships by using administrative systems that linked support from the private sector to development projects and matching contributions made directly by residents. Approximately 60 percent of the costs of Saemaul projects were provided directly by residents, often in the form of labor while the federal government provided basic support free of charge (Korea Rural Economic Institute 1999). Additionally, while residents worked without pay, the advice and planning was provided through Saemaul leaders working alongside government representatives and technical experts. Communities kept daily records of their work that were signed off by Saemaul leaders for submission to government representatives in order to monitor and verify their progress; these records are a history of the Saemaul spirit and are listed in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. The advantage of public-private partnerships was that government workers, leaders and residents all became familiar with the movement and their respective roles therein. Fifth is that Saemaul leaders were able to consistently pursue the projects throughout the entire development process. Leaders participated in a systematic management process based on communities being part of a national network. The voluntary sacrifices of leaders served as a link between residents and the delivery of national policy. Leaders were unpaid but still had to represent the will of their communities in administrative affairs and problem solving, and were responsible for encouraging participation, procurement, meetings, reporting to and from the government and linking with private partners.

In general, the characteristics of SDM are based on the following content and successes from the Saemaul movement. Overall, SDM is a community-driven national development model; the movement itself is Korea's regional and rural agricultural development model. As the contents and experience of the model are expanded, it can be explained as a national development model. As a result, SDM is a bottom-up development model based on the will of community residents to live better that relies upon their participation and reforms their values in the process. Second, SDM is based on the Saemaul spirit and philosophical values. The reformation begins with giving residents opportunities and incentives to better their daily living conditions and thus building their confidence through concretely actionable guidelines and practical indicators that naturally incentivize their continued participation; throughout, residents receive education in health and welfare that extends this process. Specific project guidelines and suggested programs and instructions help residents to internalize the benefits of development as the cumulative effect of their efforts contributes to national development. The flexible nature of guidelines ensured project feasibility while the specificity of measures for success helped residents to observe their progress. Third, SDM can be adapted to suit the specific cultural and environmental conditions of any nation's development circumstances. To this end the Global Saemaul Development Network (GSDN) was launched in order to leverage the strength of SDM as a compressed development model for the international community.⁸

SDM is not a development model of growth and redistribution; rather it promotes participation and shared bottom-to-top governance to promote the development process and allow

for adjustments to be made as circumstances dictate. That is, the movement starts with the state providing support materials to residents who then go on to autonomously utilize them in pursuit of greater future allocations based on their success. Through this process a mindset of shared civic values is created, and SDM distinguishes itself from other development models through its operational, training and education, and monitoring systems which rely upon community leadership, government representation and private sector partnerships. The success of SDM rests on its regional adaptability, supportive atmosphere that rewards participation, bottom-up-led implementation of development policy, and paradigm of public-private partnerships (Choi 2008). SDM synergizes cooperation and competition for increased governmental support as a development engine that leads to improved capacity building. Throughout the decision-making process behind project implementation is essentially grassroots and democratic.

The international community has recognized SDM's achievements and is seeking to adapt it to nations in need of development around the world. In particular, the World Bank, OECD and United Nations endorse the dissemination of SDM for global poverty reduction in developing nations.

A special high-level event on Saemaul was held in September of 2015 at the 70th UN General Assembly and UN Development Summit, with South Korea's Foreign Ministry, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the OECD and World Bank in attendance. The purpose was to discuss the role of SDM in pursuing sustainable development in the UN's post-2015 development agenda. Korea promised to share its development experience with the international community through cooperating with international organizations by teaching the principles and concepts of SDM, the Saemaul spirit and project guidelines and procedures in Saemaul-ology training programs. In this context SDM represents an important tool for ensuring future sustainable development and community development in the international community by addressing development needs and reducing poverty in nations around the world.

Notes

- 1 The author first proposed the term Saemaul Development in 2011, at a seminar on sustainable community development at the Saemaul spirit in Cheong-do, South Korea—the birthplace of the Saemaul Undong. In an opening address titled “Saemaul 2.0 and Saemaul Development”, it was suggested that the term Saemaul Development be used interchangeably when referring to the model that had arisen from the experience of the original movement. The Saemaul Development Model (SDM) is intended to share Korea's experience with developing nations; it is a grassroots initiative built on diligence, self-help, and cooperation.
- 2 President Park Jung-hee's “Saemaul Exposition for Income Growth”, May 18, 1972.
- 3 President Park Jung-hee's “Regional Overseas Diplomatic Conference for Export Growth”, February 9, 1970.
- 4 President Park Jung-hee's “Regional Overseas Diplomatic Conference for Export Growth”, February 9, 1970.
- 5 President Park Jung-hee's “Regional Overseas Diplomatic Conference for Export Growth”, February 9, 1970.
- 6 The guidelines for practicing these values are as from the Ministry of the Interior (1975: 50–51).
- 7 The author proposed an expanded set of values for a Global Saemaul Spirit in November 1, 2011 at a conference for sustainable development and Saemaul. These values include the original three (diligence, self-help and cooperation) along with an additional three (sharing, service, creativity).
- 8 The GSDN is a non-governmental organization launched on September 16, 2015 in Gyeongju, South Korea with representatives from 56 different nations, governments and NGOs in attendance.

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PLACE-BASED APPROACHES TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Institutional Innovation and Asset-Based Community Development

Gary Paul Green

Introduction

The field of community development has focused on a wide variety of programs intended to alleviate poverty and promote economic mobility for low-income workers. A distinguishing characteristic of community development is the emphasis on programs that target poor and low-income residents in a specific geographic area. One of the rationales behind a place-based approach is that the needs of the poor and low-income residents can best be met through local initiatives, especially those that are designed and implemented by residents. In addition, there is a large body of research indicating that “place effects” shape opportunities for economic mobility, so it is important to ameliorate local conditions to enable residents to improve their quality of life (Sharkey 2013; Wilson 1987).

There are many advocates of place-based development. Politicians who represent these geographic areas often favor place-based approaches because they allocate more resources to their constituencies (Lemann 1994). Foundations are enamored with community development because they prefer to concentrate resources in geographic areas where they can have a greater impact (Dreier 2015). Businesses support these initiatives because they receive subsidies to locate in these areas, and hired local workers also are the beneficiaries of place-based approaches.

The philosophy behind community development also is consistent with political theories emphasizing that democracy works best at the local level (Putnam 2000). As our institutions have become more bureaucratic, there are fewer opportunities to learn how to participate, which is so essential to democracy (Pateman 1976). Community development enables residents to participate in the decisions about issues that affect them directly.

Critics have charged, however, that place-based approaches are largely ineffective because they have failed to address the mobility of capital and labor. For example, as the lives of poor residents improve they are likely to move away and conditions actually get worse for the residents who remain. For decades, the middle class has moved to the suburbs, which left many neighborhoods with high levels of concentrated poverty in the central cities. Similarly, investments

to support businesses may be lost when they relocate to places where they can earn a higher profit rate. In both of these examples, there are costs to the community that provide few benefits to residents who remain there.

Community development is frequently criticized for not addressing the structural causes of poverty that are located outside the community. Community development programs may be less effective at changing the power structure that led to disinvestment in the community. Decisions by multinational corporations to relocate to countries with cheaper labor are rarely influenced by the activities of local communities. Similarly, it is difficult for neighborhood initiatives to address racial discrimination in housing markets that lead to high levels of residential segregation (Massey and Denton 1993). The high level of racial and income residential segregation makes it more difficult for poor neighborhoods to provide social resources to residents (Tigges et al. 1998). Given these structural constraints, community development is viewed as focusing only on the symptoms and not the root causes of poverty and inequality.

Both ends of the political spectrum point to alternative strategies (either the market or government) that they believe will have a better chance of improving conditions in poor neighborhoods. On the Right, employment growth is seen as the most effective way to reduce poverty and increase economic and social mobility (Bartik 1991). Employment growth can be achieved, according to this position, through tax breaks and other incentives to businesses to locate in areas with higher rates of poverty and unemployment. In other words, the market is considered the most effective way of promoting growth. Capital investment generates new jobs, which ultimately puts pressure on wages to increase. As labor markets tighten, employers will be more likely to hire the unemployed and low-income workers. In addition, the demand for workers will attract more workers to the area who bring with them an increased tax base. The result of this process is lower poverty and unemployment rates, as well as increased wages. Higher employment levels also contribute to increased government revenues, which can lead to improved services and/or lower taxes. This too can provide incentives for additional businesses and workers to locate in the community. Community development programs are criticized for not having an appreciable effect on the business climate in neighborhoods. In addition, government programs are often viewed as providing disincentives for the poor to enter the labor market (Mead 1992).

On the Left, there is much more support for government programs providing social services, such as subsidized housing, food, job training and childcare, to assist low-income families. Economic growth in recent decades has provided few benefits, it is argued, to the poor and unemployed (Blank 1997). The benefits have primarily gone to the wealthiest individuals, while wages have stagnated for most workers. The political shift to austerity and neoliberalism has left many of the poor and working-class families without adequate social support. Governmental services are necessary to help individuals maximize their capacity. At various times, religious organizations and non-profit organizations have taken the lead role in providing social services, but the responsibility has fallen largely to state and federal governments. Community development, it is argued, can never match the ability of local, state and federal governments in providing the services that poor people need. The critique assumes that government intervention through social programs is the only viable way to counteract the negative effects of market dynamics and to provide the safety net that enables residents to be productive workers and citizens.

A third way, the “community option”, receives much less attention by policymakers and academics (Clavel et al. 1997). The alternative to the market or government programs to address poverty and inequality is premised on place-based approaches that are rooted in locally controlled organizations (Bruyn and Meehan 1987). Although these strategies often continue to rely on market mechanisms and government programs, they have social objectives that also guide their decision making. Community-based economic development approaches are designed to improve

opportunities for women, minorities and the poor. By incorporating social goals, community-based strategies attempt to overcome some of the inherent weaknesses of markets and government programs (Green and Haines 2015).

A second important attribute of place-based approaches to poverty alleviation is that they typically engage local residents to identify strategies and goals. Local knowledge provides appropriate strategies that fit local conditions. In addition, participation by residents increases the effectiveness of programs and builds the capacity to address other issues in the community. In other words, residents develop a sense of “agency” rather than as an object of social change.

Finally, place-based approaches tend to be much more holistic than other strategies and they recognize the way in which a wide variety of factors (housing, transportation, job training and social services) interact to impact low-income residents. Low-income workers need appropriate training for jobs that are available in the area, but they also must have access to affordable housing and healthcare, as well as public transportation, to gain access to these jobs. Many government programs fail to provide the type of integrated support that low-income workers and the unemployed need to function in the labor market.

Place-based approaches to poverty alleviation increasingly rely heavily on leveraging local resources that are available in the area, including individuals, organizations and institutions (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993). An asset-based approach represents an alternative to many community development programs that focus on the problems and needs of poor communities (Green and Goetting 2010). Place-based approaches work best when they build the capacity of communities to mobilize and leverage these local assets. Community assets include individual, organizational, institutional, physical and cultural resources.

Individual assets, such as experience and skills, are frequently overlooked in poor neighborhoods (McKnight 1995). This is especially the case for the unemployed or individuals on public assistance. These people have something to contribute to the community, but they are seldom viewed as a resource.

Organizations provide important social resources through social networks that are established through interaction over time. These organizations can play a key role in mobilizing residents, as well as providing continuity to a community development effort. Saul Alinsky (1969) was one of the first community organizers to recognize the power of organizations in building power.

Local institutions play a significant role in the community development process by providing a wide variety of resources, such as jobs, purchasing power and space for social interaction (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993). Schools, hospitals and libraries hold assets that often are not fully used in most communities. Mobilizing these different types of asset is critical to the success of community-based development. It does not mean that communities rely entirely on their own resources, but residents need to mobilize these assets to gain access to institutional and organizational resources outside the community.

The physical resources of a community include things like buildings, parks and other amenities. But they also include abandoned buildings and vacant lots that can be critical resources in a development effort. One of the most heralded community development efforts over the past few decades is the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston (Medoff and Sklar 1994). This neighborhood was granted the power of eminent domain from the City of Boston to take control over abandoned property in the neighborhood. This property was then used in their development effort to build affordable housing.

Cultural resources are frequently overlooked as community assets (Florida 2002). In many communities, music festivals, local theaters, art fairs and other related activities are viewed as a benefit to local residents, but also as an attraction to others outside the community. These resources can be enhanced and promoted as part of a community development strategy.

In the following section, I briefly discuss the role of place-based development in US policy and some of the tensions or contradictions in the past. Place-based development has evolved over time, with a much greater reliance on market-oriented approaches. This emphasis may limit the effectiveness of these programs in addressing the problems of poverty and inequality.

Place-Based Development in History

Many people trace the origins of place-based development to the Progressive Era at the turn of the 20th century in the USA (Green and Haines 2015). Progressives believed that effective social change meant that intervention should be holistic, collaborative between experts and residents, and participatory. The settlement house movement, such as the Hull House in Chicago that was established by Jane Addams, was exemplary of this effort. At the turn of the century, there was an extraordinarily large wave of immigrants arriving in many of the major cities in the USA. The settlement house movement sought to provide adult education and social services to help integrate immigrants into the larger society. The focus of these efforts was on the neighborhoods where poverty was concentrated. There was no attempt to address the broader factors that affected the quality of life in these communities. In fact, many of the efforts during this period were sponsored and supported by the elite in order to preserve social order in urban areas.

The Great Society programs of the 1960s ushered in a variety of place-based programs that required the poor to engage in efforts to improve their neighborhoods. Although these programs involved a strong federal presence, they emphasized the importance of public participation in redevelopment efforts. It should be pointed out that there was also a political dimension to these programs. The Democratic Party sought to mobilize support among the minorities in urban areas. These programs provided federal support for their activities and gave them the power to define and implement them. Three programs stand out: Community Action Program (CAP), Model Cities and the Special Impact Program (SIP).

CAP was probably the most controversial of these Great Society programs because it required the “maximum feasible participation” of residents in developing and delivering programs for the poor. The program provided federal funding directly to non-profit organizations to help provide employment opportunities, job training and food assistance in poor neighborhoods. It organized these efforts outside local governments (and power structures). Critics of CAP suggested that it raised unrealistic expectations among the poor and contributed to the urban riots of the 1960s when it failed to meet expectations (Moynihan 1969). Obviously, mayors and local officials were upset that federal funds would not be controlled by them at the local level. One outcome of these programs, however, was the enhanced political power of minority groups. This ultimately led to the rise of minority political officials in many cities for the first time.

The SIP provided funds to support community development corporations (CDCs). CDCs were designed to be locally controlled organizations that focus on development activities (especially housing projects) in a community. Although they have been relatively successful and have grown to more than several thousand CDCs today, the evidence on the effectiveness of CDCs in meeting the demand for affordable housing is lacking (Stoutland 1999). In addition, there is concern that CDCs may be coopted by their dependency on external sources of financing (Stoecker 1997).

In response to the federal programs of the 1960s, the Republican administrations of the 1970s shifted resources to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Through the CDBG programs, the federal government provided more flexible funds for communities

to improve conditions for low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Again, the plan required public participation in decisions about how these funds would be used. In some cases, however, CDBG has been used to promote development that displaces residents or is a direct subsidy to businesses.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the federal government shifted its focus to promoting community development through the concept of Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC). These federal programs provided tax incentives and loans to businesses in a specific area to create jobs for local workers. In addition, the programs provided support for workers, such as job training, childcare and transportation. One of the chief criticisms of these programs has been that the subsidies for businesses may be unnecessary and that the tax benefits have very little impact on the decision making of employers in these areas (Green et al. 1996).

The Obama administration replaced the EZ/EC program with a new set of place-based programs to address poverty. The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative was designed to provide funds for redevelopment in neighborhoods with high concentrations of rental housing. Participating neighborhoods are required to develop a transformational plan that identifies improvements for vacant properties, housing, services and education.

There are other numerous place-based programs that have been initiated by the federal and state governments over time. Research on the effectiveness of these programs has suggested that they have had a limited impact. In some cases, the programs have lacked sufficient resources to show any impact. This was certainly the case with the Great Society programs of the 1960s when resources were diverted to the Vietnam War instead of domestic social programs. Other programs have been initiated by outside organizations and institutions, and there is very little grassroots support for the efforts. In the next section, I discuss some of the other reasons for ineffectiveness of many place-based programs.

Federal Community Development Policy Weaknesses

Federal support for community development in the USA has always suffered from programs that have contradictory effects, or as Alice O'Connor (1999) suggests, they have been "swimming against the tide". For example, the place-based programs discussed above have focused on neighborhoods and communities that tend to have high poverty and unemployment rates. The goal is to provide support and incentives for redevelopment projects in these geographic areas. At the same time, there are many federal policies that undermine development efforts in these areas, such as highway subsidies that make it easier for workers to commute from suburbs to central cities and tax incentives for businesses to move to new areas. Tax deductions for mortgage interest also facilitated population shifts to the suburbs after World War II. Many cities also encourage reinvestment in poor neighborhoods that ultimately leads to gentrification. Gentrification can make it more difficult for poor residents to remain in the neighborhood and ultimately does not produce benefits for the intended population. The result is that many federal, state and local policies undermine the efforts to revitalize concentrated poverty neighborhoods in many central cities.

A second characteristic of federal programs addressing poverty is administrative fragmentation. Community development programs are administered across several federal agencies, including Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services. It is very difficult to coordinate programs across numerous agencies that have their own organizational culture, stakeholders and structure.

Another feature of the federal programs for community development is that they are a "two-tiered" system of provision. Most of the programs for poor communities are means tested—

they are dependent on meeting criteria, such as unemployment rate, poverty rate or median income. Programs for middle-class communities, however, are not means tested and are available to everyone. One example is the home mortgage interest tax credit that is available to all homeowners, even second homes. Middle-class residents do not need to qualify for this tax credit, while low-income residents need to meet numerous criteria to qualify for housing assistance.

Finally, federal programs (and foundations) for community development tend to be prescriptive and focus on the issues established by organizations and institutions rather than goals generated from below. Funding often is focused on specific topics and limits the ability of communities to use these resources for other issues they are facing.

In the next section, I briefly discuss how community development programs can more effectively be structured to address the needs of poor communities.

Institutional Innovations: Collective Ownership and Control

One of the chief weaknesses of place-based approaches to poverty alleviation is that they seldom address the issue of ownership and control of key institutions in localities (DeFilippis 2004). Local institutions are important because they influence access to resources and information, as well as shape social interaction. Meaningful community development often involves transformation of key institutions to enable residents to better control land, labor and capital (Williamson et al. 2002). I focus the following discussion about institutional innovation and transformation on three key threats to communities: capital mobility; land development; and financial disinvestment. I argue that institutional change in most poor neighborhoods is necessary to effectively respond to the external forces that affect these communities.

Capital mobility threatens community stability. Globalization facilitates the flow of capital and creates new competition among places (Friedman 2007). In many cases, businesses are profitable operating in abandoned communities, but they can earn a higher profit rate elsewhere. When businesses leave a community, this has devastating effects not only on the workers and families, but other households and businesses in the region. Dislocation has been found to have an impact on crime, divorce rates and other disruption to family and community life (Bluestone and Harrison 1982). In addition, plant closings lead to declines in tax revenue and additional demands on social services. For many small cities and towns, the loss of a key institution (such as a grocery store, restaurant or retail establishment) can leave a void that is difficult to fill. William Wilson (1987) has shown how the loss of manufacturing jobs in most urban areas has contributed to the loss of the middle class in these areas and has ultimately led to the rise in concentrated poverty.

In response to the threat or actual harm created through capital mobility, many communities have turned to community or worker ownership as a survival strategy (Kruse et al. 2011; Shuman 2000). Sometimes community ownership may involve local or state government investment, but often it does not (Green et al. 1990). Community ownership means that establishments or institutions will be locally owned and controlled. Communities or neighborhoods may have only one grocery store or restaurant. If that business closes due to a retirement or the franchise owners decide that the profits are not high enough, the community is left without these services. If there is enough interest, residents can pool resources to support these businesses organized as a cooperative or a non-profit organization. In other instances, communities that do not have access to broadband internet or renewable sources of energy are providing these services for residents rather than relying on the private sector.

One of the best examples of community ownership is the Green Bay Packers (an NFL football team). The City of Green Bay, Wisconsin is the smallest city in the USA with a professional football team. Although many franchises move to new cities to obtain a better financial deal, such as a new stadium, the Packers will always remain in the Green Bay area because they are community, rather than privately, owned. This form of ownership provides stability and can effectively generate jobs and wellbeing in the community.

Community and worker ownership typically faces some common obstacles. Access to capital from traditional financial institutions is difficult for community organizations because they lack collateral or credit history. Technical assistance is usually oriented toward for-profit organizations and is often inappropriate for cooperatives and non-profits. For example, business schools offer very few instructional programs on managing cooperatives or non-profits. Similarly, small business development centers tend to focus on entrepreneurs interested in for-profit enterprises rather than alternative forms of organization. Finally, management of these types of organization can be more difficult because few individuals have experience in this context. Because there are multiple objectives, not just profit maximization, it takes a different type of managerial expertise.

Although community and workers ownership accounts for a relatively small share of the US economy, it can play a critical role for those localities in which they are located. It may not replace all of the jobs that have been lost to globalization and economic restructuring, but it can provide more sustainable solutions for a region's economy. Community- and worker-owned firms still must be responsive to markets, but they remain rooted in the locality. It is this structural difference between community/worker ownership and the corporate forms of organization that is so important for community development.

A second threat to community stability is land development (Logan and Molotch 1987). Population growth can lead to the intensification of land use and ultimately to pressure on housing costs. Although existing homeowners can benefit from the increased value of their homes, it also means that they pay more in property taxes and long-term residents may not be able to stay in their homes and renters may not be able to remain in their apartments (Capek and Gilderbloom 1992). Land development can also change the character of the community in ways that do not benefit existing residents. Promotion of big box stores and other chain stores, for example, can lead to the loss of small businesses in the area (Halebsky 2010).

In response to these pressures, many neighborhoods and communities have adopted one of several social housing models (Davis 1994). One of the most popular models is the community land trust. Land trusts enable landowners and homeowners to protect their property from the negative effects of markets forever. Typically, control over the "development rights" of the land is transferred to a non-profit organization that will protect the land permanently. Homeowners and landowners can use the property as they normally would, but they lose the right to sell it for a market price.

Land trusts are often used to maintain affordable housing options in neighborhoods that are undergoing development or gentrification. When housing units are incorporated into a land trust, the value of the unit is controlled by the land trust (not the market). The market price for resale is limited by the land trust so as to keep housing affordable. Homeowners benefit from any improvements they have made to the property. Similarly, land trusts are used in many rural areas for conservation purposes. Communities purchase land to protect key natural resources, such as agricultural land or property that plays a key role in the local ecology.

Communities interested in developing land trusts are often faced with the difficulty of purchasing land (and housing). Most non-profit organizations do not have the financial resources required to purchase a large number of properties or houses, so it is very difficult to expand.

There also are legal technicalities in forming and administrating the organization. Land trusts can sometimes be very confusing to residents who may be worried about their investment and development rights.

Community land trusts are probably one of the most effective ways of keeping land out of development or maintaining affordable housing in a neighborhood that is experiencing rapid growth. Most other policies, such as zoning, intended to shape development may be temporary. Political officials can always change the policies under the pressure of developers and other interests. Land trusts, however, can be permanent and more directly address the structural issues of land markets.

The third threat to community is financial disinvestment. Poor and minority communities tend to lack access to financial capital (Parzen and Kieschnick 1992). There may be several reasons for this situation, including racial discrimination, perceived risk by lenders, incomplete information, transaction costs or lack of collateral or credit history among borrowers. In most cases, there is available financial capital in these communities, but it is often placed in institutions that invest these resources outside the community (Cortese 2011).

In response to these obstacles, there are a growing number of community development financial institutions (CDFIs). Some common examples of these institutions are: Community Development Credit Unions (CDCUs), community development loan funds, revolving loan funds and microenterprise loan funds. Each type of CDFI is directed at different populations. For example, microenterprise loan funds direct very small loans to entrepreneurs to help start a business. Revolving loan funds help existing businesses expand in the community. Community development loan funds channel funds to development opportunities. Community Development Credit Unions help local residents with consumer loans.

These institutions have a few characteristics in common. First, they only make loans to residents and businesses in a specific geographic area. This size of the market can vary widely from a specific neighborhood to a broader region, such as a county in rural areas. Second, CDFIs are social enterprises, which means that they must make a profit, but they also have social objectives (Tasch 2008). These social objectives often focus on improving opportunities for women- and minority-owned businesses and providing affordable housing options to working and non-working poor.

CDFIs can be a viable option for residents in poor neighborhoods. Currently, they do face some limits. CDFIs can only have a very limited impact because they tend to be small and it is difficult for them to expand. Most CDFIs are initially funded by foundations and federal and state governments. At this point, the level of funding is insufficient to meet the demand for these funds. Most CDFIs do not earn a high enough profit rate to expand their operation. As a result, it is often difficult to manage the contradictory goals of profits and social benefits at the same time, although the evidence suggests that institutions like microenterprise loan funds have very small loan loss records (Green and Haines 2015).

Community efforts to promote greater community ownership and control need access to additional sources of finance, information and training. Traditional institutions tend to foster dependency, rather than independence, and are ill prepared to serve the needs of these alternatives. Although foundations have been interested in supporting some of these alternative organizations, they are not meeting the demand for these resources. I believe an alternative set of intermediaries could provide the necessary support.

There are some excellent models that could be used to develop these alternative intermediaries. The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) provides training and resources for community development corporations. The Center for Community Self-Help in Durham, North Carolina offers support for worker-owned firms. Similar types of institutions could be expanded to the

national level to provide assistance to community-owned businesses, community land trusts and community development financial institutions. These intermediaries also could serve as advocates for alternative community development institutions and aggregate development funding from various sources. They could help attract financial support for various foundations, corporations and the federal government. In addition, they could lobby for legislation that may negatively affect the ability of communities to adopt these alternative institutional structures.

In addition to the role of intermediaries, there is a need for public policy changes to recognize and support the potential of community ownership and control. In several states, cities and towns are legally prevented from competing with utilities by providing Internet services. These types of restrictions are usually established to prevent competition with existing utility companies. They limit the development potential of smaller communities that often lack access to these services through other providers.

In addition, many states have policies that make it costly and difficult for communities to incorporate their businesses. Community ownership is a different business model and often does not look like sole proprietorship. Public policy needs to recognize and support these different business models.

Conclusions

Community-based antipoverty efforts are often criticized because many of the causes of poverty and inequality are located outside the community. Structural factors, such as economic restructuring, residential segregation and institutional discrimination, are major contributors to poverty and inequality. In addition, as the federal government has attempted to rein in the deficit and reduce support for social programs, communities are more limited in their ability to address poverty and inequality.

Place-based approaches are constrained in their efforts to overcome these structural forces. They can, however, contribute significantly to broader efforts to ameliorate poverty. Asset-based community development is premised on the idea that most communities have resources that are underutilized. I have argued that institutional innovation, especially in the form of land trusts, community-owned businesses and CDFIs, can more effectively address the root causes of inequality and poverty. This approach recognizes the significance of local assets and points to the importance of institutional change to protect and leverage these assets. The primary weakness of these approaches at this time is that there is not enough support from the federal government or foundations to grow these alternatives.

Alternative intermediaries could also help these place-based development efforts overcome many of the limitations they face. Intermediaries could play another critical function of linking place-based development efforts into a more regional or national mass movement (Alperovitz 2013). These intermediaries, then, could serve as a political voice for poor neighborhoods and advocate for public policies to better serve their residents. It is important to recognize the diversity among poor neighborhoods. For example, there is growing evidence that poverty has moved from the central city to suburbs in many metropolitan areas. The issues in these neighborhoods may look quite different than those in the inner city. Similarly, there are significant differences across poor neighborhoods occupied by different racial and ethnic groups. The key to building a broader community development movement, then, will be to organize around key issues that cut across different communities of color and regions (Warren 2001).

There is growing concern that globalization of economic markets has failed to provide benefits for the poor and low-wage workers. Even during recent periods of economic growth, poverty rates have not declined appreciably and wages have stagnated. At the same time, there does not

appear to be broad support to increase social support through government programs for the poor and there are questions raised about the impacts of minimum wage laws established by states and municipalities. Place-based strategies for poverty alleviation provide an intermediate position between the extremes of increasing government dependence and relying entirely on economic growth to solve the problems. Place-based approaches work within a market framework, but embed the market within social objectives. Similarly, place-based approaches leverage local resources to take advantage of government programs within community goals and visions.

It may be unrealistic to think that community development can completely overcome all of the structural forces that are affecting poor and working-class neighborhoods today. One of the most significant weaknesses of place-based approaches is that they cannot directly redistribute wealth or other resources. Place-based approaches to community development can foster efforts to raise the level of living for poor and low-income residents, but do nothing to address the concentration of wealth among the wealthiest individuals and corporations. Greater investment in innovative place-based development efforts, however, can soften the blow from these pressures and provide communities with greater autonomy and capacity to improve their quality of life. I also believe that a broader social movement to challenge these powerful political and economic forces will come from the grassroots efforts of community development programs.

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8

LAND, CULTURE, CULTURE LOSS AND COMMUNITY

Rural Insights from Sub-Saharan Africa

Uchendu Chigbu, Chimaraoke O. Izugbara and Walter T. de Vries

Introduction

The meaning of community development is highly diverse and contested. This is because the two key concepts, *community* and *development*, which make up community development have several meanings. This chapter focuses on *community* as a socially and geographically defined place “where people interact with each other and have psychological ties with each other and the place in which they live” (Garkovich 2011: 13). It views *development* as any action directed towards specific social, cultural, political, economic and environmental changes in societies. Although the meaning of community development is contested, it can be defined as activating collective action that would lead to progress in societies. Three essential aspects of community development are “collective action”, “informal learning” and “organization development” (Gilchrist and Taylor 2011: 10). Regardless of how community development is defined and in what form it takes in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), it requires an understanding of land issues and culture.

Some starting points of community development approaches in SSA would be the stabilization of community relations with the external environment, by providing access to public infrastructure; establishing public services; and setting up initiatives to reduce poverty. This is important because community development has long been a key term in poverty alleviation discourses about SSA. Moreover, approaches to community development have evolved over time, resulting in a set of principles that were based on professional practices. Although there is considerable disagreement about these principles and whether they are or should be based on professional practices (Mayo 2008), an important element that tends to be left out of these principles is the intrinsic relation that communities have with their land and culture. Both land and culture apply to most forms of community development in SSA.

Land and culture are heritages passed on to generations. Most cultures in SSA have their roots in the way they use and allocate land. As a result, their community development initiatives are bound to encounter challenges relating to how individuals or groups change and improve their relation to land. That is why it is crucial to connect the concept of community development to land issues, on the one hand, and to cultural issues on the other.

Understanding Community Development in SSA

Although Africa is a continent and not a country, many development initiatives and discourses have treated it as a homogeneous unit. With a size of more than 30 million km², the continent could include the geographic size of China, India and the United States, and still leave room enough to accommodate Europe. Its current population of 1.1 billion people is smaller than those of China and India. This makes Africa a continent with high potentials in spatial interactions—especially in the movement and distribution of people, goods and ideas within and between its human settlements. Expatriating on the above point, Ojike (1946: 5) notes that:

Africa is not a language, or a religion, or a race, or a government. Consequently, it is not a culture and there is nothing homogenous about it. But we speak of African languages, African religion, and African culture exactly in the same way we speak of European languages, European religion, and European culture. We all know that German culture is not identical with the English . . . In spite of these discrepancies in European religion, government, and languages as well as in social customs, we still have what we like to call European culture. So it is with Africa.

Africa is racially, linguistically and culturally diverse. The name, Africa, is a term used in identifying all indigenous and migrant ethnicities living in the second biggest continent in the world. Consequently, community development cannot be uniform and homogeneous across Africa. In SSA, community development is hinged on two different streams of vision: one that is derived from Western development theories and practices, and one that is rooted in local cultures. Its diverse geographical and social entities have made community development concepts in the continent complex. That is why it is hard to discern a clear concept of community development across the continent.

Community development in Africa not only concerns the physical aspect of a group of people but also includes the cultural, social, environmental, economic and political scenarios. Although this may be true for most community development efforts elsewhere, culture and land are particularly relevant in the SSA context because they present viable options for accommodating or integrating traditional customs and local knowledge within its existing community development structures (Abebe 2013). However, the land and culture elements differ from one part of Africa to another. Among these many different elements, land and culture play prominent roles in creating, developing and sustaining communities in the continent. Whether in rural or urban Africa, customs, heritage, landscape, geography, belief systems, social norms and values tend to influence the living pattern. They usually manifest in the practice of land tenure—or the modes in which people have access to land, how they use land and natural resources—and culture. Land tenure offers a framework for community economic development because it serves as a control mechanism in the lives of people in SSA communities (Chigbu 2014). As a result, land and culture provide two important perspectives from which the concept of community development is viewable in Africa. Community development in Africa, although viewed as a relatively new construct, has roots in its pre-colonial customs and the public administration practices of its European colonizers. Both of these contexts provide an essential background for why and how the concept of community development has evolved.

Pre-Colonial Legacies of Community Development

Literature on community development in SSA ranges from missionaries' and explorers' accounts of African communities in the 19th and 20th centuries to community development programs

in the post-independence period. However, it can be argued that there was already a local understanding of community in many sub-Saharan societies. Traditions of self-help and normative ideas about social change have been in existence in nearly all pre-colonial human settlements. Also, imperial declarations by monarchies that emerged in early history established basic notions of community membership and rules within the community. There are many examples of SSA pre-colonial states that practiced community development at different times in their history. Many of these pre-colonial states practiced community development based on specifically defined viewpoints on community welfare. The Kushite (780–755 BCE), an ancient kingdom situated in what is now Sudan, had a politically gendered idea of community. Men and women had their institutionalized roles recognized and protected by the monarchy. Women were meant to provide political stability between the male kings. The Buganda kingdom (1100 CE till date) in Uganda, with its extensive history of land annexation, views community from the perspective of land dependency. It viewed community development from the standpoint of providing land access to its citizens to cater for their everyday needs. In the Buganda worldview, rivers, trees, mountains and other features of their physical environment were part of the concept of community. The Kingdom of Zimbabwe (1220–1450 CE), in the location of modern-day Zimbabwe, expressed its idea of community development through the erection of stone structures for both housing and sociospatial interactions between its citizens and its place. Other pre-colonial SSA empires that had similar experiences include the Benin (1440–1897), Bamana (1712–1896), Lunda (1660–1887) and Nri (1043–1911) among many others. In these pre-colonial states, community development meant pursuing implicit and explicit goals with the aim of achieving (through collective efforts) improvements in the way people lived within defined social, political, cultural and physical boundaries. Even before Robert Owen (1771–1851) and other Western thinkers sought to create perfect communities through community planning, there existed African thinkers who aimed to establish utopian communities in SSA. Among these were Shaihu Usman dan Fodio (1754–1817 in Nigeria) and Shaka kaSenzangakhona (1787–1828 in South Africa). While most of these SSA thinkers had their community development visions and worked towards institutionalizing them in their states, most of their approaches were based on declarative enforcements. However, their community development legacies were passed down to pre- and post-colonial SSA.

Colonial and Post-Colonial Administrative Influences

The Berlin Conference (1884–1885) initiated the *Scramble for Africa*, which self-empowered some European countries to invade African countries for economic interests. Differing opinions exist on the colonial experience of SSA, especially concerning its economic, social and political consequences. This is not surprising because colonialism was practiced differently (and to an extent, indifferently) throughout SSA. Its implications differed, and still differ, from one SSA country to another. However, it had (and still has) significant influences on the idea of community development in SSA.

In anglophone colonial Africa, the institutionalization of community development practices began with the provision of general social services in 1906 and institutionalized with the establishment of a Tropical Africa Medical and Sanitation Committee in 1909. It was followed by the establishment of another advisory committee on Native Education for Africa in 1923. Between 1925 and 1930, specific advisers in different areas of local development—such as finance, agriculture, finance, medicine and economics, among many others—were appointed for all the British colonies in Africa. The Beveridge Report and the introduction of the welfare policies in Britain led to the introduction of Colonial Development and Welfare Acts (1940 and 1945)

in its colonies in Africa. These Acts “brought into British colonial administration in Africa a new era of state-sponsored social welfare initiatives first described as mass education but from 1948 termed community development” (Smyth 2004: 418).

In francophone colonies, the colonial administration structures (with the view to integrating communities into French culture) were simply replicated from France. Community development in this perspective disregarded time, place and local context. With the passage of the *Loi Cadre* (Reform Act) by the French parliament in 1956, these colonies started enjoying more authority on development decisions. The *Loi Cadre* empowered the francophone African countries to assume self-government. Still, many of these countries embraced the French ideas of community development.

Similar situations occurred in other countries under European colonial authorities. Colonial development plans were enacted through various social services departments and funded through colonial development and welfare funds. In all cases, these efforts were based on the principle of state intervention—a principle conceived by most colonial administrators as a way of intervening in decisions leading to improvements in the development of their colonial territories. It positioned the colonial administrators as key agents in social welfare promotion. However, their task was limited to primary enforcement of law and order.

After the Second World War, the interest of the USA in Africa started growing. Human rights ideas, technological development and missionary activities from USA agencies and influential individuals put pressure on Europe to assume a non-imperialist approach to administration. Colonial administrators

sought to go beyond the rudimentary maintenance of law and order to communicate with their colonial subjects and seek their cooperation in improvement schemes.

Smyth 2004: 420

This development initiated alternative ideas about community development in some colonies. Local community chiefs became more involved and empowered even though the activities under the umbrella of community development were mostly agrarian in nature.

In early post-colonial Africa, community development remained a major aspect of sociocultural or political ideologies. In line with socialist ideology, *Ujamaa* village development (meaning *socialism* in Swahili) was established in Tanzania by the then President Julius Nyerere (1922–1999). *Ujamaa* was an integrated approach to community economic development of villages in Tanzania. It promoted the principle of generosity and the practice of shared social welfare and wealth. Based on the communal concept of living, it stressed self-reliance of village groups. In South Africa, the ideology of *Ubuntu* was propagated as an idea for community development. As a way of life, *Ubuntu* has been known in South Africa from the mid-19th century, although it became an African development mantra during the anti-apartheid period (1980s to 2000s). *Ubuntu* is a word that denotes human nature, goodness and kindness. The *Ubuntu* ideology is also related to the *Harambee* (Swahili concept for reciprocity of human kindness) practiced in Kenya. In other parts of Africa (e.g. Ghana, Ethiopia, Angola, Nigeria, Chad and Zambia) similar community development ideologies exist based on cultural practices. This resulted in an increase of national policies and strategy documents that embrace new conceptualizations and priorities of communities and their development.

Prevailing Ideas of Community in SSA

Different ideas of community are encountered in SSA. Constructivist thinkers treat the “phenomena of the social world—such as ‘community’. . .—not as ‘things’ but as the results of

processes of production and reproduction that operate by means of continuous communication and interaction” (Harneit-Sievers 2006: 4). From this point, community development depends on how people perceive social reality in a particular time- and space-dependent context. Communities in this perspective are non-homogeneous groups of people with varying norms and values. The goals and processes of community development are then the results of how communities, in their interactions with internal and external community developers, shape and reshape their viewpoints about their community and their goals. A crucial consequence of this way of thinking is that the path and shape of community development are non-rational or predictable, yet aligned with time- and space-dependent factors.

Positivist thinking, on the other hand, has been the norm in engineering and technological sciences and planning disciplines. Positivists assume that a social world can be shaped and reshaped, and rationally planned. Communities are conceptually reduced to fixed groups of people with homogeneous histories, norms and values. Community development is in this perspective a design-oriented rational exercise with particular, usually registered, groups of individuals. Plans are made in advance and executed. Success is evaluated regarding the results obtained vis-à-vis the plans, and not necessarily vis-à-vis the changed local context or the acceptance within the community. Some scholars (Manyanga 1996; Chirikure et al. 2010; de Beer and Swanepoel 2012) have advocated community from a nativist thinking. In this regard, communities are considered an essential aspect of traditional African life—and defined from the aspect of common unity.

The contemporary challenge is that all of these viewpoints are encountered simultaneously in the SSA context of community development initiatives. In some cases or situations, the idea of community in SSA has been imagined (Anderson 1983) as situations that can be produced (Appadurai 1995). It has also been viewed either as conditions that can be constructed (Lentz 1998) or as symbolic (Cohen 1993), or can be built, renewed or lost (Chigbu 2013a). In all of these perspectives, there is always some form of evolution in the process. In political situations, such an evolution can be engendered through mass movement—as in the case of some South African social groups formed during the fight against apartheid. There are instances where environmental activism has engendered new forms of communities—for example, in the case of social groups from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. In countries like Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, Ghana, Angola, Zambia, Ethiopia and Namibia (among many other SSA countries), social grouping is central to the formation of communities. This usually takes the form of geographies or localities, tribes, languages, cultures or sub-cultures, ethnicities, clans, kinship, lineage or gender.

In the SSA context, *cyberspace* has had its influence on community (especially in annihilating distance in the conception of communities), but it has not destroyed the importance of place as a focal point of community. *Place* remains important because it provides the platform for face-to-face interactions between individuals and groups and helps to nurture and sustain identities, values, cultures and other interactional elements within *place* over time. It is the platform from where natural resource (land, forests, water, fisheries and pastures) is accessed by communities and individuals. In most SSA communities, governments lack the capacity to implement countrywide land legislations, while many communities gain access to land resources and livelihood through local land tenure systems. To date, community development initiatives in SSA have poverty alleviation or livelihood improvement components and it is important to understand the land or culture factors for better community development implementation.

Elements of Land and Culture in Community Development in SSA

From the SSA perspective, *community* connotes a group of people that share commonalities in all or any of the following—ancestry, cultural practices, place habitation, heritage and interests—

based on common or diverse goals (Chigbu 2015a). These attributes of community engender a mix of constructivist and positivist approaches to community development in SSA. They reflect relational, interactional, geographical, ethnical, place-attachment or place-based interests and cultures shareable by those (members) who make up a community. Furthermore, the place factor is central to SSA community conceptions because it encapsulates social, heritage, cultural and political units as seen in decentralized structures of administrative authority in most SSA countries. This perspective of community emphasizes the importance of group and group activities. Community is, therefore, livable and experiential in SSA. It evokes a strong consciousness of common and shared interests that are based on collective foundations (Table 8.1).

The consciousness of community in SSA societies goes beyond individual self-consciousness to communal consciousness of culture—as an essential part of the community development. It also goes beyond mere geographical descriptions or boundaries of human settlements, to denote localized relationships centered on interactions between people and institutions as a common. This way, community is viewed as unique human association founded on personal and group ties with a sense of attachment as well as belonging to place (see Table 8.1).

Despite the generalized understanding of the community in SSA, the practical implementation of community development in SSA remains contentious. The situation is evident in national policies and implementation strategies. In some countries, the task of community development lies almost entirely with the governments (e.g. Eritrea). In other countries, the task is largely handled by civil society organizations (CSOs) (e.g. post-war states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo). In some other countries, the task is almost equally done from government and CSO perspectives (e.g. Senegal, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa). CSO is a contested term. In its most general sense, “the term is broad and inclusive of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), charities, trusts, foundations, advocacy groups, and national and international non-state associations, which are all particular types of organization within civil society (Hutter and O’Mahony 2004: 1).

In general, the type of activities that are undertaken under the umbrella of community development in most SSA countries is very similar because countries in the region share high similarity regarding development needs and challenges (World Bank 2015). Some examples are provided below:

- Assistance in government-funded community welfare initiatives;
- Self-help at village and municipal level;

Table 8.1 Case Study of Korogocho and Viwandani

In the slum communities of Korogocho and Viwandani in Nairobi (Kenya), community members’ narratives of themselves in relation to community development provide evidence that a sense of belonging to place shapes views on community development in SSA.

The community members expressed awareness of the lack of development, insecurity, and neglect in their neighborhoods. They shared common interests in the transformation of their communities into safer and healthier settlements. The residents of Korogocho put it this way: *“This is not the Koch we want to see. We want Korogocho to be a place where people come to live peacefully and do business without fear and where you can proudly call home . . . and raise your children.”* In Viwandani, similar sentiments were expressed: *“Viwandani is not the best place to live in. . . . It is insecure and dirty here and only poor people live here. We do not have opportunities . . . Viwandani can be improved so that we can be proud to live and work here.”*

Source: Izugbara, C., Tikkanen, R. and Barron, K. (2014) “Men, masculinity, and community development in Kenyan slums”. *Community Development* 45(1): 32–44.

- Appropriate management and use of natural resources—for example, forest, pastoral water, farmland, among many others;
- Service delivery: financial services, transport, hospitals and health services, education and information and communication technology (ICT);
- Empowerment: youth engagement, gender awareness, girls' and women's empowerment programs, livelihood enhancement and poverty reduction programs;
- Appropriate identification of community needs and priority;
- Community welfare improvements;
- Skills development projects for improved livelihood earnings;
- Infrastructural provision—for example, electricity, schools, hospitals, roads and water; and
- Agriculture and industrial development: farm extension services, agricultural incentives, skills development and awareness creation.

The above list is not exhaustive. It summarizes the typical activities that are carried out in community development initiatives across various SSA countries. Depending on particular cases, these activities may be initiated or implemented by governments, private foundations or socio-cultural organizations. Other agencies who initiate community development in SSA communities include professional associations, non-profit and for-profit organizations and communities (or groups of people). Individuals or special groups (e.g. women and youth groups) can also initiate the community development process. In some cases, these agencies (or initiators) of community development have different views on the use of the concept. For instance, whereas most SSA governments view community development from the perspective of infrastructural provision (Westoby 2014), CSOs may see it from the perspective of empowerment or participation. Individuals (e.g. philanthropists) and special groups (e.g. village organizations) may view it from the perspective of self-help, some ethnic or regional groups may view it from the perspective of sociocultural and economic development. These approaches, together with the attachment most people put into land and culture as key elements of community development, make community development tough to define. However, motives—such as collective empowerment in gender equality, access to natural resources, participation and livelihood—provide a common ground for understanding the relevance of land and culture in community development in SSA.

In most societies of SSA, customs, practices, traditions and nature are rooted in land or place. The reason for this is that land guides the traditional economic systems. This makes land and all land-based activities relevant aspects of the peoples' cultures. The two aspects, land and culture, are embedded in community development. Their embeddedness in community development matters is one of the reasons why it is hard to isolate local economic development from community development; especially as most communities in SSA have livelihood or income-generating visions as the core of its community development agenda. In this regard, people particularly view land as representing a gift of nature in their places of settlement. Hence, land is seen as a natural gift for community development by most SSA communities. That makes land an indispensable element of community development in SSA (Figure 8.1).

As Figure 8.1 shows, the key elements of community development in SSA include *culture*, *welfare*, *people* (individuals and groups) and *place*. Among these four elements, *land* (a fifth element) stands at the core of community development. The reason is that land tenure systems are the lifelines of community life in SSA. Land tenure practices permeate across different aspects of community. The holding of land rights leads to ownership of place. On its own, "land tenure is the relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land" (Food Agricultural Organization of United Nations 2002). This constitutes

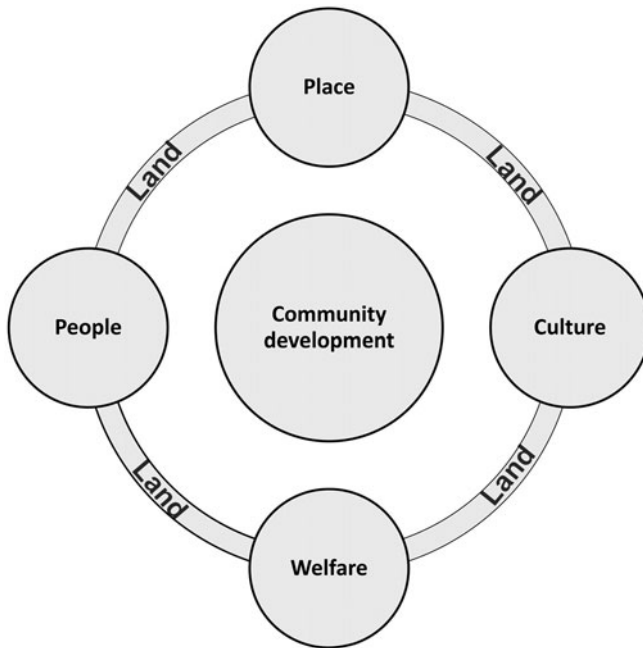


Figure 8.1 Key Elements of Community Development in SSA and their Relationship to Land.

the acceptable cultures related to the use of land. People on their part depend on land for most of their welfare, particularly as it relates to basic livelihood options. It is an institution that guides and regulates behaviors concerning how people relate to and act in their place. It, therefore, serves as a key institution that influences community development. Land tenure is the foundation on which *people* thrive, *culture* evolves, *welfare* is provided and *place* is identified.

It is the *people* and land that give concreteness to *place*. Without them, *place* is reduced to space. *Place* is, therefore, important because it consists of *land* (which has social, economic and political notions embedded in its conception through land tenure systems) and of *people* who are in constant search for ways to improve their welfare. The nature of *welfare* (general living condition) determines what the *people* need in their *place*. Land tenure systems are interwoven with cultures, and together, they influence the way of life of the people, especially in the rural areas. This makes land a cultural object, as well as an object for socioeconomic, spiritual and political well-being. It serves as the basis for shelter, food, religion and all livelihood activities. It is inseparable from community development because the people's livelihood is tied to the land or place factor in their culture. Land has been the basis of livelihoods for ages, as well as an inheritance from ancestors. Therefore, community life depends on it and community spirit is built around the use, conservation and holding of land through adherence to cultural norms about land. Hence, community development in SSA particularly depends on these—land and culture.

From the list of community development activities presented in this section, as well as explanations presented concerning the importance of land and culture in SSA community development conceptions, two key inferences are deducible. First, community development in SSA involves a set of activities still guided by traditional cultures, as well as conventional approaches. These manifest in designed programs and conscious movement towards sensitizing improvements in the welfare of defined groups of people sharing common interests. Second, community

development in most SSA countries includes local economic development. This is because of the dependence on land by most of the populations for their livelihood. From these forethoughts, community development in SSA entails collective conscious decisions and actions initiated to create socioeconomic capital and capacity development that can lead to improvements in all or any aspects of the living conditions of people. Usually, the people concerned would share a common interest (e.g. ancestral ties, geography, historical ties, sociopolitical systems and functions).

Approaches to Community Development in SSA

Approaches to community development in SSA, although related regarding philosophy or ideologies, may vary in on-the-ground application. This is due to the differences in the culture or processes of identifying local development needs by communities. It leads to differences regarding how they develop goals or objectives. Even more so, the inherent capacity of communities in taking action towards addressing their needs and enhancing their well-being in SSA varies widely. Also, the process of mobilizing and engaging agencies, individuals or groups, and institutions to participate in community development differs from one community to another. Furthermore, the procedures for agency development in the search for solutions to community problems—for example, consultation, participation and factors that allow adaptation to local realities—widely vary from one community to another. The implication is that community development in SSA, just as in many other parts of the global South, occurs within a diversity of contexts. This is why there exists a continuum of community development approaches (but largely influenced by pre-colonial heritage and international development agenda) in the region.

Table 8.2 highlights the breadth and diversity of community development approaches in SSA. These approaches have been presented based on their philosophical or ideological orientations. Community development approaches in SSA are not limited to this list (which is a generalized summary). However, most community development initiatives being implemented in SSA today fall within one or a combination of the listed approaches. The list excludes various other approaches that involve community service provisions, education, primary health care, malaria mitigation and HIV/AIDS. Most importantly, even where these approaches are practiced in all SSA countries, they are usually practiced in different ways. They are also either state- or community-led or CSOs-led or led by a combination these actors.

Some of these approaches identified have now been abandoned. One of them is the approach to community development implemented by the apartheid government of South Africa under policies relating to the removal of “black spots” and poorly situated areas as a betterment scheme. Some other approaches, although becoming increasingly irrelevant, are still being practiced in SSA—for example, modernization that is based on the assumption that SSA communities are backward and would embrace Western-style development. Other approaches include basic needs promotion, local development, women development and poverty reduction. What seems to be a missing link in the implementation of these approaches is the land or/and culture focus. Due to policy problems and the inability of development practitioners to integrate the land and culture needs (and problems of communities), community development outcomes have not been sustainable (Table 8.2).

Policy Neglect of Land and Culture in Community Development in SSA

From a policy perspective, poverty is a major problem in SSA. Different policies exist in SSA countries for poverty alleviation or eradication. The most striking objectives of these policies

Table 8.2 Selected Approaches to Community Development in SSA and their Philosophical or Ideological Bases

<i>Approaches</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Example of countries where it was practiced</i>	<i>Period of operation</i>
Community improvement	State protection	All SSA countries	Precolonial era
Self-help	Improving community initiative	All SSA countries	Precolonial era (ongoing)
Community administration	Colonialization	All SSA countries	Colonial era
“Black spots” removal	Apartheid or racial segregation	South Africa	1948 to 1994
Community modernization	Industrialization	All SSA countries	1950s (ongoing)
Villagization	<i>Ujamaa</i> (social welfare)	Tanzania	1960s–1970s
Agricultural extension	Technology transfer	Ghana, Kenya, Zambia and Nigeria	1960s (ongoing)
Community small-holder agriculture	Food security	All SSA countries	1960s (ongoing)
Environment and ecology	Sustainability	All SSA countries	1980s (ongoing)
Basic needs promotion	Social services provision	All SSA countries	1970s (ongoing)
Women development	Gender equality	All SSA countries	1970s (ongoing)
Local development	Economic development	All SSA countries	1990s (ongoing)
Governance	Institutional efficiency	All SSA countries	1990s (ongoing)
Poverty reduction	Wealth creation	All SSA countries	1990s (ongoing)
Participation empowerment	Community	All SSA countries	1990s (ongoing)
Asset based	Assets development	All SSA countries	2000s (ongoing)

include food security, social services provision, gender equality, economic development, wealth creation and community empowerment, among others. These objectives have strong linkages to land tenure. They cannot be achieved without addressing issues concerning land rights, land uses and inheritance cultures in community development. Unfortunately, most SSA countries do not have land policies that address community development issues. A land policy is a government framework that sets “agreed principles to govern ownership (or access to), use and management of land resources to enhance productivity and contribution to social, economic, political and environmental development and poverty alleviation” (African Union 2009: xiii). Since community development initiatives are not directly integrated into land policies in SSA, land and culture (through land tenure practices) become disengaged in community development implementations.

From a practitioner's perspective, there are many ways the understanding of land issues and cultural practices can help in attaining community development objectives. It can widen the knowledge base of community development in the areas of empowerment and participation, resilience, climate change responsiveness, gender, health and sanitation, and food security. For instance, integrating knowledge of land and cultural practices in community development efforts can help practitioners understand how communities can develop resilience to natural and social disasters. *Resilience* is a concept that is increasingly used to refer to a community's ability to anticipate, survive, respond and recover in the face of disaster, decline and hardship (Burkett 2014). Considering that flood, famine, drought and many socioeconomic and environmental challenges plague many SSA communities today, building resilience is necessary in community development in SSA. However, to build resilience, practitioners and communities must work together; and the local understanding of culture and land are crucial for developing sustainable approaches.

Land tenure and cultural practices have direct linkages to income generation, social exclusion, capacity development, social capital formation, community participation, mobilization and empowerment. Understanding the land and culture perspectives of community development is necessary for adapting working partnership with SSA people towards building healthy, productive and sustainable communities in the region. Some community development challenges that can be improved by understanding land and culture in SSA communities include local economic development, capacity development and social capital formation. Others are community participation, ecological development, mobilization and empowerment efforts and loss of community culture.

The Challenge of Culture Loss in Community Development in SSA

One of the most recent emerging community development challenges in SSA is loss of culture. It is the least written about, least talked about and least researched aspects of community development. Chigbu (2015b) identified it as a situation that manifests in the form of disappearance of cultural identity. In its simplest sense, loss of culture means the total or partial disappearance of aspects of culture that give unique identities to a community. Due to urbanization and globalization, some SSA societies have become vulnerable to loss of their traditional cultures. Another reason why loss of culture occurs in SSA is due to the exposure to and embracing ways of living and community development as practiced in the global North (or Western or developed economies). Many researchers have identified loss of culture as a key problem in community development in SSA. For example, Jackson (2004) raises an alarm on the issue of cultural degradation in Central Africa. Dapash and Kutay (2005) call attention to the same issue in East Africa. Manu and Kuuder (2012) identified loss of culture in West Africa. Chigbu (2013a: 821) reveals how "culture loss" is a challenge in SSA. The most affected are communities that have unique traditional patterns of life. In these communities, culture loss leads to distortions in their traditional cultures and identities. Many researchers have written about this concerning Twa (Jackson 2004), Maasai (Dapash and Kutay (2005), Kuku (Poggo 2006), Siringu (Manu and Kuuder 2012) and Igbo communities (Chigbu 2013b). The development of communities is inseparable from land (place) and culture (Table 8.3).

A loss of community defaces culture, and a loss of culture dismantles community uniqueness. In all cases, their consequences affect land (place). Likewise, a degradation of the environment or insecurity in landholding (and other aspects of land tenure) affects both culture and community. However, while a loss of community defaces culture instantly, a loss of culture takes a gradual dismantling of the unique factors that make a community. Loss of culture leads to

Table 8.3 Case Study of Uturu

In Nigeria, Uturu community (a rural community) has a long history of community development. Due to their dependence on modernization approaches, just as in most SSA communities, they are experiencing culture loss in the following aspects:

Impending loss of native dialect: preference in favor of other native language dialects instead of the original dialect of the people.

Weaknesses in sense of place: people are beginning to care less about the place, resulting in environmental degradation and loss of cultural landmarks.

Emergence of *placelessness*: locations lose a distinctive sense of place and its people are beginning to identify less with it due to insensitivity to the significance of place.

Emergence of *mental rural–urban* migration: a migratory trend whereby rural community members have developed a state of urban mentality even though they remain physically within their rural setting as it encourages *placelessness* and works against grassroots development.

Source: Chigbu, U. E. (2013) “Fostering rural sense of place: The missing piece in Uturu”, *Nigeria. Development in Practice* 23(2): 264–277.

deterioration in community life. Where such a situation arises, it is like losing the traceability of the identity of a community. Loss of culture is a reality in SSA communities. It is noticeable when the mark of identity, which makes a community unique, diminishes.

An example of how a loss of culture can result in the deterioration of community life is the loss of indigenous language within a community (see Table 8.3). The loss of indigenous language can destroy mediums of communication—for example, language that is one of the bonding fabrics of community. It also affects interactions, participation, commitment and place-attachment negatively. It can serve as one of the bases for making decisions on community affairs. This is important because SSA communities are known for striving to retain their unique identities for posterity. That is why “cultural preservation, social inclusiveness, and community-based solutions to local problems are particularly relevant” for avoiding loss of community in many locales (McGrath and Brennan 2011: 343).

The Land and Culture-Based Community Development (LCCD) Approach to Tackling Loss of Culture in SSA

“Every culture is known for something distinctive and inimitable to it” (Mawere 2015: 65). What make SSA communities distinct from each other are the physical character of their place, their land tenure system, traditional economy, languages, indigenous knowledge and ways of living (worldviews). Loss of culture affects all of these aspects of community uniqueness. Where this has occurred, it is important to reverse it by fostering stronger identities. Where this has not occurred, there is a necessity to put in place measures for prevention. As a way forward, an LCCD approach is necessary. The LCCD approach brings together two key issues in community development—cultural renewal and placemaking. Together the culture and land (place) factors form a basis to tackle loss of culture experienced by SSA communities in their community development challenges.

Cultural renewal involves renewing inherited cultural properties transferable to future generations. This is essential for community development in SSA. Cultural renewal involves evoking and re-establishing all cultural heritage themes within a particular community. It entails bringing back to life tangible and intangible cultural heritage so that people relate to them so

meaningfully that they elicit spiritual, social and economic values. Renewing tangible cultural symbols includes activities such as renovating, reinstating and using heritage objects (both movable and immovable) for identity promotion or other developmental purposes. In practicing LCCD, cultural renewal calls for four principal measures. These are diffusion, re-education, retention and assimilation of cultures.

Figure 8.2 shows that these four measures can help in aligning communities plagued by culture loss towards resuscitation. It is possible through six mediums. These include the enablement of culture awareness, culture conservatism, culture dynamism, culture progressivism, culture capacity building and culture networking.

Cultural re-education in the LCCD involves implementing formal or informal training or reorientation in communities to enable children to learn the traditional norms and heritages of their communities in such a way that it adds value to community life. Such a practice can serve as a means of tackling challenges such as destruction of cultural landscape and cultural objects, malpractices in performative arts and festivals. It can also help in creating an awareness of the traditional calendar systems and the concept of time in SSA communities—as well as the issue of language loss. This is possible by way of using traditional rulers and chiefs to sensitize community members to live more culturally. Traditional policies can encourage the adoption of native or indigenous languages as the major means of communication in all community affairs or occasions. Age-old skills (e.g. crafts) can be taught to the younger ones by those who have

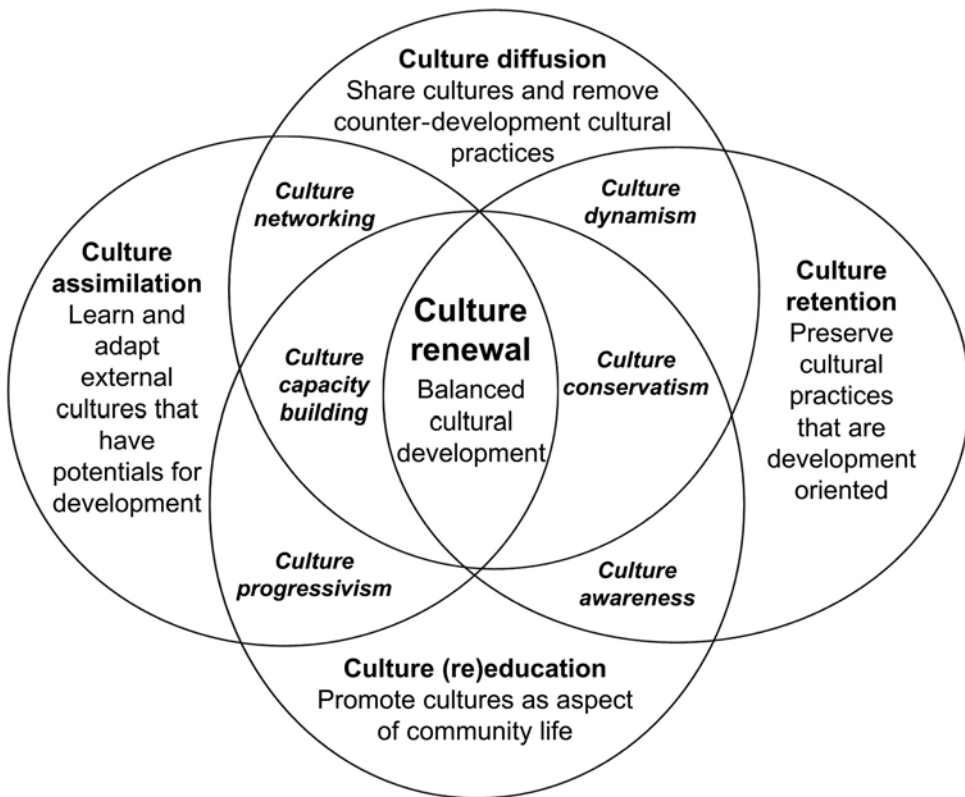


Figure 8.2 LCCD measures for aligning communities plagued by culture loss towards resuscitation.

these skills. In time, practices such as cultural crafts and occupational skills can serve as a way of living life culturally while deriving a livelihood from them.

Creating strong knowledge of the local place (homeland) can help community members to develop more affinity for protecting their landscape by avoiding activities that destroy cultural objects and outlook—issues relating to malpractices in performative arts and festivals, or ignorance of the traditional calendar system—made possible by reliving these events through constant practice. This means that festivals should be adhered to in a timely fashion, and their significance explained to all in ways that promote peace and harmony in community life. Putting all these into practice (based on educational principles) can result in strong cultural emblems that are practicable and can be preserved for posterity.

Cultural diffusion involves the spread of cultures from place to place. Communities should share cultural experiences in a way that allows their members to enrich each other's experience of their local cultures. It should also involve the erasure of traditions or practices that are counter-development—for example, gender discrimination limits development potentials. A gradual approach to the diffusion of cultures that are unfair and unjust to community members or are counter-development is recommended.

Cultural assimilation is necessary for sharing cultural experiences. This is possible if people are open to accepting and tolerating other cultures around them. Apart from being open to learning and sharing each other's cultures, individual community members need to have a strong knack for cultural retention. *Culture retention* implies preserving positive cultures. This will allow them to retain positive original or cultural ethics of living. Together, these four measures when followed can elicit renewal of practices related to the better understanding, promotion, tolerance, acceptance and application of cultures for community development. Communities bedeviled by loss of culture can benefit through LCCD by boosting these features through placemaking.

Placemaking, in the context of SSA, entails living culturally as a measure of community uniqueness and promoting the cultural identity and expressions of the culture being lived in connection to place. This is possible when it aims at building a cultural place for community life, and can serve as a linkage between the traditional (cultural) and formal economies. It could involve building modern infrastructures so that these align with cultural landscape and the environment. This is attainable by giving adequate priorities to the arts, marketplaces, traditional festivals (community rituals) and neighborhood issues in community process so that these reflect community history and culture. It can increase the interaction between the community and its natural environment in a way that is sustainable for the future generation. Placemaking involves a range of activities that emanate from a two-pronged vision.

As Figure 8.3 shows, the broad community development agenda consists of two concrete visions—improvements in community living through land and physical development, and improvements in culture. Implementing these visions implies embracing actions that can boost the socioeconomic (and livelihood) conditions and align cultural issues (identity, heritage and place) towards a development path that benefits people and place. In boosting a socioeconomic aspect of community, the focus should be on rebuilding destroyed and abandoned cultural objects in ways that they attract economic values. This can lead to organized community tourism. Existing customary land tenure systems should be made to support activities that bring economic development as well as participation in culture—for example, community foresting and crafts making. Farmers should be encouraged to cultivate cultural crops that form staple foods and others that have multiple uses. This will allow them to thrive and avoid extinction of species as well as increase the livelihood options of the people. These can lead to improvements in natural resources and cultural management practices. It can have positive linkages to actions that boost the identity, livability and uniqueness of place.

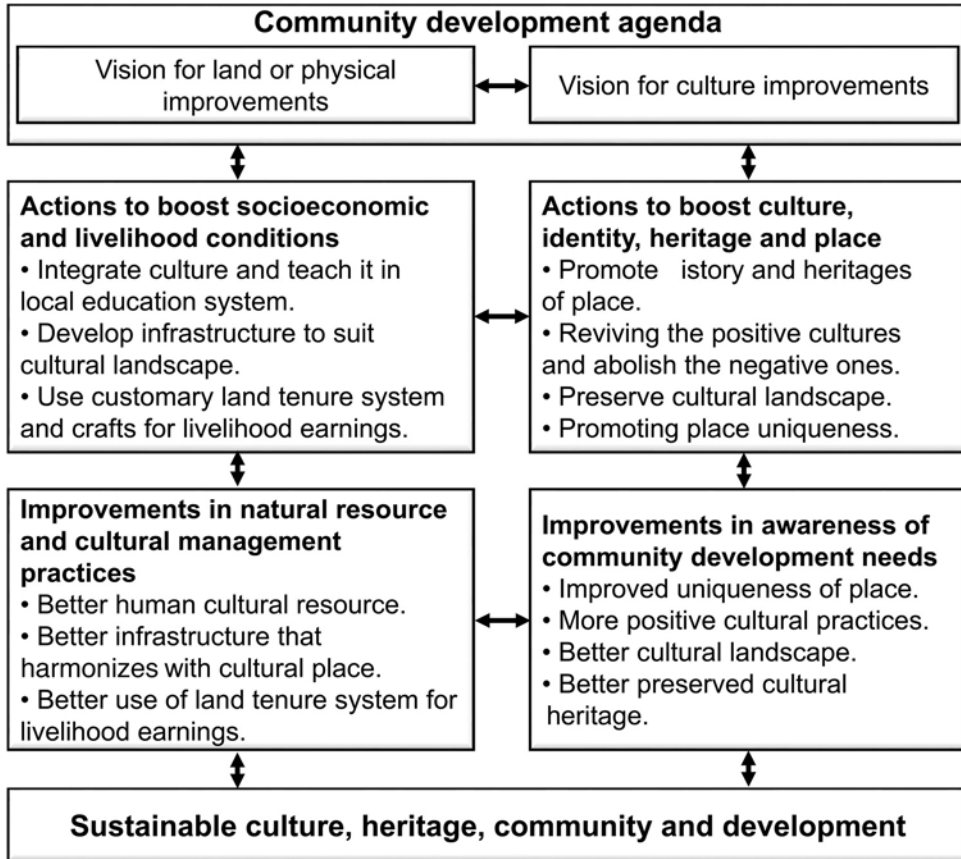


Figure 8.3 Process of Placemaking in LCCD.

Most importantly, it can lead to the sustenance of culture, heritage, community and development. From the perspective of boosting cultural identity, life, heritage and place, the promotion of history and heritage is important. In this regard, teaching local community culture as a subject in homes, nursery and primary schools can help raise early awareness in children concerning their local cultures and heritage. Local languages should be used in both oral and written mediums, to enable balanced functionality. This is possible by encouraging culture-informed community members to volunteer in carrying out these tasks. The revival of customs, traditions and cultures that promote positive changes in the community is important. Preserving cultural heritages by investing in their care is mandatory, followed by the promotion of place uniqueness.

Improving historic places can lead to attractions capable of boosting socioeconomic development or cultural tourism. All these can lead to the unique nature of identity, positive cultural practices, better cultural heritage and landscape. Boosting the cultural identity, life, heritage and place would result in better human resource and livelihood earnings. The long-run impact is that communities would become places with appropriate infrastructure and have a cultural symbolism that resonates with its members. For this to materialize, the cultural lives of communities need to be considered in future government policies—the same way as their economic bases and resources for their development. Most importantly, local leadership with the ability

to improve community transformations can drive community members into actions for change and improvements in all aspects of community life. This should constitute a precondition for the success of LCCD.

Closing Comments

When writing about community development in the context of SSA, there is always a dilemma regarding which aspect should be highlighted. The chapter approached this dilemma by presenting a generalized view of community development in SSA by focusing on land and culture.

The early stages of this chapter presented a host of information on the notion and history of community development in Africa, with focus on SSA. The issue of land and culture is important because the future of community development in SSA will depend largely on the ability of policymakers and community development professionals to understand how to manage them, as well as integrate them into community development planning and practices. This is crucial because the achievement of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in SSA will depend on how community development is implemented in the region.

The land and culture issue relates not only to the understanding of the idea and challenge of community development in SSA. It raises questions concerning community development approaches in the region. As a result, this chapter presented the major community development approaches practiced in SSA from the pre-colonial period to the present. The LCCD approach was therefore introduced to fill the gap left by the neglect of land and culture in community development. The LCCD approach presented in this chapter is based on fieldwork conducted in Nigeria concerning loss of culture. It integrates culture and land factors in ways that, if well implemented or adapted, can help reduce the emerging culture loss in SSA. Although the approach is based on the SSA context, it can apply to other parts of the global South where loss of culture exists due to community development. However, this is only feasible if the approach is grounded in a specific context.

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9

CRITICAL AWARENESS-RAISING IN MYANMAR

Anthony Ware

Introduction

Paulo Freire's idea of "conscientization" (1972, 1974), perhaps best translated as "critical awareness-raising", has become a key development and empowerment approach adopted, at least in part, by many local (and some international) non-government organizations (NGOs). Often such NGOs describe themselves as doing "grassroots" or "community-led" empowerment. It describes a process of facilitating the poor to become aware of their oppression and its sources (that is, the causes underlying their poverty), and the means available to them to do something about it. In more contemporary development parlance (and less socialist terms than Freire), critical awareness-raising is an empowerment-focused community development approach that seeks to enlarge capabilities, build human rights awareness and extend the agency of individuals within a social context. This explicitly includes empowerment for advocacy and social change. Critical awareness-raising is thus closely related to the ideas of community-led, participatory and asset-based community development, particularly when implemented in conjunction with a rights-based approach to development.

This chapter explores a case study of a Freirian critical awareness-raising development program, analyzing the successes and challenges in light of contextual factors and local innovations. Critical awareness-raising is examined, defining and locating it within the history of political thought, political philosophy and contemporary development practice. The case study is ActionAid Myanmar's (AAM) Change Maker Fellows program, developed as a new program in Myanmar in 2006, and building in part on the learnings and materials of the Freirian Reflect methodology widely used during the 1990s. AAM's Change Maker Fellows program was designed as a critical awareness-raising, participatory and rights-based response to poverty, and initiated during a period in which military rule and international sanctions greatly restricted most conventional international development activities. My previous research (Ware 2012, 2013a, b) found localized, highly participatory, community-led approaches to development to be an effective approach to poverty alleviation during the authoritarian military-rule period, and identified the AAM program as being of particular interest. This chapter extends that earlier analysis theoretically, and draws on recent interviews and reports to include the recent reform period in Myanmar and growth in the program.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four sections. The first explains Freire's concept of critical awareness-raising in greater detail. The second surveys of some of the historical, political and philosophical thought that underpins the concept, and locates the concept within the political and development literature. The third presents the ActionAid Myanmar "Change Maker" Fellows program case study in depth, including something of its origins, practice and evaluations of effectiveness, before a final section analyzes the program in the sociopolitical context of Myanmar, in terms of theory, implementation issues, implications and innovations.

Freire's Critical Awareness-Raising

Freire's (1972, 1974) major contribution to both education and development studies is the concept of *conscientização* (Portuguese)—most commonly translated into English as "conscientization", "critical consciousness" or "critical awareness-raising". Conscientization is the key concept underpinning the design of the ActionAid Fellows program. By critical awareness-raising, Freire means facilitating the poor becoming aware, as social groups, of their subjugated socioeconomic position, its causes and the means available to them to take action against the oppressive and dehumanizing elements of that reality. The term derives from Frantz Fanon's coinage in French of the term *conscienciser*, in his 1952 book, *Black Skins, White Masks*. Fanon used the term to mean "to bring to consciousness" the racism and dehumanization inherent in colonialism. Freire imported this into Portuguese as *conscientização*, meaning bringing the nature and sources of inequality and deprivation into the consciousness of both the oppressed and oppressors—as the first step of social change.

As a Brazilian socialist activist and educator during the 1950s–1960s, Freire draws heavily on Marxist and post-colonial language to express his ideas. While this language does not resonate comfortably with some readers today, his ideas must be first considered in this socialist light. Nonetheless, with minor changes to the language (not substance) of his ideas, they also reflect and are reflected in more liberal democratic political and philosophical traditions, as well as fitting within the spectrum of mainstream contemporary development.

Freire's central argument is that social, economic and political domination has a dehumanizing effect on people, and results in a "culture of silence" in which the dispossessed become submerged in the reality of their oppression. Outward behavior associated with this submersion is often mistakenly identified by outsiders as ignorance and lethargy. The central problem of poverty, for Freire, is thus that the oppressed have internalized the power inequalities that created their oppression, in the process surrendering autonomous thought and agency. The result is that the poor willfully stand back and allow others to think and act for them, becoming an "object" of others' will rather than self-determining "subjects". Every imposition of someone else's choice upon them transforms their consciousness to conform more closely to the prescribers', with the oppressed losing the awareness to think critically for themselves.

The solution, Freire argues, can therefore only come through critical reflection in which the poor discover they have become hosts of their own oppression. Freire argues that through critical awareness-raising the oppressed can regain their sense of humanity and the agency to act upon the world around them, by becoming critically aware of the nature of their oppressive circumstances and hence identify for themselves the means to act upon their material situation and socio-structural context. Or as Freire put it, "critical awareness-raising" means "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of that reality" (Freire 1972: 15, FN 1).

Freire argues that every human, no matter how "ignorant" or submerged in the "culture of silence", is capable of looking critically at the world, and through self-discovery to find his or

her voice and win back the right to participate. He speaks of man's (sic) "ontological vocation" (as he calls it) as being to act upon and transform the world around us. For Freire, overcoming poverty is thus the struggle to regain lost humanity. Freedom requires rejecting this dehumanized image of self as instilled by systemic paternalism and oppression, and replacing it with one's own critique of self and the world, thereby becoming able to generate personal responsibility and action. Conscientization empowerment must therefore be acquired out of personal struggle, and development workers cannot do this for people. However, neither can people do it alone—Freire argues that critical awareness is only achieved through dialogical encounters with others, and thus critical awareness-raising must have a community or social dimension, and the process benefits from skilled facilitation.

As an educator, Freire's implementation of this theory involved adult literacy, which he saw as pivotal. He argued that traditional processes of teaching, in which a teacher transfers knowledge to students, is both ineffective and a form of the very dehumanizing oppression that leads people to submerge into lethargy and silence. This translates directly into the context of development, which so easily assumes professionals with more "advanced" knowledge are required to come and provide expert solutions. In a community development context, critical awareness-raising requires careful facilitation, helping communities discover their own situation, context, realities, resources and empowerment.

Locating Critical Awareness-Raising in Broader Theory and Practice

Political Theory and Philosophy

The idea that deprivation and inequality should be addressed by empowering the agency of the poor through highly participatory processes has a very long history in political theory, as well as in political philosophy and the sociology of power. Certainly, this approach is central to communist-socialist political theory, which analyzes inequality in terms of class and contends that the ruling bourgeoisie or capitalist class maintain power via social, economic and political domination of the working class, thereby also impoverishing and ensnaring them. Freire was significantly influenced by both Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci (Mayo 2014), as well as Fanon as discussed in the last section, and wrote using the same revolutionary language.

Marx saw an ideological dimension to bourgeois domination, beyond coercion and economic-political control; his *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) observed that "the ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class" (www.anu.edu.au/polsci/marx/classics/manifesto.html). In other words, the dominant ideology of a society reflects the beliefs and interests of the ruling class, and the consent to rule given to the dominant group is maintained as much as by the domination of ideologies as through economic and political power. Marx also suggested that a consequence of living as a mechanistic part of a social class-based society was alienation or estrangement from aspects of what makes us human (aspects of our "species-essence"); workers invariably lose the ability to determine life and destiny if deprived of the right to think (conceive) of themselves as the director of their own actions. For Marx, the first step in ending this oppression and dehumanization was the development of a "class consciousness", in which people become aware of the realities of this classed society and thus better enabled to take action.

Gramsci built his concept of "hegemony" on this basic idea. Gramsci was concerned with the question of how the bourgeoisie, who were after all a small minority, maintained rule over the large peasantry and working class, and why they continually acquiesced to, accepted and sometimes actively supported governments and political systems that worked against their interests.

Contrary to the Machiavellian idea that power is exercised through coercive relations, Gramsci (1971) argued that the bourgeoisie also establishes and maintains control by projecting its own values and norms onto the masses as a hegemonic ideology or sociocultural understanding of reality. Gramsci variously described this as “cultural hegemony” (1971: 10), “social hegemony” (1971: 13), “intellectual hegemony” (1971: 160) and “moral hegemony” (1971: 58–60), but his primary idea is that consent to rule is manufactured through the domination of ideas and ways of thinking. The result, Gramsci argues, is that the working class mistakenly confuse the good of the bourgeoisie with their own good, and thus ignorantly reinforce their own subjugation in the status quo. Such ideological hegemony conceals these contradictions from the masses, leading to a “contradictory consciousness”—in which people find it difficult to translate their implicit outlook on reality derived from experience into a conception of the world that is different to the hegemonic culture. Ideological hegemony submerges working-class explanations of reality. To deal with inequality, Gramsci thus argues the poor must first come to a new awareness of reality, and engage a “counter-hegemonic” struggle, with “organic intellectuals” advancing alternatives to hegemonic ideas of what should be normal and legitimate.

Such ideas, that deprivation and inequality should be addressed by empowering the agency of the poor, are not restricted to the political Left. This is important because, as will be seen in the case study analysis, AAM does not convey socialist or communist leanings and the Fellows program seeks to engage with state officials for liberal democratic rather than socialist social change, drawing in political and development ideas beyond “pure” Freirian practice.

For example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose 1762 *The Social Contract* has become a cornerstone in modern liberal political thought, argued that people move out of disempowerment and poverty by joining together as a “civil society” and engaging in informed discussion, holding rulers accountable through a “social contract”. While not a direct influence on Freire, his ideas are also central to the approach of the Fellows program. A similar idea is reflected in the work of German political philosopher Jürgen Habermas, who advanced “critical theory” to attempt to explain the structural underpinnings of inequality. The success of the Enlightenment, Habermas (1989) argued, was due to the emergence of a “public sphere” in Europe during the early 17th and 18th centuries, as a counterbalance to absolute rule. This “public sphere”, in which competent and knowledgeable citizens engage with one another in policy development through informed and rational public debate, thus mediated the relationship between state and society, and gave legitimacy to law and politics. Emancipation from the “self-imposed tutelage” (Habermas 1991: 35) of oppressive authoritarianism, thus requires appropriate knowledge and the ability to exercise the human potential for reason. Thus while AAM describe their Fellows program as being Freirian, whether they realize it or not, the program also draws heavily on ideas from other, more liberal and democratic, political theory and philosophy.

Development Practice and Approaches

Freire’s critical awareness-raising ideas not only resonate with a range of political theory and practice, but also sit squarely in the mainstream of contemporary development practice. Ideas such as local participation in social and economic development policy and programming, community mobilization and self-help have featured strongly in United Nations publications and mainstream development practice and theory since the decolonization discussions of the 1950s. Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Fals-Borda 1987, 1991), and its subsequent incarnations as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), have been based on the argument that development professionals need to shift from being “on-top” to “on-tap”, emphasizing that they should approach their role with the values and disposition

of facilitator rather than expert (Fals-Borda 1987, 1991). Building on this foundation, Chambers (1983, 1997) conceptualized poverty as powerlessness due to marginalization, rather than as a lack of income, assets, services or even knowledge. Chambers argued strongly that the poor already have most of the knowledge they need, have the potential to analyze their own reality and should be enabled to do so, and their involvement in planning their own development future is integral to effective and sustainable outcomes. Highlighting the often inappropriate knowledge outsiders bring, Chambers argued for a reversal in the management of development, transferring decision-making primarily into the hands of recipients.

More recently, development theorizing has added Sen's "capability approach" and the "rights-based approach to development" to this picture. Amartya Sen won the 1998 Nobel Memorial Prize for contributions to the economics of poverty alleviation and famine prevention, work he developed as his capability approach (Sen 1993, 1999). For Sen, the core of the problem of poverty and underdevelopment is "unfreedoms" that inhibit people from exercising reasoned agency. This focus on reason resonates with the ideas of Rousseau and Habermas, and the emphasis on agency with Gramsci and Freire. Unfreedoms include both political and macro-economic structural barriers, as well as the lack of requisite education, empowerment and capability at the individual level required for free exercise of reasoned agency. Poverty is thus a deprivation of capability to achieve well-being, a lack of capability to exercise reasoned agency, and results in the lack of real opportunities to do and be what people may have reason to value. "Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerances or overactivity of repressive states" (Sen 1999: 3). The solution thus requires improving capability to exercise reason and agency across a broad range of areas contributing to well-being. Capability, however, lies in real freedoms and not in choices made with those freedoms.

The rights-based approach (RBA) to development became popular during the 2000s, springboarding largely off the UNDP's Human Development Report (UNDP 2000) Human Rights and Human Development (see also Uvin 1994; Hickey & Mitlin 2009). ActionAid describe themselves as a rights-based organization, and the RBA as integral to the Fellows program. A central aim of an RBA is empowerment of poor citizens as rights-holders, to hold duty-bearers (authorities vested with the responsibility to ensure rights are not violated, usually the government) to account under international human rights legislation and norms. It thus seeks to empower the poor to claim their rights and change the social structures that keep them poor, to give the poor agency to change both their economic and sociopolitical circumstances, and voice to people not usually at the center of development planning. In particular, the RBA seeks to assist marginalized poor people to understand and assert their rights to a fair share of existing resources and power, including provision of basic services and an equitable application of the law. An RBA is therefore an explicitly political approach, seeing the solution to poverty as largely requiring a positive transformation of power relations around resources and access, and therefore putting politics at the very heart of development practice (Nyamu-Musembi & Cornwall 2004).

Case Study Context: The Nature of Poverty in Myanmar

Poverty is a significant issue in Myanmar, and the poor in Myanmar suffer deep multidimensional poverty. According to the UNDP (2011), almost a third of the estimated 55–60 million population are multidimensionally poor, with 45 percent poor in at least one dimension and facing significant risk of multidimensional poverty. The UNDP report also finds that those who

are multi-dimensionally poor in Myanmar typically suffer a particularly high intensity of multi-dimensional deprivation, with almost 10 percent of the population living in “severe poverty”. Other reports find that 26 percent of the population lives in absolute poverty, unable to purchase the minimum food and non-food items required to maintain a basic calorie intake while continuing to subsist (IHLCA 2011). As a result, 39 percent suffers moderate–severe malnutrition while almost 1 in 5 has no access to healthcare, 30 percent lacks safe drinking water and one-quarter has no toilet or sanitation. More than half the population does not have more than a grade 4 education, with two-thirds having no access to secondary education. Economically, Myanmar is so far behind its neighbors that even if double-digit GDP growth could be sustained (which is unlikely based on the performance of other Asian economies), “it would take 39 years to catch up with the level of per capita GDP that Malaysia hopes to attain by 2020” (Myint 2010: 22).

This poverty is the result of decades of isolation, poor governance, failed policies and inept bureaucracy, characterized by the personal power politics of authoritarian military-led regimes, and complicated by international sanctions (Ware 2012). During the time AAM developed the Change Makers Fellows program, most international development assistance was frustrated either by the suspicions the authoritarian regime held towards the international community, including development agencies, or by the sanctions and strained international relations of donor countries. The seriousness of this international opprobrium is illustrated by the fact that both the United Nations General Assembly and Human Rights Council passed resolutions against Myanmar at every sitting between 1991 and 2014.

Anthropological research during this period suggested that the psychological impact of five decades of military rule on the wider population was that the people were highly disempowered in decision-making, with an aversion to risk trying new things (Fink 2000, 2001; Skidmore 2003, 2005). This reflects Freirian or Gramscian analysis. The Nobel Prize-winning Aung San Suu Kyi (Aung San Suu Kyi 1995) described the people as living under constant fear, leading, she suggested, to the poor having pronounced, learned helplessness and dependence. She argued that the chain of command culture had trivialized all those who did not enjoy formal positions, demotivating initiative and independent self-help action. Fink’s (2001) analysis is summed up in her book title, *Living Silence*. This is consistent with Freire’s analysis that poverty is driven by oppression, and dehumanizes people into a “culture of silence” in which they surrender autonomous thought and agency, standing back to allow the elite to do the thinking and acting for them, which manifests as apparent ignorance and lethargy. Effective community development empowers the marginalized, powerless and poor to overcome such submergence to achieve better life outcomes and a higher level of well-being through individual and communal agency—all of which requires new awareness, imagining their world differently and empowerment to take action to change their circumstances (Eyben et al. 2008: 3).

Case Study: ActionAid Myanmar “Change Maker” Fellows Program

Program Description

The preceding sections have offered a description of Freirian thought, a survey of the political, philosophical and development literature which underpins his idea of critical awareness-raising, and an analysis of the poverty context in Myanmar. This current section offers a detailed examination of the ActionAid Myanmar (AAM) “Change Maker” Fellows program, as a case study of contemporary critical awareness-raising in development practice in a specific context.

AAM developed the Fellows program in Myanmar in 2006, in partnership with local NGOs Metta and Shalom (Nyein) Foundation, as a means to contextualize implementation in Myanmar

of the Reflect Action methodology that had been trialled in Bangladesh, El Salvador and Uganda during 1993–1995 (Archer & Cottingham 1996). The Reflect Action methodology was written as a fusion of Freire’s critical awareness-raising approach with the practical PRA/PLA participatory tools of Fals-Borda and Chambers, with reflective community development participation becoming the social activity within which critical awareness-raising could be sustained. Based on AAM’s early successes, the Fellows program was quickly expanded until by 2012 AAM worked with over a dozen local partner organizations (Gowthaman & Aung Naing 2012). By 2015 they had approximately 1,500 fellows working in poor communities.

The Fellows program is described as a “youth fellowship” of trained young women and men, networked together and working to foster social change from below (Kane & Pyone Thet Thet Kyaw 2011; Ferretti 2015). Fellows must be under 25 years of age, with most being between 18 and 22 years. Most have commenced a tertiary degree, although many have not completed their degree and a few did not go on after secondary school. Given almost two-thirds of the rural population have no more than a grade four education (IHLCA 2011), these young people are nonetheless a potentially powerful force for empowerment, despite their youth. Two-thirds of fellows are women. Fellows are recruited by local partner organizations, through their direct contact with communities. Most commonly, an advocate from a partner organization conducts an open community meeting, explains the program and invites the community to nominate suitable young people to receive intensive training. Fellows are recruited for a one- or two-year placement, commonly back in their own village area. Having been chosen for the role by their communities, the fellows commence with a measure of credibility despite their youth, and their communities possess a basic understanding of the program before they commence.

Fellows are provided a minimal salary for two years, after which they are encouraged to remain as self-supporting members of the Fellows network. Supported and graduate fellows receive personal support through networking with other fellows and access to ongoing training, but little additional financial resource for projects. Most fellows are motivated by an intrinsic desire to contribute positively to their communities while developing personal leadership skills and building their resumes for the future. For most fellows, the program is a means to attain further education. Most graduates who go into other employment end up as NGO workers for other organizations, or school teachers.

Fellows Training and First Steps

To empower these youth to facilitate critical awareness-raising social change, AAM provides an initial 6-week intensive training followed by ongoing training opportunities. This training leads the fellows through a process of conscientization for themselves, focusing on human rights, governance, advocacy and personal development, as well as training in participatory community development practice (Ferretti 2010; Löfving 2011). Fellows report that one of their biggest challenges is the inner personal struggle of changing their attitudes about their own power and that of authorities, to convince themselves and their communities that change is possible through engagement and non-confrontational strategies, despite their youth, poverty and experience of authoritarian rule (Ferretti 2010). The program is thus based on developing youth leadership through conscientization, seeking to change power inequalities by empowering young people to view their world differently and find their own voice, to engage concurrently with both power holders and the marginalized for socioeconomic and political change (Ferretti 2015).

After initial training, the program “[throws] the fellows in at the deep end . . . [providing] fellows with tools and capacities to mobilize people, but with no blueprint on how mobilization should proceed” (Ferretti 2010: 2). Described as a learning program, the focus is on building the capacity of the fellows, not prescribing community projects. Fellows are seen by AAM as supported local catalysts for change, not field staff, and are therefore given significant autonomy. Given freedom in the tools and types of activities they initiate, fellows most commonly commence work by organizing self-help groups (SHGs) with interested community members, ranging from literacy groups, to savings and loans circles, to rice banks. Fellows report usually starting by promoting small community actions around tangible areas such as health, education or livelihoods, gathering one or more SHGs of interested and open people around them. Most fellows create groups of younger adolescents and other volunteers around them as a core team, and many report initial involvement is mostly by other young people.

Community Organizing and Village Books

Fellows are trained in the use participatory development (PRA/PLA) activities, to plan and initiate activities and seek to build an environment of cooperation and social cohesion. As the fellows and SHGs develop a track record, the fellows shift focus to the establishment of community-wide inclusive development planning and participatory decision-making structures. The formation of informal community ‘reflect circles’ allows community-wide needs and asset assessments to commence, and participatory planning, initiation and management of community projects. These “reflect circles” are more than just community development planning and management groups, but in actuality Freirian groups for mutual critical awareness-raising. Discussion about needs, assets, priorities and planning allows fellows and others to share new humanizing perspectives, increased voice and sense of empowerment, and lead other community members in the same conscientization. Communities win back the right to participate, act upon and transform the world as they reflect on the world and their own situation, and develop the critical assessment and problem-solving skills to facilitate their own development projects, debate priorities and find resourcing together—not to mention planning how to engage local authorities around community entitlements. Reflection facilitates regular critical awareness-raising.

Over time, the aim of the program is to develop these “reflect circles” into representative community-based organizations (CBOs) that take long-term responsibility for the planning and implementation of larger community development projects and processes: facilitating these CBOs is an express goal of the program. Over several years, “reflect circles” develop a well-researched “village book” documenting baseline data from needs and asset assessments, prioritization and development planning decisions by the community, and documentation of project implementation and evaluations undertaken to date. This process facilitates community mobilization and engagement, co-opting state and non-state actors to obtain the resources required for larger-scale development activities:

The programme views communities as inherently resourceful and capable of identifying their own needs, formulating ideas and initiating and leading processes of change. . . . [It] seeks to inspire communities to realize their development aspirations through advocating to and forging linkages with state and non-state actors. . . . Underpinning [the programme] are the complementary concepts of *self-reliance* and *empowerment*.

Löfving 2011: 2

Engaging Authorities

One of the most oft-reported outcomes at Fellows' conferences, and the most surprising outcome for most new fellows, is their increased confidence to engage with authorities (Ferretti 2010; Löfving 2011)—evidence of their own concientization. While initial suspicion of the fellows by local officials has at times resulted in threats, even arrests, and while describing engagement with military and state actors as a long and complex process, a real strength of the program is this extent to which the fellows have successfully engaged the civil-political power structures affecting communities.

As with many highly participatory development programs in Myanmar, the Fellows program has both local grassroots development and broader democratization goals. It seeks to stimulate positive change at the local level, based on community critical-reflection, planning and resourcing, as well as providing a way of contributing to broader macro changes through empowering communities in their engagement with government agencies (ActionAid 2010). Fellows training emphasizes the rights and responsibilities of active citizens, encouraging commitment to facilitate and participate in good local governance, as well as how to hold authorities accountable.

In Myanmar, fellows widely report that the most effective engagement with authorities involves “elite co-option”, meaning that even if their vested interests lie elsewhere officials have often been actively engaged around notions of joint gains, rather than by attempting blame or shame, and they are drawn into constructive dialogue about the nature, causes of and solutions to poverty through persuasive narratives. Fellows seek to involve authorities in ways that seek to maximize their empathy and engagement with the issues, and minimize blame or shame.

Where support from government officials is achieved, this most often comes from seeking assistance *after* the community has demonstrated how much they have already achieved on their own (Ferretti 2010). Communities that can demonstrate a self-reliant approach, are well-organized, have researched their own needs and resources and developed a long-term plan—all documented in the “village book”—are more likely to have their requests taken seriously by officials and other external actors (Löfving 2011). Indeed, this village book planning process has been so successful that in 2015 the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development adopted the AAM “village book” model for implementation nation-wide.

In complementary activities supporting the “Change Maker” Fellows program, the other major activity of AAM is training programs for local, regional and national officials, to strengthen governance at all levels. Indeed, 46 percent of the AAM total annual budget is devoted to these activities. In the context of the current liberalization underway in the country, as well as the ethnic peace process, AAM believes that the future will involve significant decentralization of decision-making and control over resources to regional and local governments. They also believe community empowerment through the Fellows program must be met with engaged governance and increased political space, or critical awareness-raising will overly raise expectations then disappoint participants.

Effectiveness

The Fellows model promotes low-cost interventions that emphasize self-reliance, and a reliance on learning to access government and other local support for initiatives. It makes a “conscious investment in the long term empowerment of communities . . . the processes of community-led development are anticipated to extend far beyond the duration of the programme itself” (Löfving 2011: 2).

External evaluations of the program find that almost all communities develop a representative committee within the 1- or 2-year project cycle, and the mobilization of local assets plus those from outside the community for development results in very impressive outcomes (Kane & Pyone Thet Thet Kyaw 2011; Löfving, 2011; Gowthaman & Aung Naing 2012; Ferretti 2015). By their first national Fellows' conference in January 2011, when AAM had just 160 fellows in communities, they compiled reported outcomes which included:

- Education sector:
 - 40 early childhood centers opened;
 - Schools constructed in 30 villages (mix of government and non-government funding);
 - Voluntary teaching by local community members in 30 underfunded primary schools;
 - 22 villages successfully negotiated new government-paid teachers; and
 - Over 1,600 people in adult literacy groups.
- Health and sanitation sector:
 - 77 wells constructed in 33 villages;
 - Well cleaning in 50 villages;
 - 45 water storage ponds constructed in 26 villages;
 - 1,500 new toilets constructed across 75 villages;
 - Health clinics built and staffed in 11 villages;
 - Vaccination programs conducted in 44 villages;
 - 19 villages obtained government-paid health workers; and
 - 27 villages negotiating mobile health services from other NGOs.

Similar outcomes were reported in the livelihood sector, with 152 savings and loans groups established, plus 60 rice banks and many other SHGs supporting livestock, farming and so on. These outcomes are based on self-reporting of achievements to external evaluators, and have not been verified, but they are nonetheless indicative of the optimistic views of the fellows. After the end of the 2-year project cycle, 80 percent of fellows remain active within their communities, self-supported and networked to the growing program alumni, creating long-term sustainable change (Kane & Pyone Thet Thet Kyaw 2011).

Based on these outcomes, AAM have increased almost tenfold the number of fellows in this program since the January 2011 conference—with approximately 1,500 fellows in communities by the end of 2015.

Case Study Analysis

The AAM Change Makers Fellows program sets out to use intensive training and networking of community-minded youth to achieve Freirian conscientization in rural Myanmar, through the process of highly participatory community development planning, with a focus on rights and active citizenship. It is a deliberate attempt to achieve Freirian conscientization through participatory development combined with a rights-based approach, contextualized to the Myanmar context.

In contrast to the level of agency and empowerment reported by Suu Kyi, Fink and Skidmore in the 1900s and 2000s, as discussed above, the evaluations of the Fellows program offer significant evidence that both fellows and communities have become far more critically aware of the nature and causes of their poverty after several years of the program, as well as of their own resources

and capabilities to bring change, and ways to address structural power inequalities and poor governance. Suu Kyi, Fink and Skidmore all highlighted that youth in particular were highly disenfranchised and disempowered under authoritarianism, but evidence from the program suggests significant conscientization, and the empowerment of their voice and agency. Community members also appear to have developed a high degree of critical awareness, empowerment and agency, which implies that critical reflection is genuinely taking place; they appear to have collectively become aware of many of the causes of their poverty and oppression, and the means available to them to take action against the dehumanizing elements of that reality. Community members are proactively assembling into Reflect Circles, SHGs and CBOs to engaging in self-driven change, suggesting a diminution of the Marxist “submergence” and the Freirian “culture of silence”, with capability and agency emerging.

The Myanmar military, economic and bureaucratic elite have dominated Myanmar society for five decades. Despite the large army and focus on coercive power towards their own population, Gramsci would have argued that this elite could not have remained in power so long without the manufacture of consent and an aura of legitimacy maintained through the projection of an ideological hegemony. The evidence offered of the substantial outcomes achieved, and the co-option of authorities into community-led development efforts, suggests this hegemony and legitimacy are now being actively challenged. A “counter-hegemonic” narrative appears to be emerging in which a legitimate continuation of high status and leading role in public life is dependent on responsive community service.

The Fellows program claims to be Freirian, and it certainly draws on Freire. But what is particularly interesting about this outcome is that rather than conscientization and empowerment manifesting in revolutionary fervour or confrontational class struggle, these fellows and communities have tentatively sought to co-opt the time, resources and public agendas of officials and elite. Thus, rather than this empowerment manifesting as a Western-style or socialist confrontational class struggle, these communities have exercised newfound agency to engage in Habermasian “communicative rationality”: utilizing their community-researched “village books”, for example, as evidence to rationally engaged officials and rational discussion of policy in an emerging public sphere to counterbalance their arbitrary use of personal power—along the lines of a Rousseauian emerging civil society holding rulers accountable and renegotiating the “social contract”. In this way, youth and rural communities appear to have had some measure of success in redefining the legitimacy of those in power. These are only tentative extrapolations of the evaluation data to date, but indicatively do suggest that empowerment through critical awareness-raising, rights training and participation in highly participatory planning and practice, has led to something akin to Freirian conscientization—only applied in a more liberal democratic framework. AAM do not claim this is happening evenly in all communities within which they operate, but to the extent that these changes are more than isolated incidents these are enormously significant and indicative that highly empowering social transformation is happening at least in some communities.

Establishing the causality of these changes directly back to the work of the Fellows, however, is difficult. In other words, it is not clear how much this empowerment is the result of the Fellows’ work, and how much due to other socio-political change. Significant change has swept the whole of Myanmar over the last decade or two, with an explosion of civil society and local activism accompanying elite-led socioeconomic liberalization and transition from authoritarianism to quasi-civilian democratic rule, which actually began gaining momentum well before the 2010 elections. This social transition has seen a great deal of change and empowerment at the local level across much of the country, including areas well beyond those in which AAM work.

Other, more recent research, has argued that rather than military rule resulting in passive dependency by the Myanmar population, the self-serving, sometimes hostile and usually inept military rule in Myanmar actually resulted in very high levels of community volunteerism, self-reliance, self-motivation and independent action within Myanmar society (for example, see CPCS 2008; Duffield 2008). While this appears to directly contradict the idea of a population living with constant fear, a “culture of silence” and learned helplessness, plus dehumanization and an aversion to risk negating initiative and independent self-help, on further analysis the two points of view are not entirely contradictory. Unable to rely on non-existent government services and with local NGOs only recently being given space to operate, the poor relied on their own motivation, mutual support and independent agency for basic survival. This does not, however, preclude submersion into dehumanization, and learned helplessness in the face of hegemonic power, preventing these same people from advancing themselves beyond mere survival, which is what both political theory and anthropological study of Myanmar society strongly suggest did occur.

One other observation is also important, and this is that AAM don't only approach this challenge with bottom-up participatory Freirian development, but concurrently engage with local, regional and national officials for improved governance. AAM seek both to empower individuals and communities for bottom-up social change through conscientization and reasoned agency, but also to enlarge the socio-political space for them by engaging the structural barriers on their behalf. My previous research (Ware 2012) found that even prior to the recent political reform process, highly participatory approaches were the most effective in empowering communities in Myanmar. However, the evaluations of the AAM case study suggest that grassroots empowerment is significantly more effective in a context of rapid and wide-ranging socio-political reform. Perhaps a key finding from this case study, therefore, is that Freirian critical awareness-raising about the nature of power relations and ways to affect change, and rights-based active citizenship training, gain the greatest traction in an environment in which political transition is also demanding from the top down that officials be more responsive to local communities and agencies engage to help enlarge the political space.

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PART III

Sustainable Livelihoods and Community Development



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10

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE GREEN ECONOMY

Ensuring a Strong Sustainability Approach

Mark Roseland and Duane Fontaine

Introduction

On September 25, 2015, the 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes the 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their associated targets (United Nations 2015). The SDGs were designed to build on the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were adopted in 2000 and whose purpose was to reduce global poverty by 2015. The SDGs are both more ambitious and more comprehensive in scope than the MDGs. They call not only for a reduction of poverty, but for its complete elimination by 2030. The SDGs also address the critical issues of climate change and the environment, improving access to health and education, gender equality and the reduction of inequality (among others). Of particular importance to the subject of this chapter, the SDGs also include a separate goal (SDG 11) relating to cities and human settlements. Taken as a whole, the new SDGs represent a powerful impetus for nations across the planet to take action on a range of issues that directly impact our ability to survive and thrive as a species, and to do so while maintaining, or even enhancing, the integrity of the planet's ecosystems and biodiversity. It is encouraging for those working in the area of sustainable community development (SCD) to see the inclusion of SDG 11. It is a clear recognition of the fact that sustainable development must be achieved at the community level in order for it to be successful at the global level (UN SDSN 2015).

While the term “green economy” is not specifically mentioned in the SDGs, the concepts embedded in the green economy approach have the potential to make significant contributions to the attainment of the SDGs. In this chapter, we first set the stage for our discussion by defining the two main approaches to sustainable development itself: weak sustainability and strong sustainability. Next, we define the term “green economy.” As we discuss the various components of the green economy, we provide some practical recommendations for community planners and policy makers to help them achieve their sustainability goals. We then present the Community Capital framework and recommend it as a means to consolidate those elements of the green economy that work within strong sustainability, and that are specific to sustainability

at the community level. We conclude this chapter with a discussion of SCD assessment and how contributions from the green economy can be measured and assessed.

Weak versus Strong Sustainability

Ecological economists today discuss sustainability and sustainable development in terms of either “weak sustainability” or “strong sustainability”. Weak sustainability is usually defined in terms of the sustainability of capital in that it calls for a non-diminishing supply of capital from one generation to the next (Ayres et al. 2001). It is important to note that capital is here defined as the sum of both natural and human-made capital. Therefore, what makes a model of sustainability “weak” is the assumption that human-made capital can be substituted for natural capital. This model would assume, then, that if human-made capital could replace some service or good that nature currently provides, and do so in a way that brings a net increase to overall utility (or well-being), then human-made capital could permanently replace natural capital and still be considered sustainable.

This model has been criticized by natural scientists, environmental ethicists, and ecological economists for a number of reasons. First, its foundation is based upon economic growth theory whose definition of “natural capital” is econocentric and instrumental. In other words, weak sustainability views nature primarily as a source of production inputs in the form of resources and ecosystem services. Most of us, however, are intuitively aware of the fact that nature is much more than the resources it provides for human consumption. Nature is a complex web of inter-related, adaptive systems that have limits to their resiliency. We are an integral part of nature, as are our economic, social and political systems. To separate ourselves from nature is to set up a false dichotomy that distorts our relationship to non-human nature, and to each other. This dichotomy inevitably fosters a relationship to nature that encourages its destructive commodification and exploitation. Second, in their assumption of perfect substitutability between natural and human-made capitals, proponents of weak sustainability engage in an exercise of incommensurate values comparison. Different disciplines (e.g. economics, ecology, philosophy) place different values on nature; both in substance and in degree. These competing claims about the value of nature are often incommensurable because they employ different normative and evaluative concepts (MacIntyre 2007). Ayres et al., citing E.O. Wilson’s book, *Consilience*, note that sound scientific theories and practices should be able to withstand the test of multi-discipline comparison and application, and further add: “The economic notion of weak sustainability does not pass the test of consilience with the established laws of biological and physical science” (2001: 12).

Strong sustainability differs from weak sustainability in several ways. The most important distinction is the assumption of non-substitutability of natural capital in the strong sustainability model (Dietz & Neumayer 2007). In terms of human utility, nature provides us with raw materials, waste sinks and recycling services that are difficult, if not impossible at this stage in our development, to replicate. Also, nature provides us with amenities and aesthetic pleasures that are important contributors to our physical, emotional and mental well-being (Capaldi et al. 2014). It also provides us with essential life-support services. Finally, for many people, nature is seen to have intrinsic value. This value is not measured in human terms, but rather, extends beyond the realm of human utility (Cook 2011). Nevertheless, it is a value that necessitates our involvement in its stewardship and preservation.

With these two models of sustainability now defined we can put the green economy into context with respect to SCD. We can also critically analyze each of the components of the green economy to determine the normative framework that they serve. This is an important

point to consider because the green economy is a highly contentious space, and not all elements or participants of the green economy are aligned with strong sustainability and its normative framework.

The Green Economy

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the green economy is an economy that provides for “improved human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities” (UNEP 2010). In more concrete terms, the green economy can be summarized as incorporating one or more of the following components: green energy, green production, green consumption and green jobs.

As we discuss the various elements of the green economy, we will place them in the context of SCD and make some preliminary assessments as to their suitability for inclusion in the strong sustainability model.

Green Energy

The core of the green economy is the green energy sector (Chapple 2012). This sector encompasses a range of industries and scale applications (McCauley & Stephens 2012). It also approaches the problem of sustainable energy from both the supply and demand sides. While renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal are most often associated with green energy, other non-renewable sources such as natural gas, clean coal and nuclear are also included in the green energy sector by those who view non-renewables as essential transition sources on the road to a completely renewable energy future. Their inclusion, however, is not without controversy. The cost of developing new sources of nuclear energy, for example, is routinely under-estimated. In a report put out by Canada’s Pembina Institute (Weis et al. 2010), the cost of a new nuclear power plant in the province of Ontario would be anywhere from 12 to 48 percent more than a mix of renewable and more efficient options. In addition, the high cost of investment in nuclear power, according to the authors, would curtail investment in renewable energy by constraining access to transmission, and the resulting path-dependence would lead to less flexibility in terms of grid access.

Community-based renewable energy schemes (CRE) are an integral part of Germany’s *Energiewende* (energy transition) and they are becoming more widespread throughout the world. For example, in several Canadian provinces, “Feed-in-tariff” (FIT) programs have been implemented that pay local communities for the renewable energy that they produce. One such FIT program, established under Ontario’s Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009, was North America’s first comprehensive guaranteed pricing structure for renewable electricity production (Iler & Iler 2012), and was built by a coalition of community, environmental, agricultural and labour groups. Also, Ontario’s FIT program gave precedence to cooperative enterprises, thus helping to keep these community-based renewable energy schemes democratic, open and under local management and control.

The biggest obstacles facing these CRE schemes are not related to technology, legislation or internal governance, but rather to the path-dependence inherent in a grid system that was designed for centralized power production and distribution, and for one-way flow. Decentralized and locally produced energy grids must be smart in the sense that they must have the capacity to incorporate a multitude of producers, many of which are capable of both pulling power from, and pushing power to, the grid at any time. Another obstacle that faces not only CRE schemes, but renewable energy solutions at all levels, is the ongoing subsidies given to the fossil

fuel industry. These subsidies lower the price of fossil fuel and divert government funds away from the development of much-needed green energy infrastructure investment. *The Economist* has noted that subsidies to the fossil fuel industry are regressive, particularly in the developing world, as they subsidize those wealthy enough to afford the purchase, operation and maintenance of automobiles (*The Economist* 2014).

Renewable energy at the community level is more than just wind and solar power. By definition, it is any energy that is produced within the community or nearby region and comes from resources that are replenished on a human timescale. It includes micro-hydro power generation, geo-exchange (or geothermal) heating, waste heat recovery, tidal power generation, local biomass fuels, passive solar and solar walls, as well as small-scale wind and solar photovoltaic systems. In order to be successful, however, these CRE schemes must be supported by sound legislative and policy frameworks. British Columbia, for example, has had a great deal of success in the area of CRE, particularly in the initial work of developing and implementing the crucial legislative and policy foundations (Community Energy Association 2014). This foundation consists of a number of comprehensive regulatory acts and amendments, as well as new funding, and financial and market mechanisms to support and incentivize CRE. One clear success was British Columbia's 2008 Carbon Tax Act, which put a price on carbon emissions. British Columbia's carbon tax has been a success (Beaty et al. 2014). This tax not only made fossil fuel energy more expensive, thus causing GHG emissions to fall, it also provided a new funding source for CRE projects, and did so without adversely affecting the province's economy.

Another important component of green energy is *demand-side management*. This component of green energy strategy focuses on reducing the demand for energy rather than increasing the supply. It is a smart strategy on many levels. It reduces the overall cost of energy to consumers and reduces the need for new energy-producing infrastructure investment. There are many tools available to encourage the reduction of demand for energy. One such tool is the pursuit of energy efficiency in building design. Technologies such as passive solar design, state-of-the-art insulation, LED lighting and smart heating reduce the need for energy in the home, office or plant, thus reducing overall energy costs. These technologies can be costlier than traditional building design, so to encourage their use, financial incentives, such as rebates and up-front incentives, can be offered by utility companies and local governments. Another tool is the use of low-interest loans supplied to home-owners by municipalities to finance energy efficiency projects (either for energy-efficient design in new construction or for retrofits). These loans, in turn, are financed by means of municipal bonds whose interest income may be fully or partially tax-exempt. One example of this type of financing is Boulder, Colorado's Property-Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, which offers reduced rate loans to homeowners making less than 115 percent of the area's median income (Roseland 2012).

Any moves to promote greater efficiency are often criticized due to the "rebound effect". The rebound effect is the phenomenon whereby gains in production efficiency, or from demand-management, lead to lower costs. These lower costs, in turn, lead to more income available for yet greater energy use. This effect is said to largely offset any gains in efficiency. However, an article in the science journal *Nature* (Gillingham et al. 2013) points out that this phenomenon is overrated in terms of its extent and impact, and "a vast academic literature shows that rebounds are too small to detail energy-efficiency policies".

Green Production

Green production is contentious ground in sustainable development owing to the competing interests and values of its main participants. Proponents of strong sustainability emphasize the

importance of minimizing the inflows of matter and energy into, as well as the flow of waste out of, the production process to levels that are within the planet's regenerative and recycling capabilities. Strong sustainability challenges communities to look beyond the "business-as-usual" models of private industry and move towards alternative models of democratized ownership and management, such as cooperatives, social enterprises and worker self-directed enterprises (WSDEs). Finally, it emphasizes local self-sufficiency and economic diversity, which greatly enhance the economic and social resiliency of the community. Proponents of weak sustainability emphasize market solutions and reduced regulation in order to promote private investment in green technologies. This paradigm sees green production as a "technological fix" to our present-day environmental problems. Often, the benefits of new environmentally friendly technologies are viewed more in terms of the returns they provide to investors than on their purported contributions to sustainability.

The investment in green production technologies is no doubt one of the important pathways to a more sustainable future, so our point here is not that we should censure these pathways, but rather that we should view them critically. When these approaches are taken without due consideration of the underlying motivating factors they may promote solutions that have little or no effect on promoting a strong sustainability mindset, and may in fact lead to a compounding of the "business-as-usual" approach. This is important if we are to give precedence to changing consumer behavior away from overconsumption and towards alternative visions of well-being and social equity.

How should individual communities approach this question of green production practices then? Communities might be better served to concentrate not on the types of goods or services provided by the individual companies within their boundaries (or those seeking to enter), but rather to concentrate on those companies that utilize sustainability accounting techniques such as Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA), Life-Cycle Sustainability Assessment (LCSA), Carbon Footprint (or Carbon Accounting) and Ecological Footprint (ecological footprint accounting). These techniques measure, and report on, the environmental impact of a company's production and service activities. Communities can incentivize companies to adopt one or more of these techniques, and to engage in continuous improvement of their overall sustainability metrics. These same tools can also be used by the community to assess its own infrastructure and operations.

While a detailed description of Life-Cycle Assessment methodologies is not within the scope of this chapter, these methodologies are worthy of consideration by community planners and administrators because they represent real progress toward the goal of increasing the sophistication and uptake of sustainability assessment. However, LCA methodologies have extensive data requirements and can be costly. Therefore, communities might turn to two other environmental accounting techniques, namely Carbon Footprint and Ecological Footprint. The Carbon Footprint (or Carbon Accounting) attempts to measure of the total amount of CO₂ and CH₄ emissions of a particular community, system or organization (Wright et al. 2011). In this regard, communities can reduce their GHG emissions through the use of the Carbon Footprint to assist them in their strategic decision-making for transportation and land-use planning, zoning and building standards. The Carbon Footprint limits its scope to GHG emissions and therefore cannot be considered a comprehensive sustainability assessment tool. However, with its well-defined and more readily available data requirements (available from many government sources, for example), it is an important tool in the sustainability assessment toolbox for communities to consider.

Another related tool is the Ecological Footprint, an accounting tool that enables analysts to estimate the resource consumption and waste assimilation requirements of a defined human population or economy in terms of a corresponding productive land area (Wackernagel et al. 1996).

If we take a city or a community as an example, the Ecological Footprint would measure the amount of land it would take to support the current population of the city or community in question in terms not only of living space, but also of energy production, food production, resource inputs, waste sink services, fresh water production, life-support services, etc. This space would obviously be greater than the political boundaries of the city or community in question and, in fact, the calculated Ecological Footprint measure of the space required would be orders of magnitude larger than the area physically occupied (Wackernagel et al. 1996). It has been estimated, using the Ecological Footprint, that we currently require 1.6 planet Earths to sustain our global activities. Furthermore, if everyone on the planet lived a lifestyle of the average citizen from the United States, we would need 4.1 planet Earths to sustain our activities (McDonald 2015). Clearly, we are not living sustainably!

The Ecological Footprint methodology is based on the measurement of the biocapacities of six land-use types: cropland, grazing land, fishing ground, forest land, carbon uptake land and built-up land (Ewing et al. 2010). Calculations are made to determine the amount of bioproductive area (in hectares) required for each primary product (i.e. goods available from cultivating raw materials without intervening manufacturing processes) and each derived product (i.e. manufactured product) produced (or consumed) in the area being measured. The total bioproductive area required in order to produce a community's primary and secondary product consumption is that community's ecological footprint (Borucke et al. 2013).

The Ecological Footprint methodology is gaining acceptance throughout the world, and is being applied not only at the country level, but also at the city and community levels. The results are easily compared to other cities or communities throughout the world to assist community planners and administrators determine the relative sustainability of their community. This methodology can also provide an integrative framework for a community's environmental management system, and help satisfy its environmental reporting requirements.

Green Consumption

At the heart of any discussion of the green economy, and of sustainability as a whole, is the question of consumption. We must all consume food, clothing and shelter to survive, and we all gain satisfaction and enjoyment from non-essential goods and services.

Before we deal with specific policy recommendations for communities related to green consumption, we first need to gain some insight into the dominant theory of consumer behavior that underlies most of our current economic policy and decision making, namely, rational choice theory. This theory has been largely responsible for the emphasis on consumption as an engine, not only of growth, but also of well-being. Consumption of goods and services, under this theory, serves as a proxy for happiness (or well-being).

Rational choice theory is an individualistic approach to human behavior, which assumes that the actions of an 'agent' (i.e. a consumer) are chosen based on a rational appraisal of all available options, given a certain set of personal preferences. This 'rational agent' uses all information that is available to him or her, including costs, benefits and probabilities, to arrive at a decision that maximizes his or her utility (or happiness). This model of behavior is dominant in economics, but is also used in some of the other social sciences. Because of its assumption of 'methodological individualism', consumer behavior is not seen as being amenable to social influence. Rational choice theory, however, has had its detractors from the beginning. In 1955 Herbert Simon, an American economist and sociologist, published a paper entitled "A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice" (Simon 1955), which outlined several elements of decision making that put constraints on individuals in a way that makes it difficult for them to

act as “rational utility maximizers”. One of the main constraints is the uncertainty of future events. We cannot accurately or easily assign probabilities to alternative actions and reactions when attempting to model the future consequences of a decision in the present. Another constraint is the cost of information. Accurate and reliable information is not often free, nor is it easy to obtain. Information is so ubiquitous and diverse it is often difficult to distinguish good and useful information from the rest. More recently, insights from behavioral economics have highlighted the importance of cognitive bias, mental short cuts (or “heuristics”) and subjective framing in shaping how consumers make decisions (Kahneman & Tversky 1979). Herbert Marcuse, and other critical theorists, have attacked the whole notion of *homo economicus*, or “economic man”, and have illuminated the “one-dimensional” thinking that is preponderant in our hyper-consumerist society. They have further shown how this one-dimensional thinking has become a form of social control (Marcuse 1964). Neuroscience is beginning to reveal how our capacity of reason and rational thinking may not be the dominant mode of cognition. In fact, our emotions may take central place, with rationality taking on a subsidiary role (Damasio 1994). All of these critiques have pointed out the social and interpersonal determinants of behavior, as well as the role that our emotions play in decision making.

The ancient Greek philosophers were well aware these tensions between the needs of the individual versus those of the community. Aristotle, in his *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* (Aristotle & McKeon 1992) discusses the ultimate goal of human existence, namely *eudaimonia*. There is no one word in English that fully defines *eudaimonia*, but ‘flourishing’ perhaps comes closest. *Eudaimonia* is a rich concept that incorporates notions of purpose, virtue, self-actualization and fulfillment at the individual level. However, it also includes an important political dimension in that all individuals have a responsibility to establish a community environment that fosters *eudaimonia*. At the heart of *eudaimonic* thinking lies a cooperative and community-focused approach to individual well-being.

It is important to maintain balance here because an over-emphasis on self-sacrifice, altruism and the ascetic approach to life is counterproductive and can breed feelings of helplessness and hopelessness (Kaplan 2000). A more realistic approach is to allow individuals to play an active role in the direction that their community takes concerning social and environmental issues. This “participatory approach” enables citizens to act in ways that are not only beneficial to themselves but to others as well. Stephen Kaplan calls this the “Reasonable Persons Approach” (Kaplan 2000). This approach helps people understand the issues at stake in regard to a particular community problem, and then invites them to explore possible solutions and participate in the decision-making process. This community-level form of problem solving has proven to be highly successful in those situations where neither the self-interested actions of individuals acting within the market, nor government intervention policies, are capable of promoting pro-social and pro-environmental behavior. Behavioral scientist Herbert Gintis, economist Samuel Bowles (Bowles & Gintis 2002), political economist Elinor Ostrom (2011), and others, have demonstrated the importance of community-based governance and have provided empirical evidence of its success. In order for these forms of governance to be successful, however, community leaders must take into consideration the social norms of their community, and be aware of the fact that these “collective action” solutions often require monitoring and community sanctions in order to be effective.

These alternative models of human behavior open the door to a consideration of policy alternatives that might direct people to alter their consumption patterns in way that is more in keeping with the goals of sustainability. Governments at all levels have various regulatory, policy and standards options available to them that have proven useful in the promotion of pro-social and pro-environmental consumerism. These include standards that contribute to the durability,

recyclability and efficiency of products (e.g. LCA scores); the fairness and equity of trade; the prevention or restriction of advertising of harmful products (e.g. tobacco); and the promotion of efficient and energy-saving building standards and codes (e.g. LEED standards).

One organization that is actively researching the area of green consumption is the One Earth organization based in Vancouver, Canada. One Earth is a non-profit “think and do” tank that is actively engaged in research and advocacy to transform our current consumer lifestyle into one that is more in keeping with strong sustainability. It is engaged in several projects that are working towards this end, but their focus is on sustainable consumption and production (SCP), local governments and the sharing economy, and envisioning sustainable futures (One Earth 2015).

Green Jobs

According to a report written by both the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), green jobs are defined as those that provide “work in agricultural, manufacturing, research and development (R&D), administrative, and service activities that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality” (ILO & UNEP 2009). This report goes on to further stipulate that green jobs should provide decent work, with decent wages and career prospects, and should uphold workers’ rights. As this definition implies, green jobs are to be found in almost any profession or vocation. In fact, it is not so much the type of job that qualifies it as a green job, but rather the attributes of the sector, industry and organization within which one works that qualify the job as green.

The first task of any community-level planning is to take stock of its existing strengths and advantages. What industries are already established in the community? Of those, what organizations fit the description of those providing green jobs outlined above? Working with existing strengths is less costly and builds on the expertise already developed within the community. Another important step is to establish a clear set of priorities for policy intervention. For example, are well-paying union jobs the priority? There is evidence that unionized sectors like health care and construction, for example, provide higher-paying jobs, with more security and more “in-house” training, than non-union jobs (Chapple 2012). Workers’ rights are more likely to be protected in unionized jobs as well. Another priority might be to encourage the growth of cooperatives in the community. Cooperatives are advantageous because they bring an added level of concern for social equity and environmental sustainability. This is due, in no small part, to the principles upon which they are based: democratic management; member or employee control; member or employee ownership; member or employee participation in economic benefits; and autonomy and independence (Majee & Hoyt 2011).

Cooperatives are also known to increase the social capital of a community. They help foster cooperative behavior and social trust through greater communication and interaction, peer monitoring and individual empowerment. In the worker self-directed enterprise (WSDE) model, for example, workers have democratic control of the organization and are responsible for all major enterprise decisions, including what to produce, how much to produce and how to distribute surpluses equitably (Wolff 2013). While these cooperative models are not panaceas, they are worthy of serious consideration because they not only help strengthen social capital, but by their very structure, they challenge the dominant competitive and profit-seeking mandate of the private sector. In doing so, they provide communities the option of prioritizing human development over economic growth.

The next task is to determine how to encourage employment in those sectors and organizations that have been identified as having the greatest potential for green job creation.

While communities have a limited range of policy options available to them compared with their larger state/provincial or federal counterparts, there are a number of policy tools a community can use to promote green jobs. One such tool is the use of financial incentives. Reduced property taxes might be offered to organizations that fall within the green sector, for example. Or, as mentioned above, low-interest loans, financed through the issuance of municipal bonds, might be offered to organizations promoting green jobs. Another tool is rezoning. Rezoning can encourage these organizations to locate/relocate to the community or to expand if already in the community.

Sustainability Assessment through Community Capital

A critical tool in the promotion of strong sustainability for any community is sustainability assessment. Without a rational and objective tool to assess the status of a community's sustainability performance, policy choices will be made in the dark, leading to counterproductive outcomes. Good sustainability assessment allows communities to track the outcomes of previous policy choices, thereby enabling administrators and planners to learn what works and what doesn't. Many assessment tools are also suitable for use in planning and scenario analysis, which permits community leaders to test out policy options prior to implementation.

All policy decisions result in a set of outcomes that provide both benefits and costs, and advantages and disadvantages. It is therefore important for community leaders to be fully aware of the trade-offs they make whenever they choose one policy over another. To help avoid the typical pitfalls of incomplete or ill-informed decision making, most sustainability assessment models are designed around a focused set of priorities. These may be broadly summarized as: (1) equal and sufficient opportunities for livelihoods that provide a liveable wage and meaningful work; (2) intra-generational and inter-generational equity; (3) taking a precautionary and adaptive approach to development; and (4) the efficient use and maintenance of resources and ecosystems (Gibson et al. 2005).

What becomes challenging is the choice of frameworks upon which to measure the success in achieving these outcomes, particularly given their diverse and often non-monetary value foundations. One way to address this problem of the diversity of value foundations is to take an expanded view on the nature of capital itself. Most sustainability assessment frameworks typically break capital into three core accounts or types: environmental, economic and social. These three capital accounts are given equal status and are not substitutable. This approach is used in many sustainability frameworks, including corporate sustainability reporting (CSR), under the familiar "triple bottom line" moniker. However, we believe that the Community Capital framework provides an approach that is more relevant to SCD.

The Community Capital approach encapsulates many of the components of the green economy discussed above, but filters them in a way that places the focus on the community and on strong sustainability. We use the term "Community Capital" (Figure 10.1) to include natural, physical, economic, human, social and cultural forms of capital.¹

1. *Natural Capital*: minimizing the consumption of essential natural capital means living within ecological limits, conserving and enhancing natural resources, using resources sustainably (soil, air, water, energy and so on), using cleaner production methods and minimizing waste (solid, liquid, air pollution and so on).
2. *Physical Capital*: improving physical capital includes focusing on community assets such as public facilities (such as hospitals and schools), water and sanitation provision, efficient transport, safe and high-quality housing, adequate infrastructure and telecommunications.

3. *Economic Capital*: strengthening economic capital means focusing on maximizing the use of existing resources (using waste as a resource, for example), circulating dollars within a community, making things locally to replace imports, creating a new product, trading fairly with others and developing community financial institutions.
4. *Human Capital*: increasing human capital requires a focus on areas such as health, education, nutrition, literacy, and family and community cohesion, as well as on increased training and improved workplace dynamics to generate more productive and innovative workers; basic determinants of health such as peace and safety, food, shelter, education, income and employment are necessary prerequisites.
5. *Social Capital*: multiplying social capital requires attention to effective and representative local governance, strong organizations, capacity building, participatory planning and access to information as well as collaboration and partnerships.
6. *Cultural Capital*: enhancing cultural capital implies attention to traditions and values, heritage and place, the arts, diversity and social history (Roseland 2012).

The Community Capital Tool (CCT) is an SCD assessment tool built upon the Community Capital framework, and is the product of a collaboration between the Centre for Sustainable Community Development at Simon Fraser University in Canada with Telos, Brabant Center for Sustainable Development, Tilburg University, Netherlands. The six capital accounts of the CCT are broken down into a set of smaller stocks and requirements used to measure capital capacity and sustainability progress. The stocks are subsystems that influence the state and development of each capital account and can be considered as assets. These stocks are, for the most part, universal and were chosen based on their ability to accurately and efficiently represent

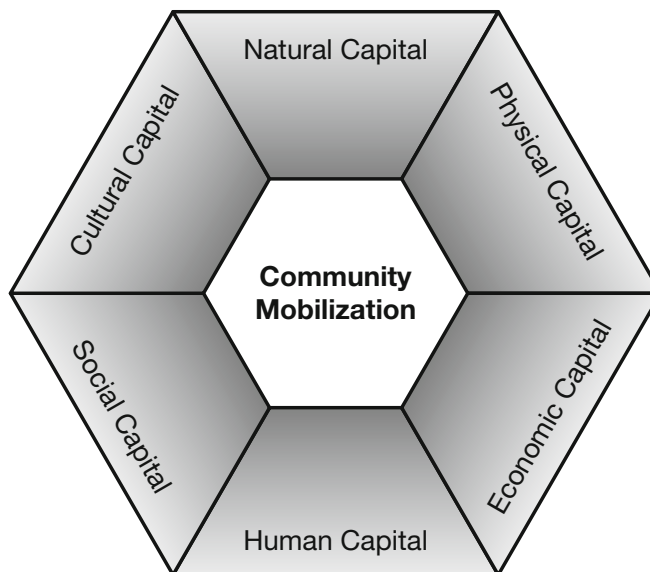


Figure 10.1 Community Capital: A framework for sustainable community development. Sustainable development requires mobilizing citizens and their governments to strengthen all forms of community capital. Community mobilization is necessary to coordinate, balance and catalyze community capital.

Source: Roseland, 2012

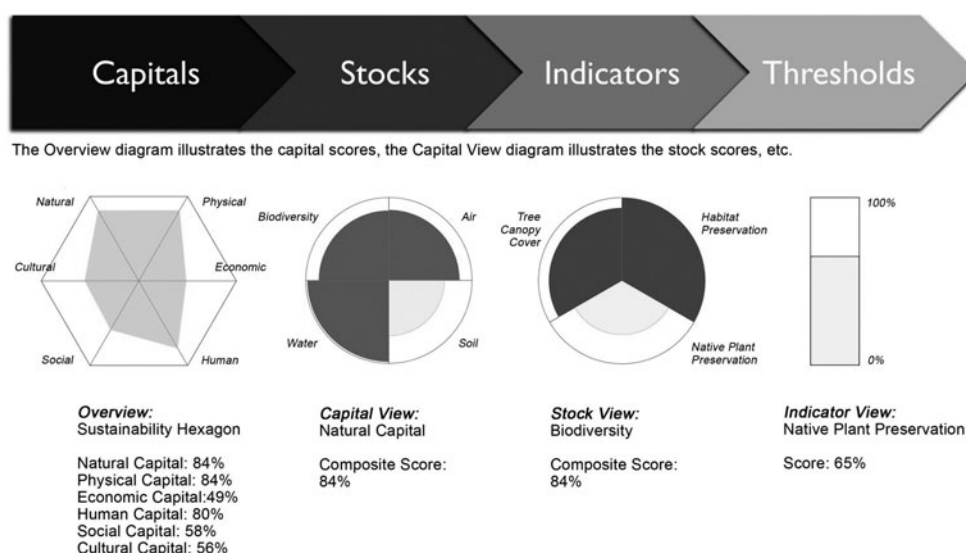


Figure 10.2 The *Community Capital Tool* breaks each capital account into a set of smaller stocks and requirements used to measure capital capacity and sustainability progress. Shown is an abbreviated example of the breakdown for one capital account.

Source: Bird, 2015

the health of the capital they represent. Within each stock is a set of requirements that are chosen by the community to more closely represent the local needs and priorities of the community or of the specific initiative being measured. Lastly, each requirement is measured by one or more indicators. Indicators are specific, measurable entities (such as GHG emissions, unemployment rates, etc.) that “indicate” the status of each requirement. They are selected based on the ease (and cost) of their data collection, their correlation to the requirement being measured and the reliability and integrity of their data sources. Figure 10.2 is an abbreviated example of this breakdown for one capital account.

After each of these indicators is measured they are ranked using predetermined thresholds. The CCT then rolls up the final results into a graphical reporting package that reports on the health of each capital account and each of their constituent stocks. Community leaders, planners and citizens can use this information to compare the current sustainability status of their community with past results, and with other, comparable communities.

The CCT was designed based on strong sustainability principles. It focuses on the issues specific to each individual community, but does so in a way that recognizes each community’s regional and global impact on the environment and on society at large. The CCT is also designed to incorporate the democratic input of citizens in terms of values and priorities, and provides planners and decision makers with a tool that helps them ensure that these values and priorities are reflected in their policy decisions.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have considered a number of focus areas of the green economy as they relate to the community. In doing so, we have defined the green economy in terms of strong sustainability, and the values inherent in that model, rather than the dominant model of weak

sustainability. We have also shown how strong sustainability, with its insistence on the integrity and non-substitutability of capital accounts, calls for an openness to policy choices that may be at odds with the dominant modes of production and consumption. This is an important point to keep in mind because all too often the green economy is thought of as just another burgeoning market to exploit or just another opportunity to expand economic growth through higher levels of consumption. This “greenwashing” is not neutral. On the contrary, it is counterproductive as it provides a temporary salve to our collective anxieties and to the cognitive dissonance we experience when faced with the clash of our “of-the-moment” hedonic desire over our longer-term, and more socially oriented, *eudaimonic* impulses. This chapter has highlighted the importance of a locally determined and democratic approach to planning and sustainability, and we have shown how this local, bottom-up approach can be achieved both through organic, collective action and by responsible and active governments intervening on behalf of the community in order to promote equitable, sustainable and prosperous development.

Note

1. There is a similarly titled framework, the Community Capitals Framework, presented by M. Emery and C. Flora in “Spiraling Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework”, *Journal of the Community Development Society* 2006, 37: 19–35. The approaches used in these two frameworks vary, with the present one serving as an assessment tool for varying measures of sub-systems.

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SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN INDONESIA

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Introduction

Community development, as a set of community-based values, processes and practices that place the needs, wisdom, skills and strategies of disadvantaged communities “at the front rather than the end of political debate” (Craig 1998: 15), would appear to offer an obvious methodology for sustainable livelihood practice. This is because community development involves people working together to ensure community viability, in all its aspects. It is driven by principles of caring and mutuality rather than the exploitation of resources for profit. However, the relationship between sustainable livelihoods and community development is complex and from some perspectives it is quite tenuous. This chapter begins by locating the idea of sustainable livelihoods in the broader discourse of sustainable development, which has become a central concern in the aid and development industry over the past few decades. We suggest that notwithstanding recent attempts to “put people first” in the discussions of sustainability, the sustainable development discourse has remained largely one in which experts debate the criteria and mechanisms of sustainability, leaving little room for community development. We ask the question “what do sustainable livelihoods look like when community development methods are used by people to construct and practice their own sustainable livelihood?” In answering this question we explore examples in two locations in Indonesia, West Sumatra and Aceh.

The Discourses of Sustainability

Sustainable development is now a central precept in the aid and development industry. Like so many concepts in this industry, its meanings are often unclear and they shift in focus. Perhaps the most cited definition of sustainable development comes from the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development, which states that sustainable development “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987: 43).

There is a certain appeal in this approach, because it seems to offer a balance between meeting immediate material needs, maintaining the existing society and protecting the natural environment. However, there are several issues that are important for this chapter, and which make easy judgments about what is sustainable and what is not, quite challenging. First, there is the

issue of needs interpretation. There is a long history of debate around the questions of who defines need, how it is defined and the best mechanism(s) for fulfilling needs (Maslow 1962; Fraser 1989; Doyal and Gough 1991). Until recently the prevailing view in sustainable livelihood discussions and practices has been that the security of economic livelihoods is the predominant need. Under the influence of neoliberal economics, development agencies have argued that economic growth and jobs are what is required to secure a sustainable livelihood.¹ Yet over the past decade, human needs have come to be seen more in the context of environmental security, in which issues concerning the condition of the planet, such as the degradation of our habitat and global warming, are central. From this perspective, the argument that economic growth, particularly through neoliberal economics, is the path to sustainability, has come under vigorous attack (see for example, Klein 2014). In the context of global warming and deliberations upon the role of human-produced greenhouse gas emissions, discussion of environmental sustainability has been focused on arguments regarding the need for societies to shift to renewable energies such as solar, water and wind power, that will lessen the amount of carbon emissions released into the earth's atmosphere.

The second issue for community development is that ideas of sustainability, whether framed within neoliberalism or concerns about the degradation of the planet, are generally constructed by protagonists in a top-down manner. In spite of extensive interest in people-centered, bottom-up and participatory approaches to development since the 1990s (see Bhatnagar and Williams 1992; Eade and Williams 1995; Long 2001; Nederveen Pieterse 2001; Bennett and Roche 2002; Hinton and Groves 2004; Fukuda-Parr et al. 2002), this top-down approach has continued to dominate development discourse. Take for example, the new United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs set out global development goals for the period 2016 to 2030. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the SDGs and the broader sustainability agenda go much further than the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (see Mishra 2004) in addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people.² From this perspective, the implementation of the SDGs should be “inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people . . . (they) will be people-centered, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind . . . [and will] require enhanced capacity-building support”.³ Howard and Wheeler (2015) comment that in contrast to the technocratic processes involved in the creation of the MDGs, in the actual development of the SDGs there were attempts to include the voices of those who are normally excluded from such discussions. However, Howard and Wheeler also acknowledge the competition between interest groups in getting their particular viewpoints across, and they argue that in reality the influence of poor and marginalized people in the SDG policy development was limited. Moreover, allowing some input from disadvantaged groups in a highly competitive forum of many interest groups is not the same as putting the needs, wisdom, skills and strategies of disadvantaged communities “at the front rather than the end of political debate” (Craig 1998: 15), and it is not a way of dislodging the top-down approach to the construction and practices of sustainable livelihoods.

The lack of voice for disadvantaged people was even more evident in the agenda of the international COP21 Sustainable Innovation Forum in Paris in December, 2015. Notwithstanding the reference to the importance of climate change to all of humankind, and the responsibility to support human rights, gender equality and the right to development in the Paris COP21 Agreement (Framework Convention on Climate Change),⁴ the “High Level Dialogue” agenda for COP21 was dominated by discussions of business concerns and the establishment of low carbon industry within a neoliberal framework and from the perspective of economic, political and business experts.⁵

Indeed, in regard to policies for sustainable livelihoods in general, a strong prerogative for taking a top-down technocratic approach has always been evident in mainstream development practice and there has never been much room for community development processes. For example, in their analysis of sustainable livelihoods approaches to development, Brocklesby and Fisher (2003) posit that the locally situated character of community development practice cannot be easily incorporated into externally driven sustainable livelihoods interventions—they contend that community development is largely absent.

In regard to Indonesia, which is the site of our case studies below, we can identify a number of projects that involve renewable energy projects. These include the Indonesia Renewable Energy Systems Project, which has operated in several regions; the USAID funded partnership between Columbia University, New York and the Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), in Bogor, West Java; and the United Nations Environment Programme, Institutional Strengthening of Education for Sustainable Consumption. These are large-scale, top-down projects, beyond the scope of small organizations and managed by external funding agencies. There is limited or no engagement with community development principles and practices in these projects.

But there have been other views of how needs are constructed and satisfied. For example, the importance of creating sustainable societies based on an *ecologically* sensitive approach that begins with understanding how we organize our lives as a whole has been championed by Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies (1999). Coming from a feminist perspective, they point out the conflict between valuing harmony with nature, the goals of happiness, quality of life and human dignity and the goals of the patriarchal capitalist system. For them, rather than focus on how to accumulate wealth through financial capital, involving the production and consumption of commodities, a sustainability perspective is concerned with ecologically sound self-provisioning. Where products are traded on the market this should only be to meet the subsistence needs for all (Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies 1999: 63). Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies argue that if we are to survive, economies must become needs-based, environmentally sustainable, cooperative and local. This viewpoint moves us closer to a community development perspective on sustainable livelihoods, but ironically, in limiting sustainable livelihoods to subsistence activities, and in rejecting any market activities that are not for meeting subsistence needs, they deny the right of disadvantaged people to identify *their* needs, priorities and goals, which may well include the desire for consumer goods. And of course, validating the wisdom of disadvantaged people and facilitating them to collectively control their lives is a key principle of community development (Craig 1998: 15; Mayo 2005: 101; Ife 2010: 67; Gilchrist and Taylor 2011: 3; Kenny 2011: 8). As we see in the empirical studies below, engagement in local and regional trading through small businesses can be, from a community development perspective, identified by people themselves as an important element of sustainable livelihoods.

Now there is a perspective that criticizes the way in which capitalism has affected sustainability, that is more consistent with community development. This perspective has been influenced by Amartya Sen. For Sen (1999), the aim of development is not the expansion of a society's material wealth, a rise in personal income or technological advances, but to expand "the real freedoms that people enjoy" (Sen 1999: 3). That is, what people need most is freedom to have the choice of how to live. From this perspective, while a secure income can contribute to expanding choices regarding material needs, it is not an end in itself. For those championing a community development approach to the fulfillment of needs and the establishment of a decent livelihood, the idea that people must be empowered, and have the capacities to "live the kinds of lives they value" (Sen 1999: 18) can refocus sustainability issues to people's own views of what is important. The implication of the focus on people themselves deciding what is important is that what is regarded as sustainable development varies, and it is not a fixed condition (Kemmler

and Spreng 2007: 2466). That is, the meaning of sustainable development and the practices of sustainable livelihoods depend on a society's or group's worldviews and values.

Sustainable Livelihoods in Indonesia

In the following section we explore how endogenous community development principles and processes have been used in the construction of sustainable livelihoods in two provinces in Indonesia, West Sumatra and Aceh. The first is a study of 12 village cooperatives in West Sumatra, located in rural areas around the provincial capital, Padang.⁶ The second is a study of how a local Acehnese organization, Forum Bangun Aceh (FBA), responded to the survivors of the devastating tsunami that hit the coast of Aceh on December 26, 2004, and how, using a community development approach, its members listened to the way in which needs and the idea of sustainability were articulated by the survivors.⁷ Both these case studies indicate the importance of local organization as the basis for sustainable livelihoods. In the case study of post-disaster Aceh, which discusses how many livelihoods were restored through the efforts of a local organization, the sustainability of the organization itself has been an important part of the dynamics of sustainability. We begin with the study of the village cooperatives.

Village Cooperatives in West Sumatra

The village cooperatives produced a range of products, some of which were essentially for their subsistence living and some of which were mainly for generating income, through selling products in local markets. Each village cooperative had one or several specialities. These included rice farming, sugarcane products, dairy and beef cattle, fishing, onion production and plant and flower nurseries for local (and sometimes international) markets. Some of these specialities had been established several generations ago, while several village cooperatives, especially where they were producing largely for the market, had been in existence for less than five years.

Although the term community development was not used in the interviews (indeed the term community development is currently used most commonly in Western-influenced and funded community projects), most of the livelihood activities in these cooperatives involved community development principles and practice. That is, the aim of community development is to empower communities, as far as possible, to collectively control their own resources and futures. As indicated above, community development practice involves an approach to development that begins with the views, needs, priorities, assets and plans of communities. It is based on principles of collective self-determination, social justice, democracy and human rights.

These practices and principles were clearly evident in most of the activities of the cooperatives. For example, a common practice in West Sumatra is the organization of seasonal groups to work collectively on agricultural production such as planting and harvesting. This greatly supports individuals who do not have the capacity to work on their own lands by themselves, and it also keeps agricultural production to schedule. Another collective tradition can be found in what is known as the *gotong-royong*, which also involves working together for a common purpose. Gotong-royong has been taking place in West Sumatra for a long time, normally taking place at the village level. Once a week, a village crier walks up and down the main road of the village and announces the project of the week, such as cleaning the road, fixing the village irrigation system or collecting rocks from the river to build a new prayer house. People then come together and perform the tasks as announced.

Each cooperative in the study was owned collectively by the villagers, who all had a say in how it should be run. Priorities for the cooperatives were decided through consensus (only

when informal agreement was not reached did a formal vote occur). All of the cooperatives had a chairperson, the majority of whom were men, but in three cooperatives the chairperson was a woman. Members of the cooperatives expressed a real sense of ownership and pride in their organization.

Interviewees were asked about any difficulties they were facing. A response that recurred in several interviews was that there had been some conflict over priorities. In these cases interviewees explained that these were always settled “internally” (without recourse to formal intervention). A number of other respondents commented that shortages of materials and resources had always been significant problems. However, these problems were often mitigated when cooperatives received government grants to assist them, to purchase fertilizer or rent land, for example. Government funds were allotted largely according to need, and cooperatives shared their information and plans amongst each other. Submissions for such funds and reports of outcomes are commonly a one-page effort.

Unlike the negative experiences of government intervention during the period of the Suharto years (1965–1998), most interviewees embraced government support and advice. They identified the facilitation of the local economy as a key role of the local provincial government. One of the main reasons for this change of attitude was the introduction of Regional Autonomy in Indonesia, which has had the dramatic effect of transforming Indonesia from one of the most authoritarian countries in the world to one of the most decentralized (Butt 2010). Decentralization has meant that in many cases authority to make laws and policies has been devolved from Jakarta to regional provinces (*propinsi*), and depending on the nature of the laws and policies, to the level of districts (*kabupaten*) and cities (*kota*). In 2000 West Sumatra began to restructure its administration, and in so doing, it drew on traditional forms of political organization (*Minangkabau*) based on the principle of subsidiarity, where village government involved participatory, democratic and accountable structures (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2009).

The principle of subsidiarity also found expression in the close relationships between local government and villages, with officials from the kabupaten and kota levels often visiting local villages, especially on social occasions such as the celebration of the end of the fasting month, the most important celebration in the Muslim calendar. Some of our interviewees reported that following the shift to Regional Autonomy, there have been higher degrees of mutual trust between the grassroots and the provincial government. Many of the members of the cooperatives stated that officials come as facilitators, to assist and advise rather than check on their activities. Indeed some of our interviewees commented that they have no hesitation in seeking advice from government officials when “things go wrong”.

Notwithstanding this favorable view of the way community development is practiced in the village cooperatives in our study, the cooperatives faced some of the challenges common to many community development projects. Some interviewees, particularly in larger cooperatives (serving up to 30 families), acknowledged the difficulty of getting all families to attend meetings and remarked on how this undermined consensus decision making. A significant dilemma facing parents was how far to encourage their children to leave for a better education (and a livelihood outside the village) and how far to encourage them to stay in the village in order to keep the cooperative going. Others commented unfavorably on the powers of the chairperson. The Indonesian context also gave rise to challenges. While, as mentioned above, many villagers expressed trust in local officials, some were more wary. Several commented on the endemic corruption in Indonesian politics and businesses and argued that devolution had not lessened the level of corruption—it just added a new layer. For example, elections for local officials had opened up a new avenue for “vote-buying”.

Forms of Sustainability

This brings us to the references to sustainable livelihoods, which featured strongly in the interviews. In general sustainability was seen as a village responsibility. We can identify several frames of reference in which sustainability was discussed. First, from an economic perspective ensuring sustainability required sustainable livelihoods, through the productive activities of subsistence farming, and as far as possible through the production of a surplus to sell on the market, and to generate some income. All of the cooperatives aspired to make at least a small surplus to generate funds to improve their productive activities, by buying a tractor or commercial fertilizer for example, although several had not generated a surplus for a number of years.

But this economic framing was only one aspect of the notion of sustainable livelihoods. There was a second frame of reference, focused on sensitivity to the need for environmental sustainability. There were many examples of such sensitivity. For example, members of the cooperatives were aware of the disastrous effects of deforestation in parts of Indonesia (although we did not discuss what exactly these effects were). Success of the fisher cooperatives was seasonal. The infrastructure of several freshwater fisheries had been destroyed in the major 2009 earthquake, and these cooperatives were in the process of being rebuilt in ways that would make them less susceptible to earthquakes. Fishermen operating off the coast were acutely sensitive to over-fishing, and expressed concern about how the huge catches taken by the international fishing industry were affecting fish stocks around Indonesia. There were also a number of cooperatives, including the cattle and flower cooperatives, that were interested in renewable energy sources and were keen to develop bio-gas (a gas which is a product of the breakdown of organic matter in the absence of oxygen). The sugarcane farmers were experimenting with ways in which they could utilize all the by-products of sugarcane, including mulching the toughest part of the cane for agricultural purposes. In trying to understand the constructions of sustainability, what was surprising was the extent to which members of the cooperatives were seeking information nationally and internationally about innovative and efficient ways of producing, how to market their products and how to be more environmentally sustainable. Many cooperatives were actively seeking scientifically based knowledge, not as an elixir that could solve all their problems, but as a source of information on how to best develop the livelihoods of the villagers within the context of scientific research on sustainability. In several instances this knowledge came by way of a partnership with a local university. None of the cooperatives was cocooned in a time-warped of a so-called “phase-out” rural model of subsistence.

Another important frame of reference was social sustainability. Each cooperative was built around high levels of social capital. Social capital refers to features of social organization, such as trust, reciprocity, norms and networks that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam 2000). While bonding social capital (such as mutuality and trust within the village) was the dominant form, bridging social capital (networks of mutuality and trust reaching outside the village) was also present. Yet villagers often faced a dilemma in deciding on whether to focus on bonding social capital—that is, focusing on maintaining social relations within the cooperative—or by making links outside the cooperative. This dilemma was evident in discussion about whether to encourage young people to stay in the village (noted above), which would ensure social sustainability while at the same time keeping existing skills and knowledge going, or to encourage young people to leave for a better education, through which bridging social capital could be enhanced as well as opening up possibilities for new skills and knowledge to be introduced. One view was that as young people left, the social connections, skills and knowledge built up over generations would be lost and that this would likely result in these leaving the village for good. Another view was that it was essential for young people

to gain new skills and social contacts, as well as external money, that could be brought back to strengthen the cooperative. The decision of whether a family should send a young person away for a continuing education, or encourage them to stay to help maintain the cooperative, was a difficult one for families.

One aspect of social sustainability that was being eroded in the power structures of the cooperatives was matriliney. Minang society is the largest matrilineal society in the world (for discussions of Minang matriliney, see, for example, Evers 1975; Kato 1978; Navis 1984; Indrizal 2004; and Goettner-Abendroth 2012). In this matrilineal society, family lineage runs through the female line and women own the property they inherit from their mothers and will in turn pass on to their daughters. It has been suggested that these two aspects of the Minang matrilineal culture allow women to enjoy an important role in sustaining their community (see Blackwood 2000, for example) and a high social status. Control over economic resources through the ownership of land gives women a leadership position and political power. In the cooperatives in this study, however, the majority of the leadership positions were held by men. This is because the economic activities in the cooperatives could now receive, and as discussed above many did, funding from outside the community, from the government for instance. This has allowed men to acquire resources for the productive activities in the community that they had not been able to access. Such a shift in economic power can cause tensions between women and men when they belong to the same cooperative, as the traditional leadership role and status women enjoy can now be challenged by men.

While rarely articulated explicitly in terms of sustainable livelihoods, all the cooperatives studied organized their activities with one eye on issues concerning future sustainability. Their viewpoints were expressions of the World Commission on Environment and Development definition of sustainable development, which we noted above, as activities “that meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”. Importantly then, their views were not just focused on economic factors. Understanding sustainability requires an appreciation of how economic, environmental, social and cultural forms of sustainability intersect.

Before we proceed any further in this chapter, we need to acknowledge the debates about the sustainability of small agricultural endeavors. It has been argued that in the context of the challenges of climate change and the need to feed an overpopulated world efficiently, small agriculture farms are outmoded and unsustainable. Large-scale scientifically based interventions, which understand all environmental effects, are required. This critique holds that over-reliance on unsophisticated tools, poor soil quality and predicted extremes in weather are making the livelihoods of small agriculture farmers even more vulnerable. It is only through commercial farming that the lives of the poor can become economically sustainable (Seavoy 2000). A contrary view is that it is the free market capitalist system that is inherently unsustainable, both environmentally and economically, and large commercial farming in part is a net contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. The extensive destruction of rainforests in Sumatra for profit-generating palm oil plantations is given as an example. From this perspective we need to explore how small-livelihood endeavors can be models for a holistic ecological creation of sustainable societies. Indeed, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, more than 500 million family farms manage the majority of the world’s agricultural land and produce most of the world’s food effectively.⁸ This same agency argues that small “farmers carefully manage their lands to sustain remarkably high levels of productivity despite having less access to productive resources such as agricultural inputs and support”. These varying assessments of the sustainability of small farming activities are, of course, part of the broader debate in which “experts” argue from different theoretical viewpoints.

The position taken in this chapter is that supporting people's own abilities to identify their needs and construct their own sustainable livelihoods does not mean ignoring what can be learnt from scientific research. This is not a position that denies that humans must act on climate change. In the context of confronting climate change, what is required is more research into the ways in which the great diversity of human activities mitigate or contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, including the activities of small farming activities.

Forum Bangun Aceh

On 26 December, 2004 an earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale occurred in the sea off the northern tip of Sumatra, causing a tsunami that devastated over 800 kilometres of the coastal area of Aceh (Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam). While there was no exact final body count, there were at least 130,000 people killed in Aceh and over 500,000 displaced (United Nations Development Programme 2006). All productive activities along the coast were threatened. The tsunami took place in a region that had already been destabilized politically, economically and socially by decades of violent conflict between the Indonesian military and the movement for Acehese independence, led by the free Aceh movement, GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka). Relief work in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami involved activities for the immediate protection of people's lives, including the provision of water, food, medical supplies and shelter. It was in the first few days after the tsunami that the need for this support was most acute. While there were a range of narratives regarding the types of participation that occurred during this period, the dominant view, particularly in the Western media, was that the survivors were largely incapacitated. What was little reported was the way in which many of the survivors had already begun to organize. For example, within hours of the tsunami, they had set up local centers, or *poskos*, as places to begin searches for relatives and friends, to provide general information as well as to assist in finding accommodation for those without shelter (Cosgrave 2007). These active survivors were joined by a flood of Acehese diaspora who added their energy and skills to the relief effort. It was in the context of this collaborative effort led by Acehese people themselves that Forum Bangun Aceh (FBA)⁹ was established, comprising both survivors of the tsunami and a group of Acehese diaspora.

Members of the fledgling FBA argued that as well as listening to and respecting survivors, one of the most important aspects of reconstruction was to "actually do something immediately, however small", rather than "just talk about what they might possibly do". "Just talking" was a key weakness of external aid programs. It occurred because external agencies often over-assessed and over-consulted, or had to wait on permission from donors before acting. Most importantly, argued the founders of FBA, if the reconstruction was to be effective, respect for the integrity of local people and acknowledgement of their skills and resources should be at the center of all activities. From the start, those involved in FBA insisted that reconstruction must be based on the priorities of people themselves. It soon became clear that the priority for survivors was to "get back to normal", as far as this was possible (this view was in contrast to the argument presented by many external agencies that reconstruction offered an opportunity to "build back better"). There were two priorities which led to the development of what FBA called the "brain and stomach approach", whereby the brain required education and knowledge, and the stomach required re-establishing sustainable material livelihoods. Ensuring the security of both these aspects, of course, is important for sustainable livelihoods.

For families with surviving school-age children, reopening schools and getting students back to classes was an essential part of returning to "normal". For example, in the capital, Banda

Aceh, where a large number of schools had been destroyed, tent schools were set up in the foothills on the outskirts of the city. Many people offered to take on teaching roles to ensure that classes continued. One of FBA's first efforts was to work with local and other Indonesians to bring in teaching materials from all over Indonesia to support the teachers. Education was essential for the sustainability of culture and knowledge. Preserving their own culture involved knowing about Acehnese history, including religious history, as well as maintaining traditional arts and crafts.

However, perhaps the most important part of getting back to "normal" was the restoration of material livelihoods. Mostly, survivors wanted to return to their previous occupations because this was central to sustaining family and community life. Indeed, the whole notion of sustainable livelihoods in Aceh is framed by the interrelated commitments to maintain the family and cultural and community life. For example, as stated by a member of FBA, sustainability means getting back to "a life like before the disaster, where people can do their own things in a normal situation, in their own way and within their own culture [where] they can get back to work or farming just like before tsunami and they will continue for generations". The re-establishment of material livelihoods often had both subsistence (supporting families through their own productive activities) and market (selling services and products) elements. While FBA was not itself a job-creation agency, what it could do was support families that had previously established small and micro businesses. Using an asset-based approach (beginning with the existing skills, knowledge and resources), and adopting affirmative action processes that focussed on women, FBA began to work with those who had previously operated small businesses. Through discussions of what economic activities the survivors had been involved in before the tsunami, calculations were made jointly of what was needed to re-establish businesses. These needs were very modest, and required very small amounts of money. Drawing on money donated by themselves and their friends, FBA set up a system of revolving loans whereby FBA, individuals and families would discuss what materials and equipment were needed to restart a business, and only when the business was "up and running" again did the recipient(s) begin to repay the loan. Most of the repayment monies were used for the purpose of helping another person or family to re-establish their means of economic livelihood.

For the first three years after the tsunami, FBA did not charge any interest for these loans. The goal of FBA was to "get the local economy moving again as quickly as possible". Once businesses were re-established, it was possible to move to the more common loans model, whereby interest was accrued, but it was limited to 8–12 percent a year, with no other costs (in contrast to the more conventional interest percent applied to loans in Aceh which were at least double this amount). The material requirements for restoring a small business enterprise varied considerably. For some families, rebuilding a business meant having a replacement motor-cycle taxi. For others it meant a set of saucepans to re-establish a way-side stall, and for farmers it could mean purchasing chickens or seeds to resume their productive activities. For one woman applicant it meant the provision of thread and fabric to re-establish a handicraft business. By 2015 over 80 percent of loans had been repaid.

At the center of the FBA livelihood program has been the appointment of "organic" leaders, called "Local Motivators", to encourage others in the community to restart small enterprises, to facilitate and mentor newly re-established businesses and to open up discussion, and find solutions, when issues have arisen. The selection of Local Motivators has been on the basis of their skills and experience and their knowledge of local culture, values and economic practices. Many had previously been beneficiaries of the revolving loans program. In choosing Local Motivators, a key criterion has been that they are trusted members of the community. A small

remuneration has been provided to each Local Motivator based on a very low percentage of the revolving funds (around 0.5 percent). At the time of writing this chapter there were five Local Motivators working in six districts.

A corollary of FBA's position that their activities should be owned by Acehnese people, and based on the priorities of people themselves, is the view that FBA itself should not be driven by the priorities of either the government or large international agencies. Early on, FBA made the decision not to accept any funding that was not in line with FBA's values and principles. Unlike in many externally funded programs in Aceh, workers in FBA often worked as committed volunteers. When they were paid, the remuneration was much less than for those in large or international aid projects. FBA has, unlike many other start-up local organizations, remained a community-based organization, continuing to work with and for the local community.

What can this case study tell us about community development and sustainable livelihoods? As noted earlier in this chapter, much of what can be identified as community development practice is actually not named as such in Indonesia, and in general this is the case for the members of FBA. Yet the principles and processes of validating the wisdom, knowledge and expertise existing in communities, prioritizing the views, and needs of disadvantaged communities, facilitating the fulfilment of needs and "rebuilding from within" are evident in this case study. It is clear that if sustainability is taken to mean continuation of livelihoods, including a manifest ripple effect in a community, then a community development approach has been successful in regard to nurturing sustainable livelihoods. Twelve years after the tsunami, FBA is one of a very few organizations still supporting sustainable livelihoods.

At this point in the chapter it would be informative to compare the FBA revolving loan program in Aceh with perhaps the most well-known micro-credit program, first developed through the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. There are clear similarities. For both the Grameen Bank and FBA, micro-credit programs involve very small amounts of money as loans for disadvantaged and marginalized groups. They are both organized around the importance of income-generating activities and self-employment, and both are organized around "trust", rather than formal legal procedures and systems (Karim, 2008). Women are key recipients of loans in both types of program, although FBA does not require that recipients are women. Both programs work on principles in which women engage with the capitalist economic system (and for some commentators, such Keating et al. 2010, this is problematic).

However there are many differences. First, it is important to understand the context of the FBA program in Aceh. In contrast to other micro-credit programs, the FBA revolving loans approach was not conceived as a policy instrument, through a top-down approach constructed by people outside the Acehnese community (however worthy the intent of such a policy instrument might be). Using the principles of community development, FBA members began by asking their friends, neighbors and other survivors in local communities what they most needed after the tsunami. The re-establishment of economic activities was at the top of the list, alongside educational institutions. The economic context was the destruction of *already existing* small and micro businesses. Unlike most other micro-credit programs, the revolving loans program has not aimed to *create* income-generating activities, but to restart them, and at the request of local communities. This has meant that those involved have always had some experience in a small business. They have not had to create a new business in its entirety nor develop completely new skills (although in many cases they have extended their skills). Indeed, recipients of the small revolving loans have not suddenly engaged in small-scale capitalist enterprise as naïve newcomers.

Second, unlike many micro-credit programs, the FBA revolving loans program has not been presented as a magic bullet for changing power relations between women and men. While, as indicated above, FBA has a policy of positive discrimination in favor of women participants, the revolving loans program was not set up under the banner of women's empowerment (see Keating et al. 2010: 157). It was based on a community development approach, as a response to the needs and priorities expressed by both women and men. In any case, the role of women in Aceh is more complex than in contexts thoroughly dominated by patriarchy. There are similarities between the strong Minang matrilineal culture mentioned above and Acehnese culture, in the sense of the historical respect for women. There is an important history of public roles for women in Aceh, including as rulers and military leaders. Between 1641 and 1699 there were four successive female rulers (Jayawardena 1977) and there is much pride in the heroine, Keumalahayati, who was the first woman in the Muslim world to become an admiral. Women have played important roles in the domestic sphere as well. During the 30 years of conflict with the Indonesian military, many men left their families to join the movement for independence (GAM) as combatants. One result was that women took over the control and management of households and productive activities, which is perhaps a key reason as to why so many women have been successful entrepreneurs under the FBA revolving loan scheme. This is not to argue though, that there are no patriarchal values in Aceh, because there are, but to point out the complexity of women's roles in this region.

Third, the FBA program has resolutely eschewed the practice of using community pressure to ensure repayment of loans. This contrasts with some of the practices in some other micro-credit programs. Karim (2008), referring to her study of the micro-credit program in Bangladesh, emphasizes the disciplining role of non-government organizations (NGOs) and the use of group pressure and the mechanisms of honor and shame to ensure that loans are repaid. She argues that:

The honor and shame codes act as the collateral of these loans. It is the honor of the family that is at stake, and which the woman represents. If the woman gets publicly shamed, the family is dishonored.

FBA does not use honour and shame to ensure repayment of loans. Rather it focuses on support and mentoring, particularly by the Local Motivator. While the support is important, it sometimes fails to provide the required assistance. At the same time repayment schedules are negotiable and there is acceptance that some loans might never be repaid. This is not to argue that there has never been pressure placed on women and men by other villagers to repay the loan quickly, in the belief that a new revolving loan might come to them sooner, but such a practice is strongly discouraged by FBA.

Fourth, as well as rejecting the principle of collective responsibility for repaying loans, the revolving loans program has never been focused on a business model in which interest on loans would build disposable income for FBA's own use. As noted above, in the beginning there was no interest charged on FBA loans. As families recovered financially, the maximum interest rate for loan repayments has been 12 percent. This contrasts with the requirement to repay loans promptly, and for some commercial and even NGO-based loans the interest charged has been up to 20 percent. In Bangladesh the Microcredit Regulatory Authority recommends 25–33 percent interest rates (Levin 2012: 111).

Finally, in many "developing countries", for-profit banks, noting the high loan recovery rate (around 96 percent) in the Grameen Bank, have now embraced the micro-credit system,

but with even higher interest rates, that many poor farmers in particular, have been unable to repay. Indeed, in desperation micro-credit borrowers have often resorted to multiple loans, including from private money lenders (Levin 2012: 112). Given the principles of the FBA approach, including the mentoring program, there is no evidence of multiple borrowing in order to repay loans. Interestingly, FBA was approached by a Jakarta-based bank to enter into a partnership based on the revolving loans program, but reflecting on the differences between the aims and modus operandi of the for-profit bank and those of FBA, the proposal did not proceed.

FBA has faced challenges of course. In their critical self-assessments, members have identified several dilemmas and challenges. A major dilemma has concerned its own growth and development. With the early success of their livelihood program, in terms of the number of small businesses re-established as on-going concerns and the growing number of applications (200 applications in the first two years), it was tempting to accept offers for funding and support from financial institutions and international aid and development agencies so that the number of loans could be increased. Indeed, in the context of the unprecedented financial resources made available for the reconstruction efforts, which were estimated to be around US \$13 billion (Telford et al. 2006), a number of offers of financial support were made by international agencies. Within FBA there were heated debates about, on the one hand, whether receiving international funds might compromise their activities, especially in the eyes of other local Acehnese, or on the other hand, whether accepting more funds would help the local population. Accepting more funding “because it was there”, as many other local and international NGOs did, was tempting. In the event, a decision was made not to seek funds that could not be directed to the core aims of FBA, namely the education and livelihoods programs. More than a decade later the value of such selectivity is clear, because other organizations that had sought funds for programs outside their remit found great difficulty in using such funds effectively and productively.

This case study of the thinking and practices of sustainable livelihoods in Aceh then, like the case study of cooperatives in West Sumatra, highlights ways in which sustainability at the community level can have several dimensions. Sustainability in this Acehnese case study is thought of within economic, social and cultural frameworks. While in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami there is a deep sensitivity of the power of natural events to destroy people’s lives, this sensitivity has not meant that Acehnese people live their lives with a lookout for new environmental threats, including the real threat of global warming. After decades of conflict, the focus of the vast majority of Acehnese people is a decent livelihood and peace for themselves and their children.

What this case study demonstrates is that people themselves need to be able to identify their needs and support themselves through their productive activities, and they need to ensure that the way they do this does not impinge on future lives. It is through the community development work of FBA that families have been able to get on their feet. From this perspective, the sustainability of NGOs supporting sustainable livelihood programs should also be taken into account if we are to have a comprehensive understanding of sustainable livelihoods at the local level.

Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to provide some insights into community development processes and sustainable livelihoods. It draws attention to different constructs and practices of sustainable development. The focus of the chapter has been two case studies in Indonesia, which offer examples of how research at the grassroots level can reveal different insights into the construction

of ideas of sustainability and approaches to sustainable development. Of course, the profound complexity of Indonesia as a society of over 250 million people, the vast variations in history and culture and the limited empirically based civil society research in Indonesia preclude generalizations for this country. Moreover, because of the unique contexts of both the west Sumatran village cooperatives and the unique history of Aceh, the case-studies discussed should be understood as explorations of community development in particular places and times. Nevertheless these studies remind us that there is more to understanding how humans value and practice sustainability and sustainable livelihoods than studying the assessments of (Western) experts. It is necessary to listen to the wisdom of people at the grassroots level and to avoid a one-dimensional view of sustainability. Thus the chapter ends with a call for much more community development research globally on the ways in which people construct and practice sustainable livelihoods and their supporting organizational bases. If we are to understand the full complexity of sustainability we cannot avoid discussion of the many ways in which people construct and practice sustainable livelihoods. We need such research as a starting point for making sense of how we might be able to respond adequately to the immense challenges facing planet earth and all its inhabitants today.

Notes

1. See for example www.un.or.id/en/what-we-do/partnership-for-development/sustainable-livelihoods—accessed September 23, 2015.
2. See www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda.html—accessed October 15, 2015.
3. Quote from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>—accessed October 20, 2015.
4. See <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09r01.pdf>—accessed January 23, 2016.
5. See www.cop21paris.org/images/downloads/SIF15_framework_agenda_01.12.pdf—accessed January 6, 2016.
6. The study of village cooperatives in West Sumatra was funded by the Australia Indonesia Research Institute for Humanity and Development at Deakin University. It has been undertaken by Co-Chief Investigators Professor Sue Kenny and Associate Professor Ismet Fanany, with the assistance of Sutria Rahayu and Syafiwal Azzam and the many villagers who assisted us in our attempts to understand the community development practices of rural villagers in Indonesia.
7. This study was funded by Deakin University and the Australian Research Council. The researchers were Professor Sue Kenny, Associate Professor Ismet Fanan and Azwar Hasan. It involved an ethnographic investigation of livelihood approaches in post-tsunami Aceh, undertaken during five field trips between 2005 and 2011.
8. See www.fao.org/3/a-i4036e.pdf—accessed October 10, 2015.
9. For an overview of the activities of Forum Bangan Aceh see www.fba.or.id/history.html—accessed September 20, 2015.

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THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INDICATORS IN GENERATING KNOWLEDGE FOR INFORMING REGIONAL PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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Background and Literature Review

Communities must contend with local environmental, economic and social challenges that often stem from more global problems. The concepts of wealth creation and resilience have increasingly been adopted by community and economic development researchers and practitioners as a strategy for building more vibrant, resilient and sustainable communities that can withstand economic, environmental and social shocks. In the community and economic development literature, wealth creation refers to the whole spectrum of community assets (natural, human, cultural, social, built, financial, political) that are used to build and contribute to individual and community well-being (Pender et al. 2012; Flora and Flora 2013). Magis (2010: 401) has incorporated the community assets into the concepts of community resilience as the “existence, development and engagement of community resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability and surprise”. Berkes and Ross (2013) assert that communities can strategically increase their resiliency through social learning, capacity building, planning and using the concept of agency and principles of collective impact. As a process, collective impact brings together individual organizations representing different sectors committing to a common agenda for addressing a specific problem in ways that each individual organization is best positioned to undertake (Kania and Kramer 2011). A key attribute of this approach is that participants recognize value in their diversity and that issues cannot be solved without each other.

The role of community indicators as a tool for benchmarking, evaluation and analysis is a common theme running throughout the resiliency and wealth creation literature (Magis 2010; Pender et al. 2012; Berkes and Ross 2013). The development and usage of community indicator programs have been widely adopted as part of many community development and sustainability efforts across the United States and around the world (Innes and Booher 2000; Valentin and Spangenberg 2000; Gahin et al. 2003; Swain and Hollar 2003; Fraser et al. 2006; Holden 2007; Holman 2009; Blanke and Walzer 2013; Martin et al. 2015).

Effective community indicator programs encourage data-driven decision making and inspire collective action within communities by measuring the issues communities have prioritized (Macdonald et al. 2012). As more communities adopted indicator programs to guide their planning and development efforts during the 1990s, Innes and Booher (2000) articulated the need for community indicator programs to move beyond producing the standard annual report that often fails to generate action and policy change. In contrast, they argue that indicators are most impactful through the “collaborative learning process” of developing and producing the indicators themselves (Innes and Booher 2000: 177). Gahin et al. (2003) describe the potential of indicator programs to “build connections between people, foster discussion in the community, and provide a powerful education tool to raise awareness. As a source of data about the community, indicators empower community members, leading to positive changes in planning, advocacy, and decision-making” (2003: 666). They then identify ten key factors underpinning the effectiveness of community indicator programs: funding, community ownership, clear decision-making process, community champions, organizational credibility, good content, cultural sensitivity, education and outreach, focus on particular indicators, and creating better ties to action.

The Environment, Community, Opportunity, and Sustainability (ECOS) Project integrates indicators into a regional plan spanning parallel and overlapping goals of enhancing quality of life, economic development and resiliency. Launched in 2010, the ECOS Project was launched when the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) received a \$999,000 federal grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. This strategic initiative of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities was an innovative collaboration between HUD, the US Department of Transportation and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The primary goal of this HUD initiative was to support “locally-led collaborative efforts that bring together diverse interests from the many municipalities in a region to determine how best to target housing, economic and workforce development, infrastructure investments to create more jobs and regional economic activity” (US Department of Housing and Urban Development 2015: xx). The forty-five grantees across the United States in 2010 incorporated the six livability principles into their work: (1) provide more transportation principles; (2) promote equitable, affordable housing; (3) enhance economic competitiveness; (4) support existing communities; (5) coordinate policies and leverage investment; and (6) value communities and neighborhoods (US Department of Housing and Urban Development 2015). Chittenden County Project partners intentionally applied for the grant as a means to continue and expand the Champlain Initiative, a multi-sector collaboration of area social service agencies and business community, which included the regional hospital, local United Way organization and various community development organizations that were active but winding down in the early 2000s.

Vermont and Chittenden County Background

Located in the northeast region of the USA, Vermont is a rural state with a population of 626,562 (US Census Bureau 2014). Chittenden County is home to an estimated 160,531 residents

Table 12.1 Various Accolades and Recognition for Greater Burlington & Chittenden County (2010–2014)

-
- Healthiest county in the US
 - #1 “Top ten cities state of well-being”
 - #1 Place to raise a family
 - One of America’s best downtowns
 - Awarded “excellence for sustainable community development”
 - #2 In America’s 10 great places to live
 - #2 Greenest small city
 - Ranked 20th city with highest concentration of creative class
 - One of top ten cities for outdoor recreation
 - One of best cities for new jobs
-

(approximately 25 percent of Vermont’s total population) and is also home to the state’s largest city, Burlington, with an estimated population of 42,211 (US Census Bureau 2014). The population of Chittenden County is 91 percent white, 2 percent black or African American and 3 percent Asian (US Census Bureau 2014). Bordered by Lake Champlain, Chittenden County and its municipalities have gained a national reputation for a high quality of life, due to investments made in community well-being, green infrastructure, open space and education (Table 12.1). These rankings reflect the culture engrained within Chittenden County of integrating quality of life into community and economic development.

Despite national recognition and accolades, Chittenden County faces numerous challenges in achieving the goals of the ECOS Plan. One in eight Chittenden County residents was estimated to be food insecure in 2013 (Gundersen et al. 2015). Health disparities exist for low-income residents; residents with incomes below 250 percent of the federal poverty level are three times more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes, cardiovascular disease or asthma, and are twice as likely to be diagnosed with depression (ECOS Partnership 2014). Affordable housing remains a critical issue: Within the New England region, Chittenden County has one of the highest rates of renters considered to be cost-burdened because they spend more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing (Mauricio 2013). The health of Lake Champlain, particularly the northern portion proximate to Chittenden County’s shoreline, is threatened by phosphorus loading from agricultural lands and runoff from impervious surfaces. These complex challenges require a collaborative, cross-sector approach that creates change from both bottom-up and top-down approaches.

Regional Planning Commission Background

Founded in 1966, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is one of Vermont’s eleven regional planning commissions. Vermont state legislation empowers regional planning commissions to carry out many duties, including promoting mutual cooperation among member municipalities, providing technical assistance to support municipal planning efforts and creating a regional plan. Regional planning commissions are necessary to support municipalities given their limited local authority and absence of county-level government. Vermont statute states that the regional plan will guide economic development in accordance with present and future needs and resources that “create conditions favorable to transportation, health, safety, civic activities, and educational, and cultural opportunities”. In addition the statute states the need to reduce inefficiencies in development patterns, promote efficient infrastructure usage, conserve

natural resources and develop housing that meets the needs of the region (Title 24 Vermont Statutes Annotated §4347:21). The regional planning commission has a critical role in promoting sustainability in a state with many small municipalities and no statewide land use planning authority.

The CCRPC's organizational vision is to "be a pre-eminent, integrated regional organization that plans for healthy, vibrant communities, economic development, and efficient transportation of people and goods while improving the region's livability" (Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission 2015). The CCRPC is led by an Executive Director and governed by a board of commissions with 19 municipal representatives and five at-large representatives from the agricultural, environmental, socioeconomic and transportation sectors. The 17 CCRPC staff members specialize in land use, transportation and emergency planning, and work with 19 small and medium municipalities with populations ranging in size from 30 to 42,000 residents. Many of these communities have volunteer planning commissions and limited municipal staff and rely on the CCRPC for technical assistance with the state-required planning processes.

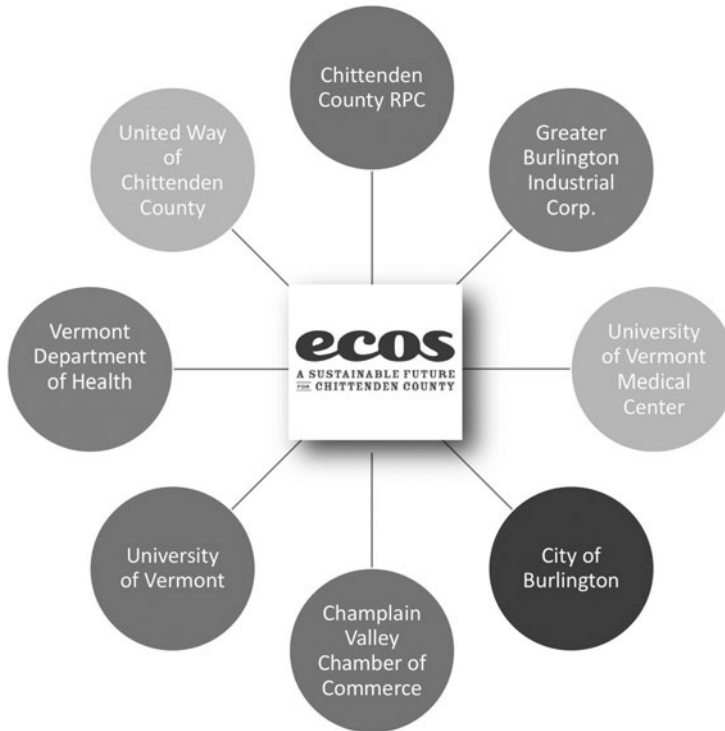
Introduction to ECOS

Chittenden County's ECOS Plan was created from the ECOS Project process; it now serves as the County's regional plan and also as the Comprehensive Economic Strategy, and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The ECOS Project process has provided a venue for a collective impact approach to be fostered within the county.

The name of the project, Environment, Community, Opportunity and Sustainability (ECOS) was purposefully chosen to represent the principled values of the plan. Through careful selection, ECOS was chosen as an acronym to brand and unify the work of various stakeholders by melding the built environment, natural systems, the economy and social community. The term ECOS created an identity that is independent of any of the organizations involved and acts as a unifying force that disparate organizations can associate with in a neutral manner. Using the multidimensional concept of sustainability, the ECOS Project seeks to bring this work to those stakeholders typically not engaged in such dialogue. Figure 12.1 shows the ECOS Partner organizations involved in the process. In addition to the CCRPC, the partners include the regional medical center, the business community, the state health department, a county-wide non-profit agency, the state land-grant university and the county's largest municipal government. Many of these partners were also part of the former Champlain Initiative and had established relationships and trust prior to the start of the ECOS Project.

ECOS is a process and a plan with feedback loops for managing sustainable growth in Chittenden County. It includes more direct public participation with opportunities to discuss regional planning. A focal point of these discussions has centered on resiliency, the ability to adapt to difficult situations and successfully thrive in the face of change, uncertainty and unpredictability, to overcome adversity. The ECOS Project builds community resiliency by investing in healthy environments that foster positive health outcomes and attract a talented workforce and entrepreneurship, in turn increasing community wealth, resources, opportunity and prosperity. Each of these aspects of community is integrated together in the Circle of Prosperity (Figure 12.2) that visually demonstrates the interrelationships between people, their environment, economy and opportunity. It highlights that the implementation approach is collective with many partners. ECOS Partners recognize that prosperity is the result of the interconnectedness of a healthy environment, healthy people, diverse workforce and opportunities.

The Circle of Prosperity and insights from the community engagement phase informed the development of eight ECOS Strategies (Table 12.2). These high-priority, cross-cutting implementation strategies represent one or more aspects of the Circle of Prosperity and describe the



Note: This diagram represents the organizations that keep the momentum of ECOS going in between plan update cycles. The initial ECOS steering committee consisted of 65 partner organizations.

Figure 12.1 ECOS Project Partner Organizations.

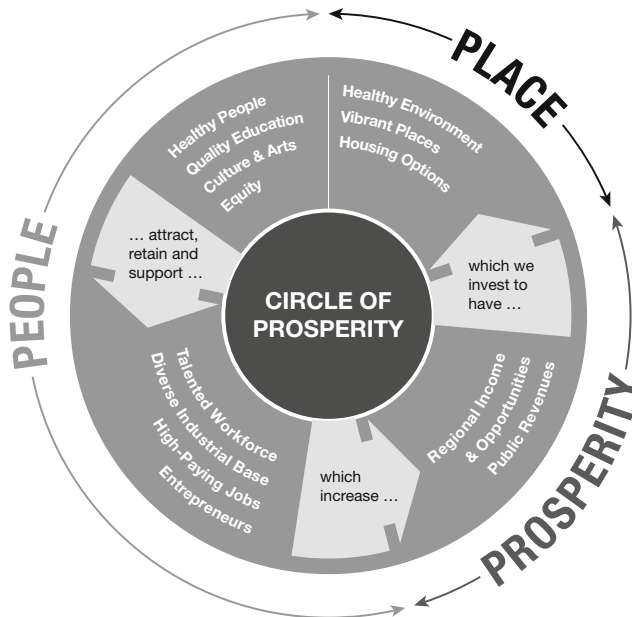


Figure 12.2 ECOS Project Cross-Sector Approach Across People, Place and Prosperity.

Table 12.2 8 ECOS Project Strategies

-
- Improve and strengthen the economic systems of our region to increase opportunities for Vermont employers and employees.
 - Strive for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth, which amounts to 15% of our land area.
 - Improve the safety, water quality, and habitat of our rivers, streams, wetlands, and lakes in each watershed.
 - Increase investment in and decrease subdivision of working lands and significant habitats, and support local food systems.
 - Increase opportunity for every person in our community to achieve optimal health and personal safety.
 - Equip our residents with the education and skills they need to thrive.
 - Develop financing and governance systems to make the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars and reduce costs.
 - Ensure that the projects and actions in all ECOS strategies assess equity impacts, and that the design and development of programs are inclusive of all and engage underrepresented populations.
-

implementation activities of the diverse ECOS Partner organizations. More information about their development is described later in this chapter.

ECOS Planning Process

The ECOS planning process involved six phases with activities guided by a 65-member steering committee. Based on a cooperative agreement, the steering committee represented all of the 19 municipalities in Chittenden County as well as 40 non-profit, institutional and governmental agencies and organizations. The steering committee met as a whole quarterly during the whole process and were also divided into sub-groups dedicated to specific topic areas such as natural systems, climate action, education, energy, housing, transportation and economy. Throughout each phase of the ECOS Plan development, the steering committee, its sub-committees and the public were invited to provide comments and feedback. A variety of tools were used to stimulate discussion and feedback, including: engagement through the arts, a strategic messaging campaign, community television and an online public engagement application website that facilitated community conversations through the ECOS Project's website. The process emphasized several key principles: transparency, priority setting, accountability, community engagement and building on prior work (Table 12.3).

The purpose of Phase I was to build upon previous work to formalize a more cohesive vision in the form of goal statements that reflect how the "collective we" can accomplish more together than working separately. This phase involved the review of planning documents relevant to all aspects of community in Chittenden County. To achieve this massive objective, the ECOS Steering Committee partnered with the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics (CDAE) at the University of Vermont. Undergraduate students enrolled in a sustainable community development service learning course, and analyzed over 60 different planning documents for objectives and strategies related to sustainability and the four broad goals areas. The planning documents included municipal plans, regional and organizational plans and state agency policy documents. In total, about 2,500 statements were identified in the students' analysis that ranged from very broad vision statements to specific objectives in a specific neighborhood. These statements were used by the ECOS Partners to develop the goal and sub-goal statements.

Table 12.3 Phases of the ECOS Project Planning Process

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Highlights</i>
Phase I: Vision & Goals	May–Oct 2011	Drawn from 60 existing planning documents from municipalities and organizations Community engagement and public review period Articulation of common vision
Phase II: Analysis & Reports	Oct 2011– Jan 2012	Technical reports for 7 topic areas Scenario planning exercise Workshops and surveys
Phase III: Indicator Development	Jan–Sep 2012	Identification of indicators relative to the topic areas Public review process Interim indicator report with 87 indicators
Phase IV: Priority Setting	Jun 2012– Jan 2013	Public engagement opportunities with Burlington City Arts Emphasis on equity and marginalized community groups Concerns, actions, and strategies
Phase V: Implementation	Apr–Oct 2012	ECOS grants to support community projects 8 community projects funded totaling \$280,000
Phase VI: Adoption	Nov 2012– Jun 2013	Public hearings Plan adopted in June 2013 by CCRPC
Phase VII: Indicator Monitoring	Jul 2013– ongoing	ECOS Indicators updated as possible each year Annual reports summarizing key trends and accomplishments endorsed by ECOS Partnership Community messaging

The outcome of Phase I produced four broad goal statements that divide the concept of resiliency into natural systems, economic infrastructure, social community and the built environment. Within these four broad goal areas, 36 sub-goals were developed to create a visionary road map. The combination of the four broad goals and associated sub-goals created the framework of what would become the regional analysis section of the ECOS Plan intended to document existing conditions with Chittenden County.

Phase II involved the development of seven technical reports with community baseline data on: economic development, housing, energy, land use and transportation, natural resources, public health and education. These reports were authored by organizational members of the ECOS Steering Committee with expertise in the specific topic of interest. For example, the Energy Report was developed by the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, a non-profit entity aiming to reduce environmental and economic costs of energy use. The technical reports proposed potential indicators and identified key issues that are summarized in the full ECOS Plan.

Phase III featured the development of indicators that would become the shared measurement system for all those involved with ECOS to monitor progress in meeting the stated goals and strategies related to the natural systems, built environment, economy and social community. This process involved identifying potential indicators drawing on research from established community indicator programs and assessing the value and availability of the data for Chittenden County. Challenges in this phase included gaps in data available at the county level, and lack of available data to specifically understand race and income disparities across issues. The shared

measurement system continues to be updated on an annual basis to measure progress. Greater detail about this phase is presented in a later section.

Phase IV consisted of creative and strategic public engagement efforts to identify and prioritize concerns, actions and strategies with the community. The knowledge generated from this phase was valuable as both a process and an outcome. As described in greater detail in the next section, the Equity Coordinator sought the involvement of groups and organizations representing marginalized communities within the county to ensure their priorities were reflected in the ECOS Plan.

Phase V, the implementation phase, involved granting a portion of the HUD funds to fund organizations and projects that addressed the goals and strategies of the ECOS Plan with the primary goal of building partnerships that would bring lasting collaborations to Chittenden County. It was a competitive grant process that received 55 different proposals. Ultimately, \$280,000 was awarded to eight interdisciplinary projects in 2013. Among the projects that were funded were the following.

- *New American Food*: a project that provided hands-on culinary job training for unemployed New Americans with limited English proficiency recently resettled in the greater Burlington area. The diverse set of partners included a variety of local non-profit organizations (agriculture and workforce development), a refugee advocacy organization and local businesses.
- *Job Growth Sites*: this project, led by Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation and a large technology employer, created a master plan for the infill development of an existing technology park to strategically identify future job growth opportunities among value-added industrial employers.
- *Eat Well, Age Well*: seeking to increase the health and nutrition of Chittenden County's seniors, this project utilized doctors' offices and trained local senior volunteers to promote a nutrition benefit program called 3Squares VT to potentially vulnerable senior residents. Partners included a range of statewide and local non-profits and a state agency.
- *Connecting the Drops*: this public art project engaged partners from conservation, arts, education and business organizations to raise public awareness of Lake Champlain water quality issues by featuring hand-painted rain barrels around downtown Burlington.

After almost three years of effort, Phase VI was completed with the formal adoption of the ECOS Plan. The adoption process was finalized in 2013 when the CCRPC approved it as the Regional Plan and Metropolitan Plan for the Region. Additionally, the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation approved it as the county's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, as required by the State's Economic Development Administration. The ECOS Plan provides the general framework for municipal comprehensive planning, and is now utilized in a variety of regulation arenas including the State of Vermont's Act 250 Land Use and Development Law, which regulates all large-scale development.

Post-adoption, the ECOS Leadership formed as a group to keep the focus on implementing the plan. The ECOS Leadership is comprised of the CCRPC, the City of Burlington, Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Chittenden County, University of Vermont, University of Vermont Medical Center and the Vermont Department of Health. Within the ECOS Leadership, the CCRPC is responsible for the continued development, maintenance and analysis of the indicators, and provides an annual update quantifying progress towards the ECOS shared agenda. The ECOS Leadership is committed to working together using the principles of collective impact to meet

the ECOS goals while minimizing the need for additional public expenditures. The annual update of the community indicators program serves as a mechanism to reconvene the partners each year to review the updated indicators, share accomplishments and identify areas of concern for the year ahead.

Role of Community Engagement

The knowledge generated from the community engagement efforts that were integrated into the ECOS planning phases was important for creating a valid plan. Additionally, meaningful community engagement broke down silos and shrank the distance between people from diverse and divergent perspectives, expertise and experience. Building a vision and creating a plan that led to equitable access and opportunities for all required engagement that included organizations that represented people of all incomes, racial and ethnic groups, with particular attention to groups that have been traditionally left out of the public policy decision-making processes. To connect with as many historically underrepresented constituents as possible, CCRPC created a unique temporary position for an equity coordinator to inform the engagement and planning processes. The equity coordinator met with individuals from community and issue-oriented organizations whose priorities are to serve marginalized communities. The equity coordinator met with key informants and informal leaders of various underrepresented ethnic and cultural groups.

An initial large gathering of representatives from diverse cultural groups took place to introduce the ECOS Project and invite their input and participation. Follow-up meetings to gather input and feedback included individual meetings, personal interviews, focus groups and various gatherings. Input from over 600 people from marginalized communities was collected over an 18-month process. Stories and feedback were collected from: persons of various socioeconomic statuses, diverse racial and ethnic communities, the aged and the young. New Americans that participated include immigrants from: Bosnia, Bhutan, Burundi, the Congo, Iraq, Kenya, Russia, Somali, including both Somali Bantu and ethnic, Sudan, Turkey and Vietnam. The equity coordinator ensured that their feedback was continuous through the development of the ECOS Plan.

In addition, creative outreach and community engagement was facilitated by an ECOS organizational partner, Burlington City Arts. Rather than conducting a survey, a creative qualitative approach was used to explore residents' ideas and feelings about the institutions with which they interact and their surroundings. To understand community members' priorities, residents were asked what they like about living in their community, what they would like to see change and who should do it. Burlington City Arts organized public meetings in towns in the county, as residents provided feedback through a series of structured exercises and discussions, and input was sketched live by a local illustrator. Residents were then asked to indicate their priorities by adding colored stickers to the mural at various public events, including a local music festival and the county fair. The artist then took all of the original drawings and synthesized them into a single work, weaving together and reinforcing themes identified by community residents. The mural revealed that Chittenden County residents have similar perspectives on what is important to them. Whether young, old, newcomer or a seventh-generation Vermonter—all residents care about similar things: protecting the environment and working landscape; affordable housing; a variety of transportation concerns, including a desire for more buses and bike paths; access to health care, good schools and job training; and access to healthy foods.

ECOS Indicators

The ECOS indicators continue to engage partner organizations and monitor the implementation of the ECOS Plan across sectors to address the goals and strategies within a collective impact framework. This section takes a closer look at how the ECOS indicators were selected and continue to be updated and shared through an annual reporting process. Each year since the ECOS Plan was adopted in 2013, the ECOS Partners release the ECOS annual report that measures the collective success in attaining the ECOS goals and strategies.

The development of the community indicators program was a formalized component integrated into the overall ECOS planning process. This process was supported with staff capacity from the CCRPC and a consultant from the Center for Rural Studies (CRS), a non-profit research and evaluation group housed at the University of Vermont. During the development of the ECOS Plan, a separate indicator report was prepared based on the work of individual ECOS sub-committees. This report included high-level, community-relevant indicators that were selected by each sub-committee. Each sub-committee used the following criteria for evaluating the selection of indicators tied to resiliency that could assist in decision making and measuring the success of attaining the ECOS goals. To determine whether the indicator reflects what we would like to measure it should:

- Gauge progress toward a desired regional result or outcome;
- Be understandable and transparent to most people;
- Drive multiple results;
- Generate synergy across indicator categories; and
- Be actionable.

To determine whether the indicator is something that we are able to measure, the data should be:

- Affordable to gather;
- Produced by a trusted source;
- Available consistently over time to produce a trend;
- Available region-wide, but can be disaggregated to local areas for comparisons; and
- Available, if possible, for other regions, states or countries for comparisons outside of the region.

The ECOS indicators were drawn from a range of sources including the US Census Bureau, Vermont state agencies (Education, Health, Labor) and regional non-profit organizations. Noticeably, the majority of the data are secondary and in some cases, data may not perfectly capture the goal statement being measured. Primary data are minimal and are collected by the CCRPC itself, such as “miles of walking and bike infrastructure” and “percent of residential development in area planned for growth”. It is interesting to note that only one indicator, land use, has a measurable target, with 80 percent of new growth dedicated to areas planned for growth. The result of the indicator development process ended with 265 indicators and 39 goal statements within the four broad ECOS goals. Figure 12.3 provides examples of indicators for each ECOS goal area.

Although an extensive process was employed to develop the indicators, the report recognized that the indicators needed to be refined to those that have the most value and those that could be reliably reported on an annual basis. Indicator refinement continued to occur throughout

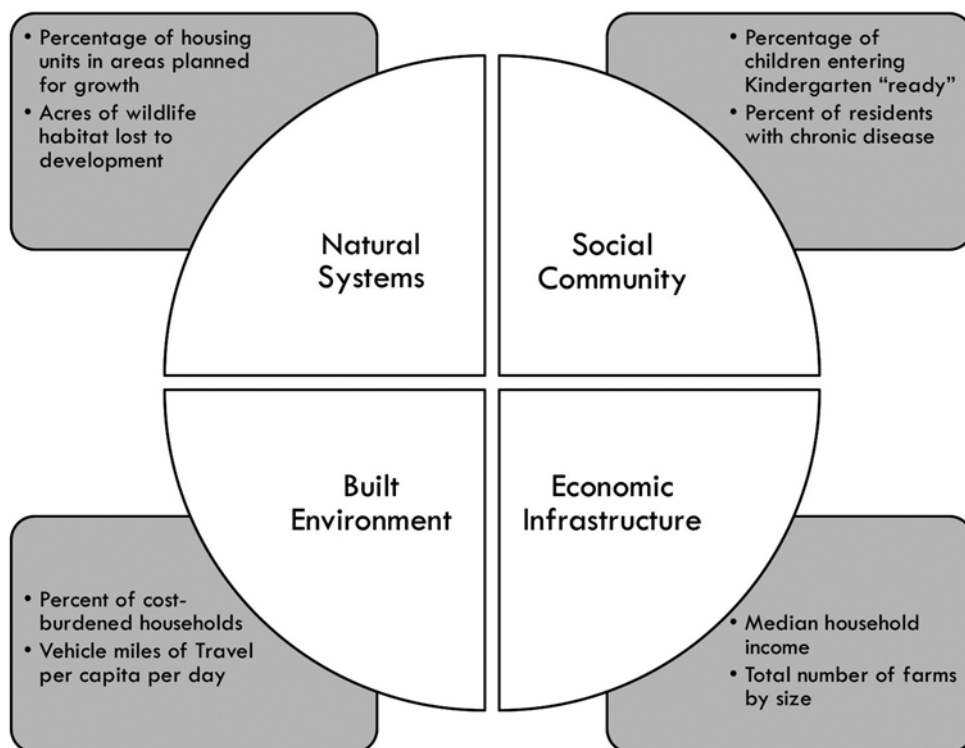


Figure 12.3 Selected ECOS indicators by Goal Area.

subsequent phases of the ECOS Plan development. When adopted, the ECOS Plan narrowed its scope to 80 indicators and 36 goal statements. Although the ECOS Plan was adopted in 2013, the ECOS Partners remain committed to the ongoing need for further refinement and annual updates of the indicators.

As the backbone organization, the CCRPC leads the annual report update process with technical assistance from the CRS and input from the ECOS Partners and others. The Annual Report combines more than 100 data points from 25 local, regional, state and federal sources highlighting accomplishments in the community and high-priority actions. It serves as a value tool with two different functions. First, the report serves as a mechanism for convening members of the ECOS Leadership on a yearly basis. Second, the report is able to positively engage members by continually demonstrating how their efforts and partnerships are contributing to the sustainability and resiliency of Chittenden County, while also reinforcing that the collective “we” still has more work to do.

Preparing the first annual report required a significant time commitment from the ECOS Partners to identify, select and analyze data for each of the indicators. The CCRPC staff member and CRS consultant worked to collect the required data and facilitated the indicator process. Additionally each ECOS Partner organization and several additional agencies contributed one staff person most familiar with data related to their organization and mission. This group of 12 representatives became the ECOS Data Partner Committee and met regularly for five months until the release of the first annual report in January, 2014. The first indicators report was a further refined 100-page static document identifying and describing the significance of the 87

indicators. To celebrate this accomplishment, ECOS Leadership held a press conference to announce their collective efforts in producing this first report.

The second year marked both the second annual report and the implementation of Results Scorecard, an interactive online platform that many ECOS Partners had prior experience using in their own organizations. With the groundwork for data collection solidified during Year 1, the Data Committee only needed to meet twice to produce the second annual report. This enabled the group to devote their efforts to selecting an interactive tool that would aid in the sharing of indicators and annual reports across ECOS organizations and the general public. Existing tools were evaluated by cost, usability and existing presence in Vermont. Given the limited resources available in a small state, CCRPC gave preference to tools already being used by partner organizations. Results Scorecard was determined to best meet the Data Committee's criteria, and the indicators were transitioned into the new format. Additionally, the ECOS Leadership released a static report highlighting important trends, issues, opportunities and accomplishments across the four broad goal areas. Efforts were made to highlight the introduction of the ECOS scorecard and the newly released report. These efforts resulted in little press coverage and limited community outreach.

Year 3 saw the seamless updating of the ECOS indicators within the Results Scorecard platform. A slight adjustment was made to the organization of the ECOS scorecard: the indicators are now organized by strategy rather than by broad goal area. Recognizing the challenge of explaining the complex multidimensional ECOS Project to the general public, partners made a concerted effort to develop a unified outreach message in Year 3. To develop the messages, the ECOS Partners met for a facilitated retreat to reflect on the last three years, resulting in the decision to feature key stories in Year 3's annual report. The message was based on aspects of community sustainability: people, place and prosperity within the context of the ECOS Leadership itself. When the partners were asked to describe major accomplishments over the past year, many of them articulated the value of their shared work and how the ECOS Plan provides a

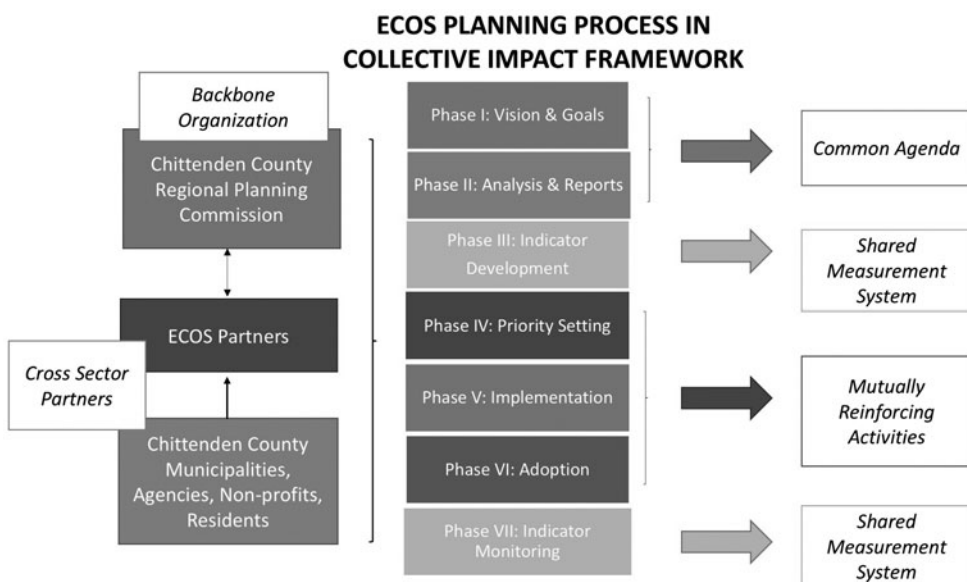


Figure 12.4 ECOS Planning Process.

vehicle to work across sectors. In addition to generating content for the key stories, this meeting served as an important opportunity to reinforce mutually beneficial activities towards the ECOS common agenda within the collective impact framework (Figure 12.4).

Discussion and Conclusion

The ECOS Project case study offers a process for the development, implementation and monitoring of a regional plan that is informed by knowledge generated through community engagement and a community indicators program. These efforts span the parallel and overlapping goals of enhancing quality of life, wealth creation and resiliency. While every community may not have such significant funds to undertake a similar process, important steps and milestones from the ECOS process can be brought to bear regardless of the size or scope of a community development planning process.

In particular, the following components are critical:

- Articulation of shared goals of creating resilient communities that are healthy places to live, work and play.
- Creation of inclusive processes that engage broad participation from different sectors and the general public to generate knowledge that informs plan development.
- Commitment from leadership of an organization with the capacity to coordinate efforts.
- Investment in the process of using the community indicators program to inform the collective impact work of partner organizations.
- Dedication of the partnership to ongoing communication with stakeholders and general public.

Community engagement and indicators are at the heart of the ECOS Project. The learning from the creative community engagement opportunities led the creation of a shared vision for a sustainable future for Chittenden County. The community indicators program provides the ECOS Leadership with reliable and consistent data to measure the progress of Chittenden County towards the goals related to the natural systems, built environment, economy and social community. Assuming some level of capacity in terms of staffing and funding, including each of the above components helps lead to the development of trust, measurable indicators and a plan that lives beyond the timeframe and external funding of the original process.

Keeping the above list in mind can also help to avoid common pitfalls in planning initiatives. For example, while a community may start with shared goals based on community meetings, not remaining inclusive after the process can lead to selecting indicators that revert to a “lowest common denominator”, e.g. the typical US Census-based economic indicators that can be easily found online and are consistently collected but do not fully capture the intent of the community goals—particularly those related to the social and environmental aspects of sustainability and resiliency.

The outreach component can be difficult once the plan is implemented. In the case of the ECOS Project, this remains a challenge. Even as leadership changes, community members who were involved with the original process move on to other tasks in their lives and new members join the community. And, even if indicator measurement continues, making sure the results of indicator measurement are translated into language meaningful for the community at large can be difficult. It is important to keep why the ECOS Plan and its indicators matter at the forefront of communication efforts with community members.

We circle back to the resource issue. While communities can seek grant dollars to fund a planning process, there are other, perhaps unlikely partners that can provide resources. In the case of the ECOS Project, a land grant university partner was found. While the university research entity charged for their services, the partnership provided more resources than the initial contract and has resulted in a long-standing and mutually beneficial collaboration. Student interns and course projects provided a two-way benefit: the community had access to increased level of resource for such things as monitoring, data collection and facilitating community meetings, and the students/faculty have learning and research opportunities. In most cases, such arrangements should build trust and decrease “town/gown” tensions (if they exist). From workforce development perspective, ECOS Partners are helping to train their next generation of employees. Students are socialized into this unique approach to planning and will graduate with the skills needed to effectively contribute to this important work.

The resource issue also leads to the question of what scale the planning process described in this chapter is applicable to. The definition of “community” is important in answering this question. For smaller towns and cities, it is possible that the entire town is defined as the community while for larger cities, prescribed areas of the city may define community. Regardless of size, the same components of the process will help define the context of community: can shared goals of creating resilient communities that are healthy places to live, work and play be enumerated? Can the process be inclusive of community members? Is leadership committed to the process, including both process, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and communication? Is the communication plan able to reach the intended community? And, is there a plan for continued monitoring? These are essential questions to ask if community development and planning efforts are to be successful.

Through monitoring and continued participation of people and organizations, there is currently a realization that communication with organizations and individuals beyond the core ECOS Partners is an area for improvement. While there is an interactive website devoted to revealing changes in metrics and how they are leading (or not) to meeting the goals of the original plan, general community members to higher-level organizational users are not fully utilizing the metrics in a way that highlights whether or not the plan is reaching the original desired and shared goals. Next steps in the ECOS Project aim to ensure that the original overarching goals of enhancing quality of life, wealth creation and resiliency are not “lost in translation” with the broader audience.

We offer the ECOS Project here not as a perfect example of planning, engagement, implementation and monitoring at a regional level, but rather as a model of a multifaceted effort that adopted a collective impact framework. When paired with community engagement and a community indicator program, the collective impact framework can be applied to a wide range of complex community development issues that demand innovative solutions and tangible progress such as quality of life, community wealth building and resiliency.

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Further Reading

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PART IV

Culture and Creative Expression in Community Development



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THE WAY ART WORKS

Insights for Community Development

Julie Crawshaw and Menelaos Gkartzios

Introduction

How can we articulate what art does in rural community development? Drawing on a one-year experimental study combining ethnography and artistic fieldwork on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne in the north east of England (referred to hereafter as Holy Island), we explore the ways art works in the context of community development. We propose that the art experience is catalytic to processes of community engagement, personal and collective reflection, revealing relationships (or even disconnects) between the community as well as between the community and the natural environment. Such reflexive processes are characteristic within ideal frames of rural development that place the community at the heart of the development of decision making. We argue therefore that art as a process within a community development strategy reveals the complexity of rural community, or in other words “reads” the community where development initiatives are being established. Community-led or “bottom-up” perspectives are commonplace in rural development processes, well discussed within ideal models such as neo-endogenous or networked rural development (Lowe et al. 1998; Shucksmith 2000). Similarly, the role of arts is increasingly now promoted as a vehicle to rural development (Markusen 2006; Bell and Jayne 2010; Balfour and Alter 2015). However, this usually refers to understanding arts in positive or economic terms (Arts Council England 2005; Gibson 2010a, b). This literature does not account for art as a practice on its own terms (an example from arts practice: Crawshaw and Bowman, 2007). Surprisingly perhaps, while these debates draw on theoretical discussions within economic and social geography, planning and rural studies, there is very little intersection with the field of art studies. This chapter aims to fill this gap, evidenced by our interdisciplinary collaboration across art and rural studies backgrounds.

We draw inspiration on the relational perspectives of art practice from art studies. As proposed by Hennion and Grenier (2000: 351) instead of *looking at* works of art, we rather shape our study to trace *the way artworks work*. To contribute a nuanced articulation of the effects mobilized by art in rural development processes, through exploratory ethnographic research, we trace associations at the micro level: we are concerned with *what* art does *in practice*. To discuss the relational nature of communities, we draw on rural studies and in particular the framework for

“reading communities” suggested by Ruth Liepins (2000a, b). In tracing associations, we notice how art impacts on community meanings, practices and spaces and structures amidst complex relational networks. As such, we make a specific contribution to the understanding of art in community development: through tracing the micro relationships of art in rural development, we propose art as a “relational reading” of the community.

Community, Rural and the Arts

Rural Community: An Approach

The exploration of community has been a popular research theme in social sciences, reflecting challenges in describing both communities of interest and geography, as well as issues of representativeness (“who is” the community?) and heterogeneity within communities (Buller and Wright 1990; Day 1998; Panelli and Welch 2005). Ruth Liepins’ (2000a) approach has been influential in rural studies (Woods 2011), because of the heterogeneity she offers in analyzing it as “a social collective of great diversity” (p. 27), a social phenomenon that entails four elements: people, meanings, practices and spaces. *People* constitute a central notion of community, reflecting tendencies of people to form groups, which have both discursive meanings and social functions. Liepins places people at the center of the community; she also, however, draws attention to other external actors and social groups having power to exert influence on understandings of community. Researchers for example have explored “actors” or “agents” and marginalized “others”, who interact within “groups”, “classes” or “networks” in a given community. According to Liepins, “people’s participation in, or challenge to” community can be studied along the lines of meanings, practices, and spaces and structures which provide objects and processes “from which we can create readings of ‘community’” (2000a: 31).

Meanings refer to explorations “into the ways people discursively create sets of shared (and/or contested) meanings about their connections and identities” (2000a: 31). A key point here is that these meanings might be diverse and not universally held by all members of a community. In rural studies these meanings are usually discussed within contested representations of lay, policy and political ruralities constructed across different community stakeholders (from local residents, to lobby groups and policy makers). *Practices* and *activities* refer to the material manifestations in which members of a community participate. This includes formal and informal ways that people interact with each other. Examples of practices provided by Liepins include social exchanges, such as the exchange of goods and services at a local store, the operation of local government boards, the creation of a social group, etc. *Spaces* and *structures* refer to the sites where community can be exercised and enacted. These can be both physical sites (i.e. schools, libraries, the town hall, meeting places of community), but also metaphoric spaces (such as newspapers and the Internet).

Essentially, Liepins’ (2000a) model is understood to provide a useful vocabulary for exploring the dynamics of rural restructuring and change. As a point of mutual departure to support our interdisciplinary dialogue we adopt Liepins’ model for reading the community of Holy Island. Rather than understanding community as static, we utilize Liepins’ framework to read community *in production*.

Community in Rural Development

Processes of community development have moved from an idea of power rooted in a particular institution to a “more dispersed notion of power and authority based on pluralism” (Taylor

2000: 1022). This shift has been central to the participatory ideologies that widely inform contemporary development and planning projects in both urban (Albrechts 2004; Tewdwr-Jones et al. 2006; Nadin 2007) and rural areas (Jones and Little 2000; Shortall and Shucksmith 2001; Scott 2004; OECD 2006; Shucksmith 2009), characterized by the formation of new institutional arenas operating via multi-level governance systems and involving partnerships with relevant public and private groups. In rural policy, such participatory and collaborative approaches are exemplified by the European Commission's "LEADER approach" and are also discussed in academic literature through the (ideal) models of endogenous and neo-endogenous (or networked) rural development.

LEADER (an acronym translating from French as "links between actions of rural development") is a local development approach, allowing local actors to develop an area by using its endogenous development potential and resources (EC 2006). The model of endogenous rural development was promoted as a response to urban-led and -biased policy models that were applied to rural contexts with minimal community input (a top-down model discussed also as exogenous rural development; see Lowe et al. 1998). The key point of endogenous rural development is to implement a local area approach inclusive of: a territorial and integrated focus; the use of local resources; and local contextualization through active public participation (see also Moseley 1997; Ray 2000). While endogenous models have been widely embraced across Europe (Ray 2000), a number of studies have also recognized limitations due to issues of elitism and social exclusion observed (e.g. Shucksmith 2000; Shortall and Shucksmith 2001; Shortall 2004). Ray (2001) highlighted the need for hybrid models (both endogenous and exogenous) that place importance on the ability of local communities to create networks of both local and extra-local actors to shape their future on their own terms, an approach termed "neo-endogenous rural development" (see examples: Atterton and Thompson 2010; Gkartzios and Scott 2014). LEADER has played an important role in the development activities of our case study, as discussed in the following section.

In the context of participatory approaches in rural development, the emerging literature has examined the role of arts in community and (primarily) economic development. Opportunities for regional economies from artists and wider creative industries are well explored in the literature now (i.e. Herslund 2012), criticizing both a lack of understating of the creative potential of rural areas and the application of "creative class" theories (Landry 2001; Florida 2002) in the rural context (i.e. Rantisi et al. 2006; Argent et al. 2013; Waite and Gibson 2013). Ray (2001) refers to a "cultural economy" to emphasize local distinctive markets (inclusive of visual arts, drama and crafts) as key resources to territorial development. Vik and Villa (2010) have demonstrated the role of culture in rebranding rural places in support of local development. Woods (forthcoming) highlights the creative potential of rural areas evidenced by the revival of new products that are geographically and culturally specific, and farm diversification strategies, which although enabling the rural economy are hardly seen as "creative" (let alone artistic). As regards community transformations and the role of art, Anwar McHenry (2011) and Roberts and Townsend (2015) refer to a series of positive implications such as improved sense of place and community identity and opportunities for social inclusion. These community effects are particularly important in the rural sector, as recent studies suggest that art engagement in rural areas is higher compared to urban areas, despite the more limiting opportunities for funding artistic practice (Arts Council England 2015).

Despite these contributions, there is very little connection with the field of art studies. We argue that such interdisciplinary approaches are crucial in understanding the effects of art. Furthermore, we observe that, unlike the discussion in art studies which follows, this literature tends to talk about art in inherently positive terms (Markusen 2006; Anwar McHenry 2011), notwithstanding few exceptions so far (i.e. Roberts and Townsend 2015).

The Experience of Art: Relational Perspectives

The level to which art can be seen as an “instrument” to social and economic objectives is well debated in the literature of cultural policy (Belfiore 2012). In urban studies there are numerous examples of “culture-led regeneration” where “the impact” of public art, innovative engineering and galleries, museums and festivals is discussed in relation to urban development and social renewal (see Garcia 2004; Mooney 2004; Miles and Paddison 2005). In these studies, physical and social artworks, buildings and other “products” of cultural strategy are the focus of concern.

“Social” art practices focused on engaging people, more than making “physical” work, are variously termed “new genre” (Lacy 1995), “participatory” or “socially engaged”. In the literature of critical art studies, it is argued that participatory art has the capacity to support discourse that enables us to imagine our world anew (Meskimmon 2011; Bishop 2012): to connect, through “dialogue rather than monologue, to our response-ability to our responsibilities within a world community” (Meskimmon 2011: 08). Artists and curators themselves often discuss their work as being “dialogic” or “conversational” (Bowman 2013). Following Rosalyn Deutsche (1996) however, art practitioners are careful to note that art’s relationships do not solve problems, but rather generate debate. In understanding art as a process of engaging multiple relationships, the curator and critic Nicolas Bourriaud uses the term “relational art”. He suggests that artistic practice resides as “a bundle of relations in the world” (Bourriaud 2002: 14). In acknowledging that community development projects take place amidst a political, economic and social context (Liepins 2000b), “relational” is a useful lens through which to consider the role of art within community development.

Across sociology and anthropology what art “is” and “does” is considered “relationally”. Rather than the product of an individual artist, institutional theories of the sociology of art propose art is produced by an “art world”. From this perspective, art is a “joint product” (Becker 2008/1982: 35) made by a network of professionals including, for example curators, technicians and museum directors as well as artists. Gell’s (1998) theory of the “art index” is premised on the notion that the art object has no “intrinsic” nature independent of its context, but is a function of the social-relational matrix in which it is embedded. From this anthropological perspective, art is produced through “social relationships” between human and non-human agents who cause events to happen. As indices of agency, art mediates change, such as for example supporting us to “re-imagine” (Meskimmon 2011) the world. In this study we explore the “doing-ness” of art in the community development context of Holy Island. Rather than seek to support arguments for art as a tool in support of community development, we rather set out to explore the range of effects produced by art’s relationships.

To account for the relational effects of art in Holy Island, we take inspiration from the pragmatist philosophy of John Dewey (1859–1952). For Dewey “the work” of art is not *the product*, such as a sculpture or painting or performance—as the focus, most often, of “culture-led regeneration”; rather “the work” *takes place* “when a human being cooperates with the product so that the outcome is an experience” (1934: 223). To discuss a “work of art” is to discuss something as pre-defined or “enfranchised” (Gell 1998: 12) *as* “art”. To support us to explore art beyond art world pre-definitions we take guidance from Dewey. We account for works “in the raw” (Dewey 1934: 3) as a process *in production*. As activated in the doing or making of music, visual, performance and literary work (1934: 77), our research takes account of the relational alterations mobilized by the art experience. As such (drawing on Liepins 2000a), art offers opportunity to observe community *in production* too.

Ethnography and Artistic Experiments in Community Research

The research draws on ethnographic and artistic fieldwork on Holy Island, a tidal island off the Northumberland coast with a population of around 150 residents. The county of Northumberland lies in the far north of England, bordering Scotland. The countryside in Northumberland is characterized by disused industrial areas, extensive natural habitats of a “stunning, but often bleak grandeur” (Murdoch et al. 2003: 112), large landed estates and particular socio-economic concerns (see Murdoch et al. 2003 on England’s “paternalistic countryside”). Holy Island is connected with the mainland with a causeway, which is covered by the North Sea twice a day. Thus, daily access is restricted to the island to two 5–6-hour periods. The island nowadays enjoys a thriving tourism sector, attracting half a million visitors every year, replacing fishing as the main economic activity. Over 55 per cent of the houses on the island are now second or holiday homes (HIP, 2011). Branded as “a place of uniqueness”,¹ it constitutes a place of environmental, religious and historic significance, famous for its priory, a 16th-century castle and the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve (see also HIP, nd). The environmental and conservation interest in the island is evidenced by the fact that the area is recognized as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar convention (Ramsar 2015), as well as a Special Protection Area under the European Union’s Wild Birds Directive (Natural England 2014).

The research partner on Holy Island was the Holy Island Partnership (HIP). HIP was established in 2009 to involve all local stakeholders in the development of the island in line with bottom-up development shifts described earlier. The partners include: Holy Island Parish Council (five elected members and a parish clerk); Holy Island of Lindisfarne Community Development Trust (a charitable company with 75 members); National Trust (a conservation charity that owns and manages Lindisfarne Castle); English Heritage (government agency that manages the priory); Natural England (an environmental government agency that manages the National Nature Reserve); Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (with interests in the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape); and Northumberland County Council (a unitary authority consisting of 67 elected representatives). HIP’s resources were originally funded by Natural England, and an Action Plan was put in place to guide the management of the island’s resources with a strong focus on community participation. LEADER played a significant role in the operation of the HIP in that it co-funded a Development Officer for two years to deliver its Action Plan. LEADER also provided support for a series of development projects on the island with a strong community remit, including projects about producing tourist guides, the conversion of a former school annex to a community education resource center, and a series of exhibitions and community events in association with the local Community Development Trust (personal communication with Northumberland Coast and Lowlands LEADER Program Officer).

Informed by a community consultation exercise (HIP 2011: 4), themes and projects for joint focus included the development of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Landscape Partnership Scheme. Concerned by a level of disconnection between residents and prior island planning processes, two of HIP’s ambitions of this recently submitted HLF project were to consolidate community participation in local development, and to ensure that community involvement would not lapse during the long HLF assessment process. HIP saw this research as an innovative way to support community engagement in island development.

In the mode of collaborative anthropology (Holmes and Marcus 2008), the primary author set out to participate in the day-to-day relationships of the island community and develop art interventions in collaboration with people she met interested in exploring artistic practice. During

2013 she made monthly residential visits of between five to seven nights. As a participant-observer she collaborated with HIP officers (particularly with the coordinating officer) as well as the resident community. Informed by the community's interest in exploring art through workshop-style interventions, she invited five artists from different visual and performing disciplines to produce artistic workshops to "map the island from the island's perspective". Her ethnographic field diary traced island life, the development of artistic workshops and her participation in the sessions.

Workshop attendance ranged from one to ten. Of 150 island residents, 25 participated in the workshops. Despite low participation at the workshops, over 200 residents, development officers and island visitors attended Island Perspectives, a collective exhibition of drawings and paintings, a soundscape, photographs and documentation of the performance and dance workshops (September 18–22, 2013). Feedback sheets collected stated that residents would like artistic activities to continue and now that residents could see what they could expect from taking part, more residents would get involved should more opportunities arise.

As a conversation between the ethnographic material and Liepins' framework, our writing has developed in service of two purposes: first, to engage the reader in the story of the research; and second to explore readings of the fieldwork material through the lens of Liepins. We acknowledge that there are many approaches of "community" in rural contexts (see reviews in Woods 2011). As an approach that acknowledges the relational nature of community, Liepins' model provided a fruitful tool for our collaborative discussion. Following the conversational nature of this chapter's development, the next section includes two "coupled" sections including an ethnographic story of the research (in italics) and explorations of the material through the lens of Liepins. The first section couples arriving on the island with considering "people" and "meanings". The second section couples the development of the workshops with considering "practice" and "spaces". In the ethnography, "I" refers to the primary author. These passages are synthesized fragments of field notes over the duration of the research. In the discussion, "we" refers to both authors.

Part 1: Arriving on the Island

To introduce me to members of the community, the HIP coordinator suggested I attend a community group meeting. This seems a good opportunity to meet people and consider how to get started. A week later I drive up the A1 North, turn off at the Beal signpost and trace the curving path to the causeway. The tide is out leaving pools of water sitting on the sand either side of the Tarmac strip. Driving across the causeway I notice a large car park to my left (Figure 13.1). The coordinator had told me to continue straight and turn left in to the village. I find a spot to park near the school where the meeting room is.

I walk to the back of the school building to a glass entrance at the back (Figure 13.2). We are sat around two trestle tables pushed together. When the meeting starts, we say a few lines about ourselves. The group of around eight includes people who live on the island, who work there and who have been invited to join because of their special interest and knowledge of the local area. I introduce myself as a conduit to a university project exploring the role of art and music within community contexts. I explain that I have come along to this meeting to see if the group would be interested in taking part. After a few questions, one resident suggests that rather than importing skills from elsewhere, they would be interested in developing workshops as an opportunity to investigate the creative skills of the island. This suggestion started a lively discussion about the traditional skills of the island: making lobster pots, dry stonewalling, needlecraft and flower arranging. In developing the workshop program, it was agreed that whatever happens, we shouldn't introduce the workshops as being anything to do with 'art', because people will be 'put off'

by that. We should rather use 'creativity'. The attendees also emphasised that it would be important to be inclusive: for everyone to know that whatever they do or make, 'they can take part'.

After the meeting, one of the group members invited me to her house. She tells me the island is tired of 'outsiders' coming to tell them what to do. There was an outcry after one of the island development documents had suggested 'pop up artworks'. She continues, 'I mean, what do you think we thought of that?! This place is wild, and we want to keep it that way'. To get to know the island she says, 'you need to come here'. On returning to the university I negotiated an extension to the accommodation budget with colleagues, to support short residential periods.

A few weeks later I consult the tide timetable to figure out when I can cross. I turn left past the Post Office and park in what I now regard as my usual spot next to the school. I am a little early for checking in the B&B. However, I had had an email exchange with the owner who explained, 'in reality', it depends on the tide. So I am not worried about being early. The owner is there to settle me in. After I unpack I go for a wander and end up at the pub for dinner. I chat to the barman. He tells me that tourists ask how they cope when the tide comes in and they can't get off. He laughs. He says: 'we tell them that they are looking at it the wrong way round. When the tide comes in, you can't get on. We are left in peace, the way we like it'.

The following morning I go in to the village area to explore. I walk past the school and turn left. I pass the Post Office and head towards the castle. I notice a craft shop. I go in and introduced myself to the sales person as working with the Holy Island Partnership. She looked quite concerned: 'I don't want this island to be spoilt by signs. I don't think people should be told what to do. People should have their own experience. Just because they've got the money, we don't want to change things'. I explained I had just started the project and this was my first time staying over. 'Oh, well, you should go for a walk'.



Figure 13.1 The Holy Island of Lindisfarne.



Figure 13.2 The Holy Island of Lindisfarne.

She tells me of a pyramid on the headland and a little shack on the beach. ‘I haven’t been’ she says. ‘But I would like to go. Actually, why don’t you go, and come back with a photograph?’ I decide to do as she asks. It takes me just short of three hours to walk to the castle, and trace the edge of the island along the North Shore (Figure 13.3) before turning back. I pop back in to the shop with the photographs. She is pleased to see the pictures of my journey.

During the week as part of a LEADER exchange visit, environmental practitioners from Latvia and Greece are visiting the island. Before breaking for lunch, they join island residents and HIP representatives in the office behind the school building. They have spent some time exploring the island and neighbouring coastal areas. The visitors suggest that the ‘islanders’ need to decide what tourism they want. ‘You need to find a logo’. A resident retorts in a tone of disgust, ‘a brand?!’ One of the visitors suggests ‘the problem’ is that everyone has a different agenda. We talk about how some residents rely on tourism whilst others would like to be left ‘in peace’.

People and Meanings

In the shaping of this narrative we have considered some of the “people” of Holy Island through Liepins’ framework. Liepins notes that for “simplicity’s sake” (2000b: 327) people are located in a “central location”; however, it is important to recall that they may be located in positions beyond “the community” in question. By presenting these passages, we introduce people as both “centrally located” and beyond the “immediate community”. In doing so, we also notice the influence of the natural environment, especially the tide.

“Centrally located” people can be understood as residents. Residents have varying occupations: some in relation to tourism, and also other work such as fishing and farming. Those “beyond” the immediate resident community might include people who come to the island to run a business, such as the gift shop owner. Other people in this category of “beyond” would include visitors and “official representatives”, such as the HIP coordinator. In acknowledging power relations, Liepins situates community amidst “terrains of power and socio-cultural discourses” (2000a: 29). In sharing both the thoughts of the coordinator and immediate response of the gift shop owner, we are introduced to some of the tensions surrounding the power positions of island development. For example, the gift shop owner suggests that just because the HIP “has money”, it doesn’t mean that it should be able to make decisions about the island. As Liepins suggests (2000b: 327), these HIP officials have powerful roles in “constructing (and constraining)” understandings of the island.

As well as people, this material introduces nature as part of the terrain of power. Liepins’ model understands community as a collective interaction and enactment of “community” by people (2000a). Here, however, we cannot avoid the tide. The island is tidal. You can only get on and off when the water lets you. The force of water affects all operations. Nature influences how people act: residents, visitors and those travelling to work.

Liepins suggests people “develop shared meanings about their connectedness in ‘community’ via local discourses and activities” (2000b: 327). In exploring meanings of community through Liepins’ lens of “connectedness”, we can make the following observations. First, that there are tensions surrounding tourism: many island residents are involved in tourist activities, but there



Figure 13.3 The Holy Island of Lindisfarne.

is dissatisfaction with branding the island as a tourist destination. Furthermore, the resident community has a strong connection to nature: understanding themselves as living within “the wild”. The tide protects them from an outer world that seeks perhaps to spoil their serenity. The residents appear to construct a collective identity around insularity inextricably interlinked with the tide.

Second, there is an appreciation for valuing and promoting local cultural capital and artistic activities, but tensions were observed surrounding the term “art”. Art is widely viewed in negative terms, as being elitist and exogenous. However, traditional making skills of the island are valued as part of the practices of the community. Residents don’t want artworks to “pop up”; rather they would like to explore their creativity through art. They are interested in exploring the way art works as a way to explore creativity, but not necessarily through conventions discussed as “art”.

Part 2: Developing the Workshops

In my daily engagement I note the informal operations of island life: that the village store opens and closes with the tide; that you can order ‘special items’ from the shopkeeper; how the post is delivered on a little trolley; and how HIP meetings themselves are scheduled with the tide timetable. Through buying my daily provisions and eating at the local pub, I become a familiar face, ‘Julie-from-the-university’.

When bumping into people during my daily routine of going to the shop, buying provisions and going for a walk, I take opportunities to ask people how we should go about developing the workshops. Residents described the workshops as an opportunity to explore the island on their own terms. In recognition that whatever the range of activity undertaken, not everyone would want to take part. To share the activities with others, it was therefore decided that there would also be an exhibition. To emphasise that the workshops had been for residents rather than visitors, it was agreed that the exhibition would be called ‘Island Perspectives’.

Artists invited to develop workshops were directed by the interests of the community. Individual community members, or small groups, were interested in photography, dance, performance/theatre, a sonic mapping and drawing and painting. A resident photographer agreed to undertake the photography workshops. A couple of residents suggested someone to undertake the drawing and painting workshops. Using my own connections and university affiliations I researched sonic, dance and performance artists to make visits to the island to meet with residents and explore possible approaches. As developed in collaboration with residents, the brief for artists was to develop artistic workshops to ‘map the island from the island’s perspective’. During July and August 2013 twenty photography, dance, performance, sonic mapping and drawing and painting sessions took place in various locations. The schedule was informed by the tidal timetable and promoted to residents by email, posting to homes by hand and notices in the Post Office, Heritage Center and the local pub. The artists employed a range of methods of improvisation. The photography workshops started the program. In the first sessions participants were introduced to using a camera and the basics of photography. In later sessions we moved out to photograph the landscape and also undertook some portrait photography, taking pictures of each other. A teenage girl attended these sessions. As we hovered by the waterside she commented, ‘you see things differently when you look through the camera lens’.

The dance and movement workshops were next. If the weather was good, we had agreed to hold the sessions on the North Shore. Only one participant came for the first workshop: the community group member who had been specifically interested in dance. We got in the car to drive to the beach. She laughed. She says she doesn’t think we can drive there, ‘the tide will have shut the road’. She is right. We turned back and went to a pebble beach instead. The dance artist asked us to stand on the shore and look to the headland. She then handed us large bamboo poles. We were asked to hold these at each end and develop movements in rhythm with the water. We were then asked to hold them out straight and trace the headland with the stick. We worked together like this for three hours.

In the second session the teenage girl from the photography session took part. This time we got to the North Shore. The tide was right out. Instead of large poles we were given slim bamboo. Between two of us, then all three. We closed our eyes and stretched out our arms. We each put a single finger on the end of a bamboo stick. We were connected to each other by the stick. We were then asked to move keeping connected with our eyes closed. We then connected directly to each other with our fingertips and palms. We moved amidst the landscape together.

The next day the teenage girl came back for a performance workshop. We were asked by the performance artist to wear earplugs and not speak. Without planning where we were going, we started walking. In silence the three of us walked around the island and to the beach. In the second session we discussed our experience of the walk. Sitting around the table at the schoolhouse we discussed how we could really sense ourselves together. We described how we were more conscious of our breathing, of our movements and where we were in the landscape. We decided to do the walk again this time without earplugs. We re-traced our steps from the first walk. The beach looked differently now. We were met by water. We stood facing it together, uncertain what to do. Our path had been closed by the tide. Slowly we turned to walk back towards where we had come from. When we returned to the school, we discussed how intense the moment by the shore was. How we were stuck there; waiting for one of us to make a tiny movement in support of a decision to move. The teenager said that she had lived on the island all her life, but she had never seen it 'like that'.

Further workshop sessions were facilitated by a sonic artist and painter. On each occasion I note how through my experience of the workshops, my senses are enlivened to my environment. Not just a visual awareness, but how I feel more and hear more. As a participant of the workshops I felt myself in dialogue with the landscape. I became more aware of my relationship with my natural surroundings. In drawing on my own experience, I had conversations with participants about their experience. The teenager described how she had developed a new sense of her relationship with the land.

People and Spaces

Understanding *the work* of art as taking place “when a human being cooperates with the product so that the outcome is an experience” (Dewey 1934: 223), the ethnographic narrative takes close account of the experience of the workshop interventions as operating between “outer” physical materials and “inner” human selves (Dewey 1934: 77). In considering these ethnographic descriptions via Liepins, we also begin to “read” the nature–human relationships through the artistic workshops.

Through descriptions of artistic workshops, the fieldwork both traces and reveals continuity. First, we note that the artistic interventions are born out of a relational collaboration with the island; and second, we notice the way the workshop practices support deepening levels of apprehension in regard to the fluid nature of our human–nature relations: both how the primary author notes herself “in dialogue” with the landscape and how the teenage participant states that she had lived on the island all her life, but had never seen it “like that”. Both become connected with the environment through taking part in the artistic process.

Liepins suggests that people will enact “community” relations via a range of processes or practices that connect people with key activities, institutions and spaces (2000b: 328). In reading the ethnographic accounts via Liepins, as she suggests, we can trace island practice in relation to local institutions such as the general store and the post office. Directed to read connections between people we trace their dialogue, or what Bruner (1986: 6) calls “expression”—the experience of life as told; as for example, the earlier exchanges with the man at the pub and the woman in the gift shop.

Drawing on her field diary, the primary researcher reflected, in Turner’s (1986) terms, on the “social drama” of village life. In reading her interactions, through the lens of Liepins we

reflect on the power of nature, and especially the tide, as enmeshed in the island's dramatics. When tracing the experience of the artistic workshops we trace associations between "inner" human and "outer" physical material. Artistic practice is not simply concerned with "expression" but revealing the immediacy of life as experienced: as a network of human-nature relations. In reading the ethnographic accounts of taking part in the workshops we are introduced to a finer relational reading of island associations.

The images and documentation of the workshops have been assembled and presented in the St Cuthbert's Center. Liepins suggests that the people, meanings and practices which construct a given "community" "will take on material and political shape in the form of key sites and organisational spaces" (2000b: 328). Through reading the ethnography with Liepins, key sites and organizational spaces have been revealed: such as the pub, the village store and the post office, and now the church. From Liepins' perspective, these sites and organizational spaces are key places for interaction in community life. If we now take account of the artistic workshops, we are introduced to beaches as additional sites and organizational spaces. In addition to introducing the natural sites themselves as spaces of community production, we can also be taken to a deeper reading of the experience of "community" as one of continuous human-nature relations. Indeed, as already discussed, people and nature are intertwined (drawing on Latour 2004). Community is not only exercised in natural settings, but is in fact part of the natural environment. Nature appears central in meanings and structures of the community, perhaps much more than the peripheral influence suggested in Liepins' model.

Conclusion

In the context of seeking to engage community voices and improve collaboration in the development of Holy Island, the local partnership of a series of organizations with development interests (HIP) welcomed and supported the co-production of twenty artistic workshops, including photography, dance and movement, theater and performance, sonic mapping and drawing and painting. We argue in this chapter that art can be understood as an introduction to the complexity of community. In the context of a development process, we propose that the artistic interventions provided a way of "reading" the community: understanding community as well as human-nature relationships, creating opportunities for personal and collective reflection and revealing new, and sometimes even contested, meanings, practices and spaces for community. Such intangible effects are particularly undermined in the academic literature regarding the role of arts in community development.

Centered on the making of community by people amidst terrains of power and discourse, Liepins' framework focuses on the interconnected notions of "meanings", "practices" and "spaces and structures". Via this framework we offer a "reading" of the community of Holy Island as being enacted through observed day-to-day activities and as taking place at the workshops. As opposed to the central position to people given by Liepins in conceptualizing community, our research demonstrates how connected people are to the natural environment: it is the tide that is equally at the center of this community, not just people. The tide influences all people's meanings, practices and spaces of community. Rather than a construct of community identity, the tide exerts power; it physically controls people's daily programs and activities. But it is not only the tide. The ethnography demonstrates all associations between the heterogeneous community of residents, policy makers and tourists in close association to beaches and nature. Community is not only enacted by people, but by people *with* and *in* the natural environment. As a network of multiple exchanges art practice mediates associations amidst people as part of the terrain.

We also argue that the art workshops are particularly valuable as they provide a series of relational practices for community development. Although the discourse of “art” appears to alienate the residents, through doing acts of art making (but perhaps not always conceptualized as art), participants form collective and personal “spaces” for reflection, for example through understanding how the tide influences the thoughts and movements of people; or through expressing the need for the community to use endogenous cultural capital and resources, but welcoming extra-local artists to take part as well. As a relational practice, art therefore offers an opportunity for collective reflexivity of ongoing struggles, available local resources, identities and actions, allowing communities to empower themselves and explore their own skills. Such characteristics are embedded within frames of neo-endogenous rural development (Shucksmith 2009). As such, we argue that art can be central in participatory models of rural development, not so much about reaching a consensus regarding the goals or the desired outcomes of rural development programs, but because of the opportunities it offers to read community in *production*, by reading the micro-dynamics of communities. As a relational practice therefore, rather than reading overt relationships by looking at a community, we suggest art mediates participants to read micro-relationships within communities. Participants become part of a network of relationships amidst other people, nature and their political context.

Finally, we observe the limitations of art. Our fieldwork data demonstrate the role of artistic practice in voicing disconnects. Indeed, we came across a series of community disagreements regarding: the development of the island (and “conflicted agendas” as expressed by one of the residents); the role, type and branding of tourism; the use of the word “art” to promote the community workshops; and a disconnect between the community of residents and the official representatives. Can art, however, remove such community tensions? We observe that research tends to have an inherently positive expectation on the role of arts in community and economic development. Although not the focus of this chapter, we don’t support the argument that art solves problematic community relationships *per se*. Drawing on Duxbury and Campbell, who argue (2011: 118) that “arts and cultural activities are not the answer to all the issues of rural communities”, we don’t see art as a panacea to community tension. Our fieldwork demonstrates that art has the capacity to reveal community relations (see also Deutsche, 1997) rather than eliminating them. We view art as a relational process that, like the tide in Holy Island, continuously transforms and exposes our associations.

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Note

- 1 The Holy Island of Lindisfarne, ‘Welcome visitor’, www.lindisfarne.org.uk/general/welcome.htm

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“BASTA MASAYA, OK NA”¹

Theater-Based Approaches in the Philippines

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Introduction

Many community development workers in the Philippines view creative and culture-based approaches as effective for community building. These approaches often elicit a certain feeling of pleasure, a sense of well-being and happiness (often at the conclusion of a performance), and a successful theater workshop or even an engaging workshop activity. In our research (see below), participants in theater workshops would often approach us to give feedback about their experience saying—“basta masaya, ok na” or “as long as it’s fun, then it’s OK”.

While this may be a pleasant validation of the creative process, critical reflection is necessary in evaluating the contribution of creative arts and theater-based approaches in community development. A lack of critical reflection may contribute to a tendency for creative approaches to be regarded simply as a tool and used as technique rather than as a key element of community development processes that provide individuals, organizations and communities the opportunity to break free from the confines of the current dominant thinking and behavior patterns.

When we refer to creative and culture-based approaches, we draw from our experience of theater, being a multi-art discipline, which provides sensory experience and creates opportunities for people’s participation. These approaches employ sound, movement, visuals and words and are often woven into collaborative and interactive activities, which from our experience have maintained their power for learning—identifying, understanding and responding to local issues related to community well-being.

When we refer to creative and culture-based approaches being used as technique, we draw from Westoby and Dowling’s argument in their book entitled *Dialogical Community Development* (2009: 7) for “making a distinction between tradition and technique in community development”. They argue that technique-based solutions are problematic because they tend to have a quick fix-it approach to social problems. They further argue that the ills of society cannot be addressed by quick fixes, that the ideal society is “one not without problems but rather aware of its problems, learning to live creatively and imaginatively with them, and engaging them socially” (2009: 7).

Therefore technique, we would argue, refers to the superficial utilization of creative and culture-based approaches that merely celebrate the feeling of fun—“basta masaya”—which tends to be very momentary. However, similar to Westoby and Dowling (2009: 8), we argue that

“techniques are essential, but they must be put in their right context . . . informed by an understanding of the tradition of community development work”. Without this deeper understanding, the use of creative and theater-based approaches, we would argue, loses its ability to achieve creative and imaginative engagement for learning and addressing community development issues.

This chapter aims to contribute to developing an understanding of this tradition of utilizing creative and culture-based approaches within community development work. We shall draw from our shared experience in people’s theater in the Philippines, which has focused on the use of creative and culture-based approaches in educating, organizing and mobilizing the marginalized sectors, and then propose a way in which this critical reflection can inform broader community development practice in other contexts.

We begin by establishing the historical context of the use of creative and culture-based approaches to community development in the Philippines; and how more recent practice embraces community development principles. We then attempt to weave together Filipino theater concepts and community development practice to illustrate and explain the observed tendency for creative and culture-based approaches to be used as techniques and the potential to contribute to transformation. Next we use specific case study examples of how these creative and culture-based approaches in workshops and theater performances have overcome limitations and evolved to offer varying levels of engagement in addressing community concerns. We conclude with a proposal for how creative and culture-based approaches in community development can overcome the tendency of merely being used as technique and contribute more effectively to the transformation and realization of community development aspirations in different contexts.

Contextualizing Theater-Based Community Development Practice in the Philippines

Historically, Polson (1956) referred to community development practice in the Philippines as the utilization of a single program of approaches and techniques that rely on community action and outside assistance with organized efforts for self-determination. Numerous non-government organizations have included community organizing as a salient factor in community development, keeping in mind factors related to cultural diversity, history and migration as important considerations in community building.

Duthy and Bolo-Duthy (2003) identified three distinct development approaches based on a framework constructed by Hess (1999), namely community organizing, community building and community development. Most of the concepts of community organizing in the Philippines, according to Silliman and Noble (1998), have roots in Saul Alinsky’s approach, that is described as “confrontational, though not violent” (Duthy and Bolo-Duthy 2003: 15). Community building, on the other hand, is described by Silliman as “projects which seek to build new relationships among members in a community and develop change out of the connections these relationships provide for solving member defined problems” (Duthy and Bolo-Duthy 2003: 15). Finally, community development tends to rely on outside facilitators to deliver products or services. However, in practice, these three share a commitment to participation, and are often used in combination, which as Duthy and Bolo-Duthy (2003) argue, is needed to support change.

A key approach to participation that has been embedded in community development practice in the Philippines has been the use of creative and culture-based approaches, such as people’s arts and theater. This practice has been recognized by international community development scholars, like Jim Ife (2013a), who specifically identified the Philippines as a country where such culture-based approaches are central to its practice of community development. Ife

(2013a: 250) observed that “in some cultural settings (e.g. the Philippines) to attempt a program of consciousness-raising and community development without music, dance and theater would be to condemn the program to immediate failure”. In such contexts, Ife (2013a: 249) argues “cultural participation is potentially political, and can assist in community development at a more political level. Cultural activities themselves have the potential for consciousness-raising for the exploration of oppression, for the linking of the personal and the political, and for coming to terms with social and community problems”.

The practice of employing culture-based activities for consciousness raising can be traced back in history during the pre-colonial, Spanish and American colonial periods. However, it is important to note that these same culture-based approaches have equally been used for pacification during these periods of colonization, which is very similar to the observed fleeting “basta masaya” feeling.

More recently, we can identify the important role of theater and the arts during the period of martial law in the 1970s, when it became necessary to use creative and theater-based approaches to mask the intention for consciousness raising and community mobilization pertinent to urgent social concerns such as human rights abuses, and as essential practice within alternative education. It was mainly during this more recent period that both Atienza and Guevara experienced the use of creative and culture-based approaches and from which all of the experiences examined in this chapter will draw.

Creative and Culture-Based Approaches as Catalysts of Change

For centuries, theater work in the communities in the Philippines has been seen as a major tool in people’s empowerment. Our local histories have marked the role of theater as a potent weapon in exposing the ills of society and calling people to take up concerted actions in their pursuit of a better quality of life. Our country’s movement for nationalism and independence has been marked by developments in the form and function of theater.

In recently published research entitled “Ang Salitang Dula” (The Word Dula) on the roots of the local term “dula” (commonly used to mean theater or play) from the term “tula” (literally referred to as poetry), Atienza (2014d) discussed at length the impact of historical events and social development on local forms of expression commonly used for education and social interaction. For instance, in the 19th century, when the Philippines was declared a nation as a result of Spain’s colonial rule, new ways of communication led to different methods of information dissemination, using music, words and movement—the very basic modalities of theater which have been in use prior to its colonial encounter with Spain in 1521. Oral lore, which embodied local tropes through the musicality of words, became codified in print. A revolution for national independence was in place as theater artists coped with the new ways of communication—writing, music and the new musical theater forms such as the zarzuela and vaudeville (Atienza 2014d: 140–144).

With the entry of the new colonizers, the Americans, theater artists, most of whom belonged to the most articulate and the most learned groups in the communities, together with the intelligentsia who had been educated in the West, developed what was later referred to as the “seditious Tagalog plays”. These plays were performed before packed audiences in various make-shift communities in far-flung areas, and were used in support of the anti-American revolution. The actors, many of whom were members of the anti-colonial movement, used the opportunity provided by the plays in encouraging people to support and join the revolutionary cause. Using satire and local imagery embedded in poetry, the performances became occasions for people to come together and discuss their experiences with the colonial Americans. Staging spectacle was

used to stimulate nationalism among the audience, who were barred from waving their own flag under the colonial American rule. These plays created quite a stir among the American soldiers who trooped to performances to witness how the plays “roasted and killed Americans” and to arrest the players (Bonifacio 1972: 24–31; Riggs 1981: 40–48).

The period of martial law in the 1970s to the late 1980s was also witness to a new kind of theater for empowerment. Taking on the vision that theater should serve the interests and needs of the people, theater skills were disseminated to ordinary people who saw to the development of new narratives based on their urgent concerns and life experiences. Theater became a living newspaper in the face of curtailment of freedom of expression and self-expression. Theater was created by non-theater people who used their new-found skill in creating narratives that sought to call attention to concerns begging for change—militarization, human rights violation, poverty, corruption, displacement and land-grabbing. Theater again became a living spectacle in providing opportunities for transformation to address social concerns (Lumbera 1987; Fernandez 1996; Castrillo 1997; Atienza 2001b). These structured theater performances drew inspiration from local cultural expressions; some were inspired by Boal’s image theater (1985) and Artaud’s theater of cruelty (1958). Roles were performed by people in varying degrees and qualities of participation—from being part of the audience, to providing technical support, to organizing, researching and performing (Atienza 1999a: 255–275).

As a result of this growing level of participation, performances were hounded by the military, who wasted no time in arresting theater directors and playwrights who had criticized the government and posed radical ideas to the audience. The arrests did not deter the performance of new plays. The arrests became living markers of an achievement among the players—they were able to put across a clear message calling for social transformation, despite the threat of arrest and military intimidation. These activist plays, or what some would describe as revolutionary plays, used creative, participatory and theater arts-based approaches and laid the ground for a growing practice of theater for transformation and community development (Magtoto 1989; Fernandez 1996; Atienza 2010c; Ilagan 2010; Pambid 2010a).

Creative and Culture-Based Approaches as Pacifier of Discontent

While the theater performances mentioned above took on the people’s perspective—meaning those who have been referred to as the poor, the deprived and the oppressed—it is important to acknowledge that there has equally been a side of Philippine cultural and community development work that draws from a tradition of using culture as a pacifier of discontent. For instance, religious theater rituals such as the *sinakulo*, a dramatization of the life and death of Jesus Christ and the *comedia*, Western metrical romances on the stories of triumph of Christians over the Moors, were introduced by Spain as part of their tools for colonization and Christianization. The Filipino natives were introduced to the Catholic religion with icons such as the suffering Christ as their measure of good deeds and that which would ensure their entry to heaven in the afterlife. Constantino, in his essay “The Miseducation of the Filipinos” (1968: 231–249) cites the use of education as a means to pacify people and mold the minds of the young to erode indigenous ideas and the triumphs of a new-found nationalism and conform to American ideas. During the American colonial rule in the 1900s, dramatic texts in English became tools in popularizing the American system of education. Learning the English language paved the way for the introduction of an Americanized consciousness, made more acceptable through the introduction of a culture of consumption for American goods and ideas.

Tiongson, in his essay “Four Values in Filipino Drama and Cinema 1970–1979” (1983a: 102–121), points out the four values that had been popularized through Filipino drama and

film, namely: *maganda ang maputi* (white is beautiful), *maganda pa ang daigdig* (all is well with the world), *mabuti ang inaapi* (hurrah for the underdog) and *masaya ang may palabas* (it is fun when there are shows). These values became used as standards of good behavior among colonial subjects—meek, docile and subservient to the whims of the colonizers. Tiongson's observation on the value of the use of theater or shows as opportunities for entertainment emphasizes how the function of creative interactions as modalities of learning has been underrated. A colonial mind molded through the manipulation of Christianity and Americanized education obliterated Philippine theater's tradition of poetry, music, song and dances, narratives both oral and written which were geared towards education and community action. Theater during the pre-colonial times had been used as supplementary process for learning, employing the techniques of sound, movement, visual and words so that experiences—both real and imagined—may be expressed into action.

Dances, songs and rituals provide functional tools for literacy and social control. Poetic jousts have been used to nurture youngsters' imagination and critical observation as they were introduced to the system of nature and society. Consequently, these creative exercises sharpened their propensity for choosing appropriate words for images as lessons in topography and the natural environment, as well as in understanding social valuations. Riddles, which are probably the oldest form of poetic joust, demanded a distinct actor–audience relationship, expressing observations in local tropes. Proverbs that were passed on from one generation to another, in elegant poetic form, served as figurative reminders of acceptable social norms (Lumbera 1986a: 3–19).

The theatrical elements of poetic jousts provided avenues for community interaction, which were pleasurable, as they stimulated the communities' imagination and provided opportunities for information dissemination and social interaction (Lumbera 1986; Almario 1996; Woods 2011). The introduction of formal learning approaches and the imposition of English as medium of learning, however, have put these cultural approaches aside. Dramatic texts on American culture and heroes quashed the newly found nationalism and made English the main medium of communication. Original plays in the vernacular language were considered as of a lower quality than those written in English. Students of drama were made to memorize and deliver their lines in English, thereby creating a notion that actors needed to be competent English speakers if they wish to take part in a presentation. Plays had to be written in English to be able to be considered as an acceptable piece. This is a far cry from the verbal jousts and informal improvisations and religious rituals which encouraged participation from the local audience. Theater became an unwilling instrument for pacification, despite the efforts of artists and directors to continue with the practice of doing verbal jousts such as the *duplo* and *karagatan*, frequently done during vigils for the dead or the poetic debate *balagtas* during town fiestas as well as the short dramatic pieces written in the vernacular. Theater became an unexpected opportunity for class segregation—those who were able to learn English in school and understand plays in English, and those who lacked the facility in the using English as a medium of communication.

Creative and Culture-Based Approaches as Alternative Education

The introduction of theater as an accessible tool for popular communication and an alternative medium for cultural reform during the 1960s was an innovation which opened doors to explore and popularize the use of theater as tools for expression and education outside the confines of the Americanized system of education. Through the pioneering efforts of a theater group named the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA), the concept of using theater to harness the arts to empower the disadvantaged and to forge national identity was put to the test (Guidote-Alvarez 2003). Coinciding with intensifying social unrest and repressive martial rule in 1972,

theater provided an alternative avenue for information dissemination and social criticism made possible through the popularization of theater in schools, churches and communities nationwide. Through numerous training and workshops among communities and schools throughout the country, theater was introduced as an accessible and neophyte-friendly process of sharing silenced insights amidst repression, an alternative newspaper to the state-controlled mass media, a safe space to criticize those in power through ridicule and try out possibilities for people's empowerment (Tiongson 1984: 2–7).

The brief history above establishes the roots of the use of theater- and culture-based approaches for both pacification and transformation of communities. The next section examines the observed tendency for the fleeting *basta masaya* feeling, not quite as pacification, mainly as the illustration of unrealized potential of creative and culture-based approaches to community development. Subsequently we propose that the integration of the theater-based concept of “ganap” to the practice of creative and culture-based approaches can contribute to the realization or fulfillment of the transformation. This is then followed by examples from our experience of theater-based workshops and performances to help illustrate this concept in practice.

From “Masaya” (Fun) to “Ganap na Ligaya” (Happiness Realized): Nodes and Tensions in the Use of Theater-Based Approaches for Transformation

Central to the observation of the use of creative and culture-based approaches to community development as technique is the perception that the “*basta masaya*” feeling is the endpoint of a process of engagement and learning, rather than, we would argue, a moment that could potentially facilitate transformation. One proposal for how to approach these moments is identified to assist in addressing the tension between technique and the identified potential for transformation in the use of creative and culture-based approaches in community development. We propose a way to understand and act on these moments drawing on the Filipino language, concept and practice of theater linked to the term “ganap”.

“Ganap” and Community Development

Atienza came across the term “ganap” in the manuscripts of plays performed in the 1900s, in the course of her research on local terms used in the Philippine theater. The Filipino word “ganap” encompasses the experience as it embodies the act of putting things or ideas into action. The term *ganap* is an old Tagalog term meaning “realization” and “equality”, and the same term is the root word of an old term meaning “to make things happen” “to realize” (Noceda and Sanlucar 2013). “Ganap” is also the same term used in reference to a performance or to realize a role or become an actor. It is a familiar term among many of us in the theater field in the Philippines, but it is something which we have not really appreciated due to the convenience or bane of using the English term “act” or “perform”. The English translation lacks the local nuance embodied in the word which illustrates “ganap” to mean “the realization of life (*buhay*) to a leveled-up life or living life (*buhay!*)” (Atienza 2014e; Atienza 2014f: 221–230). In Atienza’s discussion, the term “ganap” refers to space, people, experience and its transformation to a new state through the use of devices which appeal to the senses—movement, sound, words, visuals and scenery among others.

The process of realization or the moment of transformation from a life experience to another level transpires in the moment described as *ganap*. While a raw sensory experience happens in the *danas na buhay* (life experience) in real time, a certain level of selectivity transpires in the

danas na buhay(!) (living experience) as life is translated into a creative mode. Through the intervention of tools of expression such as the body of the actor, a life experience (buhay) is recreated and relived to become a live and living experience (buhay!) (Atienza 2014g: 1–15). It can be said then that “ganap” embodies a semblance of Turner’s concept of “liminality” (1969: 94–130). This same phenomenon happens to the actor as he/she negotiates his/her way into “realizing” a “role” in an imagined reality during the performance. Theater is life transformed and made alive through a new *danas na buhay*, a new experience in reliving a sliver of life. Here lies the power of theater—not just to create that “*basta masaya*” (fun) but to create an experience of positive transformation in the community.

As Fray Paolo Casurao, cultural worker and playwright from Samar, intimates:

our intrinsic right to transformative and co-creative work is a fundamental ethical condition en route for the achievement of our full human potential. To impede this by unjust economic, social, and political condition denies our very humanity.

Leano 2010: 17

We shall illustrate this concept of “ganap” as the realization of a goal made possible through a creative process, drawing from experiences of how creative and culture-based approaches, within theater-based workshops, were employed.

BITAW: Integrating Creative and Culture-Based Approaches in Theater Workshops

As mentioned earlier in the history section, theater workshops using structured learning experiences and local cultural forms culled from everyday life were used to address social concerns that had been glossed over due to ignorance, mis-education or fear. These became new opportunities for education and critical thinking.

Among these workshop processes, the Philippine Educational Theater Association’s (PETA) Basic Integrated Theater Arts Workshop (BITAW) can be considered as one of the major theater designs in the use of theater as pedagogy for learning and transformation (Fajardo and Topacio 1984). BITAW, initially described as an integrated arts workshop, started out as a theater workshop framed, we would argue, on the middle-class liberal view of self-expression and self-awareness. BITAW’s popularity served as a timely response to the need for self-expression, which was curtailed during the martial law era in the Philippines. However, its popularity among communities in the cities and towns outside Metro Manila, faced by challenges of militarization and human rights violations, resulted in the BITAW evolving into a theater design aimed at providing an alternative avenue to vent grievances and to call the public’s attention to the need for change. Using local cultural modes of artistry, such as songs, dances and word play, BITAW encouraged the use of local issues as basic materials in developing original theater pieces. As a result, BITAW became an alternative for learning and a critical communication tool, an antidote for an ultra-silenced Westernized consciousness made worse by a repressive military rule.

Initially developed from a PETA member’s unfinished undergraduate thesis, BITAW was enriched as PETA members rolled out training workshops for different communities around the country. PETA members refined and validated the BITAW design with inputs from its interactions with communities in Mindanao, Visayas, Luzon and the Metro Manila theater groups, as well as inputs from its members who came from various disciplines and organizations that adhered to the use of the arts for social emancipation.

Its basic modules included dula-tula based on an exposure trip to a local area, an exploration of basic poetic jousts as starting points for dramatization, re-reading of local history in the historical module, a study of local tropes and urgent critical issues in the expressionistic-allegorical module—all leading towards the creation of an original piece that tackles issues close to the participants' experiences. A salient component of the BITAW workshops was the use of the local language, an approach that opened opportunities for expressing one's own sentiments and which was a milestone given the Philippines' long history of asserting the use of one's own language in education and the arts.

BITAW drew from numerous key personalities in theater and education, namely Viola Spolin's *Improvisation for the Theater* (1963), Lajos Egri's *The Art of Dramatic Writing* (1972), Dorothy Heathcote's *Drama for Learning* (1995), Paul and Kitty Baker's *Our Theater a Place for Ideas* (1977), Rudolf Labana's *The Mastery of Movement* (1960) and Augusto Boal's *Theater of the Oppressed* (1985).

BITAW's learning philosophy borrowed largely from Paulo Freire's use of popular education towards critical thinking and giving voice to silenced masses (1984). Since every BITAW workshop module was designed to fit the needs of its target participants, the design was continuously enriched by experiences and lessons from organizing work and cultural work in local communities. It was equally influenced by lessons from countries like China through Mao Tse Tung's concept of popularization and raising of standards at Talks at the Yen-an Forum (1942: 1–43), Africa through Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1963) and Brazil through Augusto Boal's rehearsal for a revolution (1985) and Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed (1984). Eventually, theater groups and enthusiasts from various communities enriched their own take on the BITAW by adapting the string of activities to local experiences—local forms of expression and local cultural concerns in creating their own games, songs, group dynamic activities and frameworks in using theater as learning pedagogies.

For example, among the more popular children's songs which were used in the BITAW is the “Ang Giyera ni Magellan” (Magellan's War), the lyrics of which have been changed to “Ang Giyera ni Lapu-lapu” (Lapu-lapu's War). The change to Lapu-lapu, considered as the first local hero who fought the Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan when he landed in the Visayas in 1500s, made the song more nationalistic, as the protagonist, Lapu-lapu was a local leader as opposed to Magellan who was a Portuguese conquistador (Fajardo et al. 1984: 62; Fajardo and Topacio 1989: 32–33).

The change in the song, commonly used as a group dynamics activity or as an engaging physical exercise for body limbering, represented an awareness by the facilitators for the need to include a positive lesson rather than merely being an active and fun “basta masaya” activity. The song concluded with a line that states how Lapu-lapu's war continues and that we are entrusted to continue it to the present. It is well documented that this revised song found its way in various communities through the spread of BITAW.

Likewise, songs from other communities in the regions were shared by word of mouth. Workshop facilitators who learned new songs and words as they travelled from one community to another introduced these new songs or games, using the regional language. An example of this is the Visayan song “Manok Anchona”, which has been attributed to Mindanao educator and theater artist Karl Gaspar and has been used in many Manila urban communities. The song, which focuses on the gleeful movement of the chicken Anchona, narrates how the favored chicken moves its neck as it pecks and scratches the ground as it looks for food and how it flaps its wings as it moves about. From a theater perspective, the song can be used as an introduction to mime using animal movements. For many participants, these songs become bridges to far-flung areas as they learned to sing the song in the regional language of their fellow community theater artists.

BITAW was not the only theater-based education workshop during the early 1970s and 1980s. There were other theater-based approaches developed by groups based in universities and communities outside Metro Manila. Mindanao had their Mamugnaong Dula (Creative Drama), Samar had their Institute of Dramatic Arts' Theater of Conscientization, Luzon had Likhandula, the Metro Manila Based Cultural Program of the labor sector had Oryentasyon sa Kultura at Gawaing Pangkultura (Orientation to Culture and Cultural Work) and several other theater networks were able to evolve their own theater training modules (Horquilla 1984; Castrillo 1997; Perez 2007; Leano 2010).

Through the theater linkage provided by PETA's outreach programs, these modules evolved as community theater groups learned from each other's experience. Frameworks for implementing programs that incorporated local community concerns were shared generously from one region to another. For example, according to Manuel Pambid, playwright and trainer of PETA, the popular framework Orientation-Artistic-Organization (O-A-O) was developed during a workshop by PETA facilitators Lutgardo Labad, Manuel Pambid, Rosalie Matilac and Wenifreda Gamboa with church workers, students and community artists in November/December 1978 (Pambid, 2015). The Orientation highlighted the importance of having a clear objective and vision when addressing the question of "for whom" in creative learning processes, as well as in creating plays and programs. The Artistic pointed to the creative mode which is considered as equally important and inseparable from the objective. The Organization referred to the system of implementation of a project or plan of action, characterized by collaboration and group work, democratic consultation and participation. This framework has been utilized by groups as a reliable guide in designing training modules and in producing theater presentations as this framework was shared through the PETA facilitators who consciously included the O-A-O framework in enriching the BITAW workshop design (Fajardo and Topacio 1989: 36-37).

Other frameworks and conceptual guides in theater for education workshops helped to develop a vocabulary for community theater artists and educators to link the use of creative and culture-based approaches for community action. Examples of these frameworks include RAESMA or Release-Awareness-Exploration-Synthesis-Mastery-Application, a guide for planning a syllabus for theater workshop using structured learning activities, and Nicanor Tiongson's RPN or Reflection of Philippine Culture, which responds to the Needs of the Masses (1983b).

Thus BITAW came to be known as a moniker for a community theater workshop or any collaborative, multi-art theater process that presents a "fun" experience using the arts. BITAW's strengths were identified as being culturally adaptable, presented learning as a collaborative, fun and culture-based process, used the everyday experience and everyday language of ordinary people as materials for critical thought, and consequently pushed the "ordinary" and everyday experience as challenges for transformation, similar to Bakhtin's idea of the carnivalesque as opportunities for change (Gardiner 2000: 56-61). These characteristics clearly reflected the transformative potential of the BITAW in community development. Here, the realization of "ganap", meaning to perform a role, is raised to level of transformation, not only in the act of taking on a role but more so in the process as a target for transformation.

While the transformative potential was present, it is important to acknowledge that the conduct of the BITAW was dependent on how the facilitators perceived its core purpose. This perception ranged from BITAW as a group dynamics activity, a series of theater games, an opportunity for self-expression and awareness or an opportunity for critical analysis and community action. Thus, there was no assurance that the theater workshop referred to as BITAW by one group is the same as a BITAW workshop conducted by another.

The Transformative Potential of Creative and Culture-Based Workshops and Performances

Despite its many variations, the BITAW and other creative theater-based approaches presented themselves at a time when an alternative avenue for learning and critical expression was urgently needed. Its participatory and collaborative nature, its structured learning activities rooted in local cultural histories and folk forms and the premium it gave to the importance of being responsive to the needs of the people, made for a potent alternative to the conventional top-down, banking system and authoritarian learning approach. The creative approach responded to a wide spectrum of community concerns—from simply being a venue for self-expression and understanding of one's capacities and limitations to providing an opportunity for critical thinking and education for participatory community action.

Let us look into some specific examples of how the BITAW was used in a wide spectrum of community action—from providing fun-filled “basta masaya” learning opportunities to becoming “ganap” or providing occasions for transformation and community action. For example, in one of the BITAW modules, the basic elements of artistic expression are introduced by engaging the participants to explore possibilities in using the body as a means of expression. An exercise called Give Me a Shape and Give Me a Space, on the concept of line and space, allowed a participant to look silly while mimicking the image of a flower or a vase as they go through the process of shaping their bodies (Fajardo and Topacio, 1989: 33–34). Boal called this phase “knowing the body” and “making the body expressive” as he called attention to the power of an actor's body and to the individual's discovery that much has been left unexplored in one's body due to the numerous social conventions (Boal 1985: 126–131).

At the conclusion of the process, participants are asked how they felt, what they thought and what they wanted to do. These questions gave the participants the assurance that learning includes giving importance to what the learner has to say and what the learner wants to do, without fear of judgment or prejudice. Also, activities centered on collaboration rather than competition, and participants were encouraged to share their ideas and feelings without passing judgment on their or their co-participants' work. This characteristic openness became very attractive for those who needed a solace for self-expression, and thus a number of parents took their children to workshops during summer as a necessary phase for growth and development of self-confidence and socialization skills. These activities were essentially improvisational theater processes which embodied change as the moving force of community action, an output and process that is a culture-based, audience-oriented experience, participatory and collaborative creative process. It involved a pool of actors who allowed their bodies, minds and hearts to be used to draw critical studies of community concerns geared towards change.

Samarnon playwright and director Fray Paolo Diosdado Casurao, who worked at the Institute of Dramatic Arts (IDA) in Samar when the Theater for Conscientization program was implemented, described how they were able to use improvisational theater for change, amidst the challenges of repression and military abuses during the martial law years. He said that they drew inspiration from the works of Paulo Freire (1984), included modules on Grotowski's theater of poverty (1968), embedded an orientation for artists based on the paradigm Artist-Curator-Teacher-Organizer-Research and utilized tools for cultural analysis from Boal (1985) and Renato Constantino's Dissent and Counter-Consciousness (1970). Furthermore, as the Theater for Conscientization program was recognized as a methodology of education, they placed equal importance on the specific qualities of the place, the importance of using the regional language, the reliance on improvisation as well as in the rudiments of production and stage design, thorough attention in training the local actors' critical thinking and analytic skills, and an appreciation

and inclusion of local heritage themes vital to the current conditions. Several plays were developed from theater workshop experiences which dealt with local concerns, among which were *Usa ka Adlaw sa Kinabuhì ni Danggit* (One Day in the Life of the Fish Danggit), which was presented during the first PETA BITAW workshop in 1976, and *Bartolina* (Prison), which told about the plot of prisoners to escape from torture and summary execution. Through the support of the local church, the program gave way to the formation of more than 10 community theater groups all over Samar and elevated the use of the local language, Binisaya-Samarnon as the principal language of the theater. This resulted in one high school principal inviting the IDA director to join the school faculty, which in turn resulted in the junior and senior students organizing community theater groups and some even taking up armed struggle to fight against the dictatorship. But the church workers incurred the ire of the military, and soon after priests, cultural workers and lay workers were arrested and a number suffered physical and psychological torture (Leano 2010: 14–30).

A more recent experience illustrates the potency of theater as an occasion for an urgent community action. Participatory theater among children was used to motivate the community to give priority to building toilets in their communities through a play entitled “Hello Healthy . . . Goodbye Dirty”. Atienza’s team of actors from *Guro sa Sining ng Bayan* (GUSI) spent the first week of August 2014 conducting theater performances in five municipalities in Masbate province classified as 4th-class municipalities or towns with very low per capita income. The script was based on scientific research conducted by UNICEF and the Center for Health Solutions and Innovations. Major considerations were based on the motivations of shame and loss of face to motivate the audience to move and build their own toilets, as well as the role of children in initiating change in the family. Songs and dances were used to demonstrate the fecal–oral transmission of disease. The flies and feces were made into animated characters for easy information dissemination. In one of the scenes, the kid tells his friends why he defecates in the open, as he sings and graphically narrates how painful it is to be looking for a place to defecate. To further intimidate and shame the audience, a concoction that looks like feces is squirted from his behind, making the audience further squirm and laugh. After going through this grueling experience, the audience is made to choose from among options to address the problem of disease in the community. Through a game, pictures of different ways of feces management are presented and the audience is made to line up in front of their chosen picture. They are also challenged to identify the image of their community which they wish to present to the world. They are then encouraged to take their selfies in front of latrines and toilets with which they want to be identified.

The performances moved people to action in varying degrees. The first reaction was to show support for the program. The Vice-Mayor pledged his support for the formation of a local theater group who would perform the play for the Zero Open Defecation Campaign program. Government buses and trucks were sent to the remote schools to ferry the children to the town center gymnasium where the performances were conducted. Everyone had a role in the campaign—from the village health workers as project implementers to townspeople as actors. The village men took turns in setting up tents to provide shade for the audience, while others helped the performers fix their sets and technical needs. The womenfolk helped prepare refreshments while the rest became stage hands—helping the actors borrow hand props from nearby houses and helping convince some schoolchildren to participate in certain scenes. In one of the shows, one mother asked the performers whether they had brought urinals for distribution. She said her family had been digging a hole in her backyard to set up her urinal. She was ready to build her toilet in her house. This move to build structures in response to a specific call is the ultimate illustration of theater’s impact in creating occasions for transformative action.

These workshop and performance examples illustrate how the creative and theater-based approach's characteristic openness and adaptability provide fun activities as well as occasions for transformation and community, which make for *ganap na ligaya* or happiness fulfilled. As such, these approaches illustrate the inalienable role of collaboration as a salient component in realizing community action. Collaboration and the importance of working together for a common good were clearly manifested in the processes of developing and sharing creative frameworks in BITAW in the 1980s, as well as in the performances which moved the communities in Masbate to build their own toilets.

The Role of ACTORS in Transformative Community Development

In this section, we shall argue that examples of successful transformative community development that employed creative and culture-based approaches in workshops and performances were more than just about collaboration. We propose that these collaborative creative and culture-based processed were underpinned by a core concept of the Filipino psychology, the “*kapwa*” or literally “the self in the other” or a shared identity (Enriquez 1978). This concept of *kapwa* and the implications for the key players in the community development process is our second proposal for how we can ensure that the potential of the fleeting *basta masaya* moments can be transformed into the *ganap na ligaya* (consummate happiness) through the realization of a vision for a common good.

Virgilio Enriquez, often described as the father of Filipino psychology, defines “*kapwa*” as “unity of the one-of-us-and-the-other. Once AKO [or the individual] starts thinking of him/herself as separate from KAPWA, the Filipino ‘self’ gets to be individuated as in the Western sense and, in effect, denies the status of KAPWA to the other”. He wrote: The English “others” is actually used in opposition to the “self”, and implies the recognition of the self as a separate entity (Enriquez 1978: 1–4). Katrin de Guia further added that:

People, who practice *kapwa* in their life can be recognized by their genuine, people-centered orientation (*makatao*), their service to others around them (*matipon, matulungin*), and by their commitment to their communities (*pamathalaan*). Community building and peace building is second nature to the people of such a bearing. *Kapwa* and Filipino personhood emphasize the function of the whole plus its isolated parts. *Kapwa* and the including orientation of Filipino personhood, trains us how to blend and collaborate, how to enhance and support one another.

2005a: 1–7

Applying the “*kapwa*” concept, transformative community development, through collaborative work—for the good of all, is therefore as much an outcome as it is an intrinsic to the process. Weaving these concepts together, we argue that the use of creative and culture-based approaches in community development can also be described as technique, if it is done for purposes of the “*ako*” or the self alone, which is tantamount to, we would argue, achieving “*basta masaya*” (fun) but not “*ganap na ligaya*” or consummate happiness for the “*kapwa*”.

It takes a new breed of actors to make this kind of transformative community development happen. Atienza proposes a new breed of ACTORS who embody a commitment of becoming an Artist-Community-oriented-Teacher-Organizer-Researcher-Scholar. This proposed acronym has evolved from PETA's ATOR concept (Artist-Teachers-Organizers-Researchers) to Roberto Mendoza's (2012a) ACTOR (Artist-Community-oriented-Teachers-Organizers-Researchers) to the proposed ACTORS (Artist-Community-oriented-Teachers-Organizers-Researchers-Scholars).

The ACTORS concept underlines the inalienable role of the theater artist or workshop facilitator as a community development worker whose work faces unending challenges as he/she negotiates the contribution of the work to the community's or audience's life. It poses the same challenge taken up by any artist—that of continuously improving his/her artistic craft to be able to translate life's idioms into more intelligible forms of expression. However, the community orientation sets the direction for service as against fame, fortune or popularity. As ACTORS, the primary motivation is to disseminate ideas and information and to engage the community into action thus; the ultimate challenge is moving with the audience from the “basta masaya” moment to an act of transformation by taking on roles which fulfill a “kapwa” need.

To become ACTORS requires a shift in orientation from being limited to individual self-expression, as illustrated by the “ako”, to being committed to service and the common good, as illustrated by “kapwa”. It is the community that takes center stage and the ACTORS initiates, explores possibilities and facilitates community action. The ACTORS takes on the responsibility of preparing the community for action specific to the community's needs and priorities.

Education and critical thinking are an important component of this process because transformation necessitates a clear understanding of a mission in which the audience has to take part to be fully realized. Skills in social mobilization as well as research are likewise important, since the objective is not simply to amaze or entertain but rather to enjoin and encourage transformation among community members. The whole experience is likewise processed in print as a contribution to knowledge building.

From Technique to Transformative Community Development

We have identified two elements that can help to explain the observed tendency for using creative and culture-based approaches as technique, namely an emphasis on the momentary feeling of “basta masaya”, rather than the potential to achieve “ganap”, and a focus on “ako” instead of the “kapwa”. We have also identified ways to increase the effectiveness of the use of the creative and culture-based approaches in transformative community development practice.

Understanding the “basta masaya” moment not as the endpoint but as a transition to action, a creative and culture-based workshop that facilitated the space for self-expression, the singing that accompanied the washing of hands and the proposal to dig holes for urinals to at least change the hygiene practices to reduce the spread of diseases, are examples of these moments characterized by “basta masaya” if not taken out of context as a creative process of collaborative and participatory community action.

While we have explored in detail the tendency for culture-based approaches to be used as technique and proposed a framework that helps to examine the causes and identify a way forward, it is hoped that what we have illustrated will have value in other contexts outside of the Philippines. For example, Mary Lane (2013) had observed a similar concern with community arts and development practitioners in Australia.

I had previously been inclined to a simplistic view that activities such as community festivals (of which I was particularly disparaging) were fun but they were not really part of the strategic tool box of activist-oriented community workers seeking “real” change for disadvantaged people. Too easily I had accepted the line that a community art was one of those consensus-oriented approaches in community work which glossed over inequalities doing nothing to change the structural factors associated with social injustices.

Lane 2013: 124

Lane (2013: 125) further described how through working with Daphne Cazalet, a community arts worker, she experienced how festivals and community arts works were “a means to empowerment for those on the fringes of public life (such as non-English speaking women and young people), providing opportunity for them to publicly express their feelings, needs and aspirations—the beginnings for many of a political, as well as social, process of inclusion”. Lane further observed that in Daphne’s hands, community arts work was more than celebratory: “It was also a means for tackling exclusion, powerlessness, racism”. Ife (2013b) observed that part of these differences in perception of the value of culture-based community development practices may also be about the dominant culture. He explained that

cultural development requires community arts, as for non-Anglo cultures the media of song, dance, theater, arts, craft, poetry and storytelling are more significant in articulating people’s needs and aspirations than they are in Anglo culture. The cultural diversity of Australian cities forced community workers to re-think these biases and to incorporate the cultural into their practice in new ways.

Ife 2013b: 176

However, as we argue, care must be taken not to simply apply these cultural approaches mechanically, as technique. Such instances could also potentially fall flat in terms of becoming more about the performance rather than the transformation. It will be worth observing how the localized performances may, like BITAW, become too popular and lose sight of the historical roots and the commitment to community transformation.

At the heart of these proposals to shift the focus from the momentary “basta masaya” to ongoing action to address transformation is the recognition in community development of what needs to be transformed. As we stated earlier, this idea is supported by Westoby and Dowling (2009: 7), who have argued that “making a distinction between tradition and technique in community development” is grounded in how we conceptualize and act on the problems we face. In using creative approaches as technique, we tend to treat the symptoms of the problems rather than accept a more holistic analysis of the roots of the problem. This treatment of the symptom is similar to being satisfied with the momentary feeling of “basta masaya”.

We have argued that the emphasis on the fleeting “basta masaya” experiences, when using creative and culture-based approaches within community development settings in the Philippines, has diminished the potential for these approaches to contribute to having a *ganap na komunidad* or a realized action for community development.

The chapter has been an attempt to critically reflect on our own experiences of utilizing these creative and culture-based approaches, and has identified reasons for the observed limited use of these approaches that we have described as technique. Through an overview of the historical use of creative and culture-based approaches within community development, we have attempted to establish the long-standing tradition that informs this practice, specifically within people’s arts and theater in the Philippines. Using more recent experiences, we have illustrated how these tendencies for technique-based utilization of creative and culture-based approaches continue to manifest themselves in current community development practice.

On the basis of the above, we have identified two elements that can help to explain the observed tendency for using creative and culture-based approaches as technique, and have helped to identify ways of how to address this observation to increase the effectiveness of the use of the creative and culture-based approaches in transformative community development practice. First, we have argued that if this momentary “basta masaya” feeling can be understood as a transition point, that represents liminality, rather than an end point, the potential for contributing

to transformative community development is realized. We have proposed how integrating the theater-based concept of “ganap” to the practice of creative and culture-based approaches can contribute to the realization or fulfillment of the transformation or what we have described as “ganap na ligaya” or consummate happiness.

Second, we have argued that to achieve this transformation equally involves reconceptualizing the role of the community development worker or facilitators who utilize these creative and culture-based approaches. As with the previous element, we have proposed the integration of the theater-based concept of the ACTORS, the acronym to mean Artist-Community-oriented-Teachers-Organizers-Researchers-Scholars which advocates for a more holistic role of the community development worker. This reconceptualization recognizes the value of the concept of “kapwa”, which helps to situate the community at the center, working together with the individuals and the institutions, in an ongoing process of community transformation.

As commented earlier in this chapter, participants would often approach us to give feedback about their experience saying—“basta masaya, ok na” or “as long as it’s fun, then it’s OK”. We conclude not just with this pleasant validation of the creative process from the positive experiences of our participants and audiences, but with a commitment to continue to strengthen our own community development practice through ongoing critical reflection. We have in the process of co-writing this chapter developed a more integrated and holistic understanding of the use of creative and culture-based approaches in community development. Our understanding is now embedded with an appreciation of our history, our language, our culture and our concept of self and community that contextualizes our community development practice. A key aim of this chapter has been to challenge the readers to discover within their own sociocultural and political contexts, concepts that effectively enrich one’s own use of creative and culture-based approaches, not as technique but as contributions to community transformation.

Notes

- 1 Filipino expression with the English translation “As long as it’s fun, then it’s OK”.
- 2 Glec C. Atienza is Full Professor at the University of the Philippines Diliman. Jose Roberto “Robbie” Guevara is Associate Professor at the RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. They both have shared experiences working with the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) and have utilized their experience in using the BITAW in their respective fields—Glec for community theater work and theater in education in the Philippines and Robbie for environmental education and gender concerns in the Philippines and in Australia.

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15

COMMUNITY ARTS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE “IMPOSSIBILITY” AND “NECESSITY” OF CULTURAL DEMOCRACY

Rosie R. Meade

This chapter considers the “impossibility” and “necessity” (see St Louis 2009) of cultural democracy as a foundational principle for community arts activities. The phrase “impossibility and necessity” is itself a borrowing and inversion of the words of Stuart Hall (2000), when he pondered the political and discursive utility of the concept “identity”. And while this chapter is not about “identity” or its theorization, the phrase helps to capture a sense of ambivalence and provisionality. It evokes the importance of, as Brett St Louis (2009: 560) suggests with respect to Hall’s original provocation, “grappling with a profound problematic”, whether and how it might be “necessary to inhabit and work within the constraints” of a confining or limiting social position, “while attempting to move beyond it towards a freer human existence”.

As will be argued in this chapter, a commitment to cultural democracy is *necessary* because it counters dominant understandings of “culture” and the “arts”¹ that are shaped by and are reflective of social hierarchies and inequalities. Class and educational barriers mediate engagement with the arts (Matarasso 2007; Lunn and Kelly 2008; Holden 2010) and there is widespread misrecognition of the cultural agency of “disadvantaged” or “socially excluded” communities (Willis 2005; McGonagle 2007; Cameron 2016). Against this, the promise of cultural democracy may inspire or infuse community arts processes that nurture participatory and collectivized forms of cultural consumption, production and distribution. Cultural democracy thus implies a “democratizing of culture”, whereby access to and representation within mainstream arts and cultural institutions is equalized. Crucially, though, it simultaneously proposes greater public recognition of and support for the diversity of expressive forms, aesthetic practices and spaces of production within society.

This chapter begins with my interpretation of and response to the “Voices from Shandon” arts program that took place in Cork, Ireland and culminated in 2013. My, admittedly impressionistic, account of that program is followed by a fuller theorization of the concept of cultural democracy, which, I argue, must be underpinned by the kind of cultural materialist analysis that

is proposed by Williams (1981) and Moran (2015). Cultural materialism draws attention to the political economy of (community) arts; it demands recognition of the materiality of all cultural production and its embeddedness within a set of really existing economic relationships.

The chapter then discusses the diverse origins of community arts in Ireland while acknowledging that the term *community arts* embraces a diversity of methods, expectations and outcomes, thus exhibiting a certain semantic mutability. For Tony Fegan (2003), community arts practice is distinguished by its anchoring in particular communities: community members actively identify, organize and develop artistic projects that reflect their interests and enthusiasms, or that speak to their social experiences. Activities are collective and collaborative, and collaboration may or may not include professional artists. This praxis is perhaps distinguishable from *community-based art*, where programs or initiatives mirror and are physically present in given communities, but where there is less emphasis on ownership or authorship on the part of community members themselves. In such instances, professional artists or arts organizations may play a more decisive leadership and creative role (Fegan 2003). To add to the confusion, the terms *community arts* and *community-based arts* are often used interchangeably with the concept of *socially engaged arts*. This latter term is, however, also suggestive of a consciously political stance by arts practitioners to work in solidarity with communities in the hope that the “arts might help lead out on change, positive change” (O’Baill 2012: n.p.). Even if it were possible to establish precisely and convincingly the nuances in this terminology, rigid definitions are unlikely to be sustainable in practice where *community arts* tends to be used as a catch-all term for the very wide variety of activities undertaken by, in, with and about communities. Furthermore, given communities’ and artists’ *de facto* reliance on statutory or philanthropic funding to sustain arts activities, the determination of aims and the evaluation of outcomes may be contentious, particularly if the arts are expected to serve ameliorative or therapeutic functions (Kester 2004). Indeed it is likely that such tensions will sound familiar to community development workers, because just like community development, diverse applications and assumptions mean that we cannot take democratic commitments for granted.

For the purposes of this chapter community development is understood simply as a “process through which ordinary people collectively attempt to influence their life chances” (Meade et al. 2016: 4). Behind this apparent simplicity much complexity prevails. Conceptions of community may be rooted in places, occupational or social relationships, common interests or identities, religious or ethnic affiliations, and they may invite local, national and even transnational expressions of solidarity. Communities may appear to be already formed and buoyant or, alternatively, in states of emergence or decline. The impetus for development may be determined and led by members of the putative community, while in other instances the process of community development may be initiated by state, professional, philanthropic or other “outside” actors (Meade et al. 2016). The focus of “development” may embrace infrastructure and services; employment and education opportunities; policy or legal changes; transformations in power, political and democratic configurations; or new forms of social or interpersonal relationship. Processes may even position the arts and culture as central to their development agendas, so that the enhancement or recognition of people’s participation in the cultural life of their communities is seen as valid in its own right. *In such cases community arts processes can be regarded as a form of community development.* Against this, however, community arts activities and projects may be regarded as elements that “enhance and improve the community development enterprise rather than as substantive stand-alone entities” (Cullen 1995: 14). Therefore, they may entice people to get involved in projects and they may contribute to the processes of capacity building, education, personal development and skills learning that are themselves seen to constitute steps towards citizen empowerment and participation (Cullen 1995; Kay 2000). *Here community arts*

processes may be viewed as adjuncts to or instruments of community development. Whatever the terms of their mutual engagement, community arts and community development activities typically invoke common “values” such as participation, empowerment and the validation of process over outcomes (Ife 2013); and for both there are real or recurring challenges in ensuring that those values become more than buzz words or rhetorical claims (Banks 2011; Shaw 2013).

In the final section I apply a cultural materialist analysis to the political and economic factors shaping and inhibiting community arts processes at the current historical juncture. Paying particular attention to the Irish context, I highlight arts sector ambivalences regarding the purposes and value of community arts; public policy’s tendency to instrumentalize the arts; and wider trends in the global political economy, which responsibilize artists and communities to engage in competitive forms of creativity and urban regeneration. The aspiration of cultural democracy seeks acknowledgment of and a contestation with these “impossibilities”. And moving beyond critique, community arts praxis may also celebrate the aesthetic statements of communities as they communicate in and through culture.

What if . . .

Cork is a hilly city, and one of the best views of its higgledy-piggledy, irregular streetscapes can be found in Bell’s Field at the top of Richmond Hill. While off the beaten track for most tourists, Cork City Council has planned, since 2007, to “regenerate” the field, in order to optimize visitor uptake of its “panoramic” qualities (*Irish Examiner* 2012). From Bell’s Field it is possible to distinguish many of Cork’s landmarks, among them St Anne’s Church, possibly its best-known building. St Anne’s distinctive limestone and sandstone tower is itself a magnet for tourists, who come to ring the bells and treat locals to renditions of “Three Blind Mice” and other classics. The four clock-faces near the top of the tower have been notoriously unreliable time-keepers, leading to its ironic designation as the “four-faced liar”, while above them is the golden, salmon-shaped weather vane widely known as “de goldie fish”. St Anne’s is central to the spatial geography and the iconography of Cork City, and in recognition of this status, between 2011 and 2013, it became the focal point for an arts project that sought to affirm local meaning-making and cultural expression.

Arturo Escobar (2001) observes that understandings of place have tended to be downplayed in the social and human sciences: place has typically been deposed in favor of space, the former suggestive of narrow particularity, the latter presenting unlimited and open-ended possibility. Against this, Escobar (2001) reminds us that cultural practice is inevitably and necessarily “emplaced”, that places are simultaneously sites of production and contestation. They are produced by the interplay between broader, even global, political-economic forces *and* everyday social practices, relationships and imaginings (see also Massey 2004). Therefore we must acknowledge

that place, body, and environment integrate with each other; that places gather things, thoughts, and memories in particular configurations; and that place, more an event than (sic) a thing, is characterized by openness rather than by a unitary self-identity.

Escobar 2001: 143

Cork Community Artlink² (CCAL) is a city-based arts organization that has been in existence since 1993 (CCAL 2011). In its various arts programs, CCAL collaborates with community groups and individuals in the ethical and aesthetic re-imagining of place, space and local environments; including, public streets, schools, community centers, parks, libraries, institutional settings, hoardings, signposts, walls, benches or even bollards. Following its move to Shandon

in 2004, and to coincide with Cork's European City of Culture, CCAL launched the "What if . . ." program in 2005 (CCAL n.d.a). As a title "What if . . ." evokes inquiry, new possibilities and longings, and the program is spatially and socially grounded in Cork's urban neighborhoods. There have been six iterations of "What if . . ." since 2005, four of which have centered on Shandon (2006, 2008, 2009, 2011–2013), albeit still engaging volunteers and communities of identity and interest from within and outside the area (CCAL, n.d.a). Arguably, "What if . . ." thus promotes an inclusive and porous conception of community in place, one that proposes ongoing dialogue about what is and what might be and about the very constitution of community itself. Potentially, it seeks to transcend the traps of nostalgia, essentialism, reification and homogeneity that render invocations of community so problematic (Rose 1997; Bauman 2001; The Critical Art Ensemble, 2002; Mulligan 2015).

"What if . . ." is a public art program for creative research, exploration and project development", which emphasizes "partnership with communities and groups to develop temporary, outdoor art works which explore the dynamics of urban public space" (CCAL n.d.b). The 2009 "What if . . ." project, "the Big Wash Up", involved the power-washing of giant reproductions of photographs of Shandon's past onto the walls of its most prominent buildings. This temporary installation was the culmination of an extensive process of trust-building, community engagement and cultural co-production that involved local residents along with artist Philippe Chevrinais and organizations such as Artillerie (France), Northside Folklore Project, the Firkin Crane, Shandon Street Festival, St Mary's Road Library and Shandon Youth Club³ (CCAL, n.d.c; Grant-Smith and Matthews 2015). In their analysis of the consultations and participatory processes around which "the Big Wash Up" was structured, Grant-Smith and Matthews (2015) point to the crucial, and necessarily challenging, role of negotiation and deliberation in this kind of cultural praxis. "Community-based and site-specific public art requires a relationship between the artist, artistic institutions, the community and the local site. The relationship is based on an understanding of the history of the area and the constituency of the art audience, the social relevance of the project, and the input of multiple stakeholders" (Grant-Smith and Matthews 2015: 148).

Reverting to Bell's Field and the summer of 2013, gazing across at Shandon you could see 1,000 flags on 2,000 metres of rope suspended from St Anne's. This was the site-specific installation and culmination of CCAL's "What if . . ." project, "Voices from Shandon".⁴ From that distance the tower radiated colour in all directions, the constant flickering of flags creating motion around the building's solidity, while the ropes literally and figuratively anchored the flags and tower in "place".⁵ Viewed from afar, this was Shandon's joyful gift to the city, what might be regarded as one example of how a "grounded community" (Mulligan 2015: 349) or community in place might project itself beyond its spatial borders. As Mulligan (2015: 349) notes, "'grounded communities'" only manifest themselves to the extent that they are constantly created and recreated", and "Voices from Shandon" asserted the importance of the visual, of song and the imagination for community building and solidarity. Moving closer, walking around Shandon a better sense of the multiplicity of "visual voices" (CCAL, n.d.e) on display was possible. This was not just a function of quantity, the sheer number of flags, but was evident from the idiosyncrasies and creative choices presented in the individual artworks.⁶ Paul Willis (2005: 74) contends: "everyday life is full of expressions, signs and symbols through which individuals and groups creatively establish their very presence, as well as important elements of their purpose, identity and meaning". "Voices from Shandon" functioned as a kind of public gallery for the "sense-full-ness" of participants' "lived aesthetics" (Willis 2005: 76), and how they might use material/fabric to signify their presence in the city.

In the contemporary world we are besieged by images, and increasingly images of brands, that call out for publicity, consumption, envy and emulation (Berger 1972; Klein 2000; Willis

2005). “Voices from Shandon” might be regarded as a speaking back to this visual assault. And in their speaking back, individuals expressed their love of nature’s really existing creatures—penguins, dogs, cats, snakes, tigers, horses, ducks, swans—and more magical hybrids—the unicorn/sheep, the mouse/cat, dragons, zombies, faeries, angels and cartoon characters. Some worked with concepts—evoking love, family, community, craziness, coolness, strength, uncertainty, health, passion—while others represented place—Shandon, Poland, Cork, home towns, the beach—and others, symbols of identity—barrel-top wagons, caravans. Against common assumptions that the purpose of community art might be to “bring” arts or culture to the people, participants claimed rich cultural lives—with testimonials to the arts of drawing, dancing, music-making, skateboarding, soccer-playing, gardening, reading, hurling, painting, gaming—and manifold illustrations of a fondness for colour and form in their own right. There were memories of the past and pledges for the future—to travel to space, to be a princess, to become a vet—as well as political commitments and celebrations of self—pride in people’s own bodies, hands, faces. Representations of objects and work-tools hung alongside impressions of the sun, moon and stars. As the flag display continued over the summer of 2013, it exhibited what Declan McGonagle (2007: 428) proposes as a defining principle for democratic arts practice and policy, “a parity of esteem” for “different intentions and the different forms those intentions take”.

Cultural Democracy: The Arts as More than our “Grace after Meals”

Art can perform many functions. For pages and pages, the various functions could be listed like a catalog of stylistic -isms: art can represent its commissioners and producers; it can be a definer and caretaker of identity; it can affect snobby allures and satiate the bourgeois hunger for knowledge and possession. Art can fatten up the leisure time of the bored masses; it can serve as an object of financial speculation; it can transmit feelings and cause one’s heart to vibrate. Furthermore, the many functions are also enmeshed in one another.

WochenKlausur, n.d.: n.p.

This quotation comes from the Vienna-based WochenKlausur artist group, which since 1993 has participated in arts and socio-political interventions in settings that include Berlin, Limerick, Leeds and New York. Its Limerick project was conceived as a free cinema for immigrants, running out of the Belltable Arts Centre in the city. A project in Plymouth (UK) focused on the need for a community center in Efford, prompting the self-organization of a committee of local residents and the crafting of a mobile tent as a temporary center and symbol of the community’s continuing desire for long-term solution. From WochenKlausur’s (n.d.) perspective, art should confront societal problems and in turn stimulate and propose progressive responses. Conceptualized thus it has an affinity with community development processes: they too seek to engender improvements in people’s everyday, political and social circumstances through actions or *interventions* that may kick-start processes of collective identity formation and empowerment. There are affinities too in the need to read art and community development dialectically, to acknowledge coexisting progressive and regressive properties, and the often conflicting expectations they are expected to serve—a tendency that is evoked starkly in the WochenKlausur quote.

Proponents of critical forms of community development highlight the ways by which power, social structures, ideology and human agency interact to shape relationships or outcomes in community contexts (Kenny 2002; Ife 2013; Shaw 2013; Meade et al. 2016). Critical praxis means taking seriously the politics of material conditions *and* of our ways of naming, thinking

and talking about such conditions and the people occupying them. If the arts are to contribute to or operate as a form of democratic community development practice, then they too demand sustained critical interrogation. In this regard, Raymond Williams' book *The Long Revolution* (1965) offers helpful conceptual resources. Williams decries the long-standing convention whereby the "relevance" of the arts requires special pleading because they are viewed as a luxury—a "grace after meals" (1965: 133)—disconnected from the necessary business of economic and societal management, or indeed community development. He links this dubious status to two paradoxical yet overlapping discourses. On the one hand "art is degraded", portrayed as "mere reflection" of the polity and economy, on which it is assumed "to be parasitic", while on the other hand it is "idealized", represented as a transcendent "sphere of aesthetics" and thus as removed from real life (Williams 1965: 134). These attributions are not always externally imposed. Artists and critics often cultivate and find sanctuary in images of the artist as an outlier genius or of arts works as difficult and unreadable to the masses. Kester (2004: 34), for example, explores how some tendencies in modernism and abstract expression, with their distinctive conception of the avant-garde, seemed to "naturalize the elitism of art as a historically inevitable condition".

The continuing relevance of Williams' analysis was graphically revealed with the announcement of recession in Ireland after 2008. As mainstream political and media commentary fixated on the causes of our collective predicament, the salience of global economic restructuring and processes of financialization (Dukelow 2015) tended to be ignored in favor of a relentless reckoning of individual failures, personal greed and the vulgarity or ostentation of the consumerist Irish (Meade 2012a; O'Flynn et al. 2014). If this "democratizing of blame" (O'Flynn et al. 2014: 926) helped to rationalize the extension of austerity and neoliberalism's disciplinary logics (Mercille, 2013;⁷ Dukelow 2015), it was often juxtaposed with claims that the comparatively uncorrupted/incorruptible artistic and cultural fields could salvage the country's reputation (Meade 2012a). Advocates for the arts began to self-consciously and uncritically talk about their contribution to international competitiveness, "brand Ireland", "the smart economy" or "tourism", resorting to "defensive instrumentalism" (Belfiore 2012) to offset the threat of funding retrenchment.⁸ Special pleading in defence of arts budgets hinged on the idea of a transcendent arts sphere while simultaneously privileging its commodifiable rather than its cultural value.

However compelling they may seem, it is important that we contest efforts to either elevate or degrade the arts. This calls for a materialist analysis that is soldered to a wider vision of cultural democracy. What Williams (1981: 64–65; also Moran 2015) calls "cultural materialism is the analysis of all forms of signification" or meaning making "within the actual means and conditions of their production". It begins by acknowledging that artworks are never untainted by their historical contexts or their physical and social environments: they are produced, albeit sometimes to express resistance or transgression, by situated, embodied actors. They are experiments in communication, which demand an audience beyond the self (Williams 1965; Kester 2004). The cultivation of taste, dispositions or the passing of judgment that constructs objects or practices as art is necessarily "social", and as such potentially contestable. Culture is a site of hierarchy and a source of capital that in turn apportions social benefits and marginality (Bourdieu 1986). The arts draw upon materials or materiality, often producing commodities, the exchange value of which inflect and are inflected by the unequal social and economic organization of resources, wealth, time and leisure (Williams 1965, 1981; Moran 2015; Bryan-Wilson 2009). Although the form, content, aesthetics or imputed meanings of artworks are not simply determined by these contextual elements, they inevitably leave their imprint. Therefore, a cultural materialist analysis insists "upon the material and productive nature of cultural forms—and correlatively, the 'cultural' character of 'the material world'" (Moran 2015: 63). It urges an ongoing critical engagement with the interdependencies of politics, policy, economy, aesthetics and arts practice,

and so is a prerequisite for understanding why cultural democracy remains a necessary if often contradictory or seemingly impossible project.

When community development or arts processes grapple seriously with the concept of “cultural democracy”, they challenge dominant understandings of how we think and talk about aesthetics and the arts. First, communities and their members are positioned not merely as audiences or consumers, but as active agents of and through culture. This upends inherited assumptions—internalized by many of us—about who is “arty” and what qualifies as “real” art (Willis 2005; McGonagle 2007; Holden 2010). It raises significant challenges for policy makers: determining a balance between privileging “excellence” and democratizing participation has been a recurring dilemma for cultural policy and institutions (Benson 1992). Second, a commitment to cultural democracy demands that access to, recognition within and opportunities to engage with the arts are seen as centrally *relevant* to people’s lives, and by implication, as falling within the purview of community development; and not just as an instrument to be put to work towards “real” development. Advocates such as Francois Matarasso designate cultural expression as a “fundamental human right” that “allows individuals and groups to define themselves and their beliefs, and not only be defined by others” (2007: 457), although the legacies of economic, political and social inequality internationally ensure that there are significant differentials in how that right is realized (Lunn and Kelly 2008; Holden 2010). In 2005 in Dublin the community-led Fatima Regeneration Board, reflecting that working-class area’s distinctive history of collaborative and participatory arts practice, asserted residents’ right to “an active and enriching cultural life in which the arts are a primary source of inspiration and learning” (Whyte 2005: 74). Notably, Fatima Regeneration Board ensured that an explicit arts and cultural strategy was embedded within its wider strategy for community development and regeneration. This strategy valued arts participation as a right in itself and not merely as an adjunct to or tool for more crucial development outcomes (Whyte 2005). Significantly, it also specified the policy, infrastructural, educational and financial commitments required to make that right more widely amenable to community members.

Third, cultural democracy means recognizing that culture is already and always “happening”. For Williams (1989: 8), culture is “ordinary” in the sense of reflecting forms of sociability, behaviors or beliefs that “are made by living, made and remade”. Ordinary culture deploys or integrates the arts to enhance its capacity for communication, and the resulting “lived aesthetics” (Willis 2005) may range across the emotions, the imaginative or quotidian, past, present and future. Appeals to/for cultural democracy acknowledge and demand parity of esteem for the diverse media, materials and practices through which people share meanings and expectations of the world (McGonagle 2007). And as with processes of community development, there are tensions between validating such communication on its own terms *and* hitching it to some other instrumental or governmental project. These tensions are explored in more detail in the final section of the chapter, but in advance of that discussion I explore the origins and purposes of community arts in a little more detail.

The (Cultural) Politics of Community Arts

In 1951, the Arts Act provided for the establishment of the Arts Council, which still plays *the* central role in implementing cultural policy and funding the arts in Ireland.⁹ In the post-Independence period, innovation in arts policy and practice was hindered by the ideological hegemony of Catholic nationalism, the blending of law and piety in the determination of censorship codes, and the overarching commitment of the burgeoning state to fiscal rectitude and the avoidance of economic crisis (Kennedy 1990/1991; Benson 1992). With the establishment of the Arts Council,

Ireland emulated a governmental project to activate public appreciation of modern art that was already underway in the UK (Fitzgerald 2004). The Irish Council was expected to “stimulate public interest in the arts”, “promote the knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts”, “assist in improving the standard of the arts” and “organise or assist in the organising of exhibitions (within or without the State) of works of art and artistic craftsmanship” (Ireland 1951).

The establishment of the Arts Council was progressive because it normalized and activated the principle of public subsidy for and popular encounters with the arts. Nonetheless, as Clancy (2004) and Benson (1992) suggest, since its inception the Council has had to navigate and reconcile divergent expectations; the (sometimes) conflicting views of its members regarding the Council’s role; the subordinated status of the arts within government policy and budgets; competing resource demands from individual arts organizations, institutions and professionals; and the critique offered by artists and citizens committed to the principles of cultural democracy. In recent decades the Arts Council has built commitments to wider arts participation into its strategic plans and it has interrogated the scale of cultural exclusion and inequality in Ireland.¹⁰ However, a strategic review of the Council, published in 2014, highlighted “an almost exclusive emphasis on the production/consumption model of the arts” where there seems “little emphasis on engagement and participation as a fundamental and valued aspect of the arts in Irish society” (Arts Council Strategic Review Steering Group 2014: 5). It also noted that the Council has been stymied by the absence of a clear or unified national arts policy and the constraints intrinsic to its role in disbursing state funding to professional arts. Clearly, the birth and subsequent form of community arts practice in Ireland need to be understood with reference to the political economy of this institutional and policy context.

The emergence of community arts can be traced to the convergence of a number of developments in the political and artistic spheres internationally during the 1960s and 1970s. Among these can be included the New Social Movements that posited “culture” and “identity” as politically significant sites of oppression and struggle, while often utilizing songs, drama, dance or poetry to critique existing and imagine alternative social relationships (Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Cameron 2016). In the Republic of Ireland the discourses and practices of community arts were consciously adopted by disparate groups in Dublin and other cities from the mid-1970s onwards—e.g. Dublin’s Grapevine Arts Centre, Waterford Arts for All, Theatre Omnibus in Limerick and Sligo Community Arts Group (Bowles 1992; Fitzgerald 2004). As the language of cultural democracy gained traction, there was growing criticism of structurally embedded inequalities in arts access and opportunities (Benson 1992; Clancy 2004), but the politics of community arts embraced other material issues as well. Fitzgerald (2004) and Bowles (1992) highlight how creative collaborations between artists and activists responded to crises of unemployment, marginalization and alienation in urban areas, while also demonstrating the agency of the working-class communities living there. Notably, these beginnings also coincided with a period when community solutions to social problems seemed particularly attractive to policy makers. From the 1960s onward rediscoveries of poverty, in the USA, UK, the EEC and Ireland, were followed by governmental programs that sought to “empower” the poor through strategies of community participation and development (Cruikshank 1999; Meade 2012b).

Adopting an internationalist perspective, we can factor in other formative influences on the cultural politics and aspirations of community arts. Among these are Dada and Situationism’s deconstructive questioning of the nature of art, its social purpose, and the status of the artist in the face of the 20th century’s surges towards militarism, massification and consumer fetishism (Debord 1967/1995; Sanouillet 2009). Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal’s radical reinterpretation of the authorship, form and staging of theater breached borders between actors and audiences, and embedded a dynamic social praxis within the “performance” of plays. Today Boal’s dialogical

Theatre of the Oppressed and *Forum Theatre* are extensively used in community development settings to explore issues of power and inequality as they impact people's intimate, familial, local, institutional and national contexts.¹¹ Colin Cameron (2016) discusses the centrality of poetry, cabaret and comedy to the fermentation of disabled people's collective and political identity. He also highlights the vital contribution of the disability arts movement, including organizations such as the London Disability Arts Forum, to the eventual formulation of an alternative "affirmation" model of disability. Some arts institutions have sought to fashion new relationships with communities that have been regarded (implicitly) as non-patrons of museums and galleries (Davoren 1999; McGonagle 2007; Gibson 2008). At their best, such efforts have not only democratized access to the physical space of the institution or "diversified" audiences, they have embraced a more substantive vision of cultural democracy, by ensuring that communities' own aesthetic statements have been recognized and displayed as art of equal standing.¹²

Community arts practice is multidisciplinary, supporting cultural production through painting, murals, sculpture, movement, music, poetry, storytelling, puppetry, theater, video, photography, ICT and a range of other media or materials. It can revitalize and revalidate "forgotten" art forms like quilting (Clover 2007), or traditional crafts and trades, such as carriage or wagon making.¹³ The collectivist orientation of community arts practice may disrupt what the Critical Art Ensemble (2002: 24) denotes as the "totalizing belief that social and aesthetic value are encoded in the being of gifted individuals". They argue that this belief remains foundational to the value-base and structures of professional artist education. Participants, facilitators and funders may differentially emphasize community arts' status as social critique, moral improvement, leisure, fun, self-expression or mutuality. Practices may seek to move the consumption or performance of art out of the concert-hall, theater or gallery and into streetscapes, public spaces and social services (Abah 2007; Grant-Smith and Matthews 2015; Cardboard Citizens n.d.). Alternatively or even simultaneously they may represent a taking back or reimagining of museums and institutions (Davoren 1999; McGonagle 2007). Finally, community arts processes may reinforce or solidify an existing community's sense of itself, but they may engage more dialectically and dynamically with the idea of community, highlighting fissures and power imbalances that both shape internal relationships and those with the "outside" world (Rose 1997).

However, there are tensions in community arts praxis that remind us of some recurring challenges for community development. Often, although certainly not always, community arts processes are initiated as collaborations between an artist or group of artists and a community. In their optimal form these are occasions of skill-sharing, the overturning of preconceptions, and opportunities for the making of arts works that reflect the authorship of diverse participants. But to fashion and maintain *democratic* processes demands an acknowledgment of and a confrontation with the differential forms of power and interests that may arise within such partnerships. Kester (2004: 139) observes that artists may regard themselves as working with communities in "need of empowerment" or that they judge as somehow alien. As with community development, such judgments, along with the assumption that communities require professional interventions in order to "better" themselves, are expressions of governmental power (Cruikshank 1999). This power might well be resisted or renegotiated by the communities and artists involved, and thus may not be a stumbling block to deeper dialogue and partnership. It is, nonetheless, important to recognize traces of paternalism or what Kester (2004) calls "Victorian reform" in some discourses and interventions associated with community arts.

Evidently arts facilitators may fall prey to this tendency even when their practice seeks to transcend a narrow vision of service to communities (Kester 2004) and to subvert structural inequalities. Against this, a materialist-informed conception of cultural democracy recognizes community members as cultural producers by right and disposition; therefore affirming that

community art participants are *already* active, critical subjects in the world and not merely objects of intercession. Furthermore, a cultural materialist framework (Williams 1981; Moran 2015) makes us attentive to the resourcing, outcomes and ownership of collaborative arts processes. It engenders questions such as, who gets paid and who works for free? What are the working conditions of facilitators and volunteers (Harvie 2011)? Are artists “doing community work” in the absence of alternative opportunities for professional development in the demonstrably exploitative creative industries (McGuigan 2009; McRobbie 2011)? Do artworks provoke nuanced understandings of a given community or do they turn “the site into an exciting, fashionable, exotic, disaster-scene destination” (Harvie 2011: 119)? Whose names and reputations are built by collaborative practice? And to what extent might a residency in a “disadvantaged community” enhance the street-cred and market value of an individual artist’s portfolio? Or is it more an encumbrance when individualism and signature performance are so highly prized in the arts world?

Posing these questions is not an attempt to demean community arts practice—especially since critically engaged workers and facilitators continuously wrestle with their implications (Hussey 1999; Connolly and Hussey 2013; Murphy 2013). Instead it is an assertion that cultural democratization demands ongoing interrogations of the material, human and professional relationships within any such cultural practices.

The “Impossibility” of Cultural Democracy?

A cultural materialist framework also helps us to identify the economic, political and policy contingencies that limit community arts’ democratic potential. Again there are strong parallels with community development, in that recurring problems with funding, infrastructure and employment conditions undermine the sustainability of arts projects. Public subsidy for community arts is especially precarious, scattered and ad hoc; it is provided by an inconsistent range of statutory bodies, many of which are more directly concerned with other social goals, e.g. health or employment (Clancy 2004; Creative Communities 2013; Joint Committee 2014). A recent Oireachtas (i.e. Government) Joint Committee (2014: 12) acknowledged that “[m]any arts organisations have to cope, on a continuous basis, with insecurity of tenure in the premises they occupy . . . they have ongoing difficulties in meeting their day-to-day administrative expenses. The current system of providing once-off grants or grants for specific programs does not take account of these difficulties”. Furthermore, the normalization of austerity post-2008 resulted in withdrawals or rationing of social services, the winding down of many community development initiatives and the implementation of new income levies and charges (Harvey 2012). Notwithstanding lobbying by arts organizations to at least maintain existing grants (Meade 2012a), austerity had significant repercussions for the arts, with an estimated 30 percent reduction in the funding of the Arts Council between 2008 and 2013 (Arts Council 2013c). And as noted already, a political and policy context where the arts must constantly prove their “brand” relevance is not conducive to economic redistribution in favor of cultural democratization.

Transformations in the Irish community development landscape may have further implications for community arts practice. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the state’s conception of community development and its interactions with community groups were primarily couched in the discourse of “partnership”. This brought increases in the scope and range of statutory support for community development programs. While partnerships were not always seamless or lacking in conflict, it did appear as if successive governments were now committed to resourcing community development as a social inclusion/anti-poverty strategy (Meade 2012b). However, in recent years the state’s commitment has become more fragile and contested. There have been controversial reforms to and realignments of high-profile programs: between 2009

and 2015, the Community Development Programme was integrated with the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme and became the Local and Community Development Programme, which in turn was rationalized to become the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Program. Such changes are not merely cosmetic; they signal a recalibration of the state's expectations of community workers and the implementation of new governmental techniques (Meade 2012b; McGrath 2015). Oversight has been transferred from local management committees or partnerships to the local government system; community development priorities are heavily weighted towards work activation and service delivery; there are increased expectations of value for money, evidence-based practice and the quantification of inputs and outputs; and community workers are responsabilized to operate within more "clearly defined parameters", reflecting Government demands that its priorities are "more effectively translated and focused" (McGrath 2015: 11).

Given the proximity and often overlapping character of community arts and community development, and their shared discourses of empowerment and participation, these transformations may prove inimical to the project of cultural democracy. They reflect a centralization of power and control within government, and the extension of a managerialist and performance culture to community programs. If and when arts facilitators and artists are commissioned to contribute to social inclusion initiatives, they will be expected to fall into line with centrally prescribed targets and monitoring systems. While this does not render impossible arts processes that are critical, resistant and founded on communities' own cultural priorities, at the very least the space for alternative visions or purposes within mainstream community development has been narrowed considerably.

We might also think critically about why it is assumed that the arts can alleviate social exclusion, and thus begin to question the extent to which the culture should be instrumentalized in the name of local or national welfare objectives. In the UK there has been much debate about the content and tone of cultural policy under New Labour, where arts programs were tasked with generating social impacts and mitigating urban alienation, unemployment, ill health or crime (Hewison 2014). In Ireland this has been replicated in the Oireachtas Joint Committee's (2014) concern that the arts "combat disadvantage". Critics contend that social impacts are often exaggerated or poorly demonstrated and, more fundamentally, that these expectations reflect an instrumentalist view of the arts that ultimately locks them into the kind of managerialist "targets culture" that was actively cultivated by New Labour (Gibson 2008; Gray 2008; Belfiore and Bennett 2010; Belfiore 2012; Hewison 2014). Clive Gray (2008) directly links such instrumentalism to the ascendance of New Public Management in the UK's public sector and, as noted above, it is apparent that centrally determined concepts of value, purpose and accountability are shaping the direction of the Irish arts and community sectors also (Meade 2012a, b; McGrath 2015).

There is a risk of slippage between problematizing cultural exclusion or inequality and freight-ing arts programs with a responsibility to redress deeper structural contradictions. The cordiality, fun, distraction and spirit of collective enterprise that may be stimulated by arts projects may alleviate aspects of alienation and personal disaffection that are consequences of social inequality. Alan Kay (2000) has recorded how arts activities may supplement processes of urban regeneration by supporting personal development, improving the look and feel of an area, and encouraging participants to engage with further training and education. But social exclusion is a function of factors that include income inequality, hierarchies of wealth and opportunity, precarious work, and institutional racism, and it is exacerbated by the retrenchment of welfare and the dismantling of public services. It cannot be undone by the buzz factor of arts participation alone: to claim otherwise is to displace politics.

Finally, there is another invidious but politically powerful form of instrumentalism, one that recasts culture and creativity as servants of investment, marketization and profit. In 2013 the then Irish Arts Minister, Jimmy Deenihan, responded to Dáil questions about cultural policy as follows:

The arts underpin policies in attracting foreign direct investment, in the creation of an imaginative labour force, in establishing an innovative environment in which the creative and cultural industries can thrive and in the area of cultural tourism. The arts are a significant economic contributor and employer in their own right and they are also important building blocks for those economic policies the Government has identified as crucial for our economic recovery.

Dáil Éireann, 18 September 2013

In neoliberalized capitalism, the insatiable desire for new markets and commodities ensures that all categories of citizens—the artists and the rest of us—are responsibilized to “create and sustain the central elements of economic well-being” (Rose 1999: 141). The concept of creativity, embodied by the entrepreneurial self, is central to the discourses and rationalities of contemporary neoliberalization, running alongside the glorification of knowledge/information societies, intellectual property and the credo of ceaseless innovation (Osborne 2003; Peck 2005). Richard Florida’s (2002) best-selling manifesto for urban and economic regeneration, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, argued that “creatives”, such as artists or scientists, are attracted by socially tolerant, pluralistic and welcoming neighborhoods. Their presence provides an economic stimulus of its own through their contribution to the creative industries, but it also transforms cities into the kind of “cool” places (McGuigan 2009) that can better compete for additional investment. Minister Deenihan, although not explicitly naming them, appears to agree that “creatives” enhance the look, feel and spirit of local economies, thus boosting global competitiveness. According to Florida (2002: 249), the three Ts of economic development are “technology, talent and tolerance”, acclaiming Austin (Texas, USA) and (pre-bust) Dublin (Ireland) as singularly effective in harnessing the energy of their creative classes. Cities aspiring to emulate their achievements should note their thriving music scenes, their success in attracting high-tech industry and their “attention to the creative ecosystem in which all forms of creativity can take root and thrive” (Florida 2002: 298).

There is much that can be said about the limitations of the Irish development paradigm adopted during the first decade of the 21st century (Dukelow 2015), and Dublin’s ersatz coolness brings cold comfort in the face of austerity and recession. As cities internationally invoke Florida’s tenets to plan for economic regeneration, where arts scenes and cultural workers must become storm-troopers of urban renewal, critics highlight some recurring contradictions (Peck 2005; McGuigan 2009; McRobbie 2011; McLean 2014). Negative consequences abound: gentrification, with working-class communities especially vulnerable to dislocation; increased housing costs linked to the commodification of land; employment in the creative industries that is highly stratified in respect of rewards, status and tenure; and the displacement of public policy, where every strategy from the provision of parks—remember the plans for Bell’s Field mentioned at the start of this chapter—to the allocation of rehearsal space is subjugated to the greater good of competitiveness. The recruitment of communities and artists to the project of urban regeneration needs to be carefully analyzed in light of the dominance of this creative agenda. Are they being invited to aestheticize neighborhoods towards future economic exploitation; exploitation which ultimately aggravates inequality and social differentiation? Or can arts processes hold out for alternative models of regeneration, such as envisaged by the Fatima communities of Dublin (Whyte 2005)—models where, to borrow from Escobar (2011), culture sits proudly and defiantly in places?

Conclusion

Clearly many of the practices of community arts that have been referenced here are easily reconciled with a robust vision of cultural democracy. But it is also apparent that perennial issues of power, ownership and purpose must be navigated whenever communities interact with artists, institutions and the state. A cultural materialist framework helps us to recognize how and why neither communities nor artists can be regarded as sole authors of their destinies when it comes to cultural production. The arts are not removed from or transcendent of material conditions: contextual factors, such as the wider economy, prevailing forms of social stratification and the distribution of wealth and inequality, all help to constitute what we recognize as arts works. However, cultural materialism as outlined by Williams (1981) and Moran (2015) doesn't boil culture down to these economic determinants alone. It recognizes that cultural production is ongoing, universal and open-ended, and it thus cautions against the dominant forms of instrumentalism that steers arts, regeneration and, we might add, community development policies internationally in these neoliberal times.

As Gibson (2008) contends, instrumentalist conceptions of the arts are not entirely new and she cites examples of Victorian and early-20th-century cultural polices that sought to positively impact the population's health and moral standing or that promised tangible social and economic dividends. It may even be impossible to avoid some form of instrumentalism when talking about the arts: to assert that art communicates, beautifies or educates is to instrumentalize it somewhat, while claims of "art for art's sake" lack the urgency of other political and social claims in the face of austerity or economic crisis. But by repeatedly pegging the worth of the arts to some other policy or outcome, we persist in our denial that cultural practice is central to human interaction and relationships. We refuse to recognize that art forms such as poetry, music and drama make possible a desire for communication, expression or, indeed, community that is valid on its own terms. And we relinquish our responsibility to find ways of thinking and talking about aesthetics, why they matter to people and why they should matter in community development, thus ceding that vital dimension of our humanity to the cultural "experts", the institutions and maybe also the market.

Notes

- 1 I acknowledge that "culture" is an even more porous, contested and potentially inclusive concept than the "arts" and that the arts are just one dimension of culture, which can also be understood in an "anthropological sense" (Duncombe 2007: 490). But in the interests of clarity and specificity, it is culture that manifests as arts works, arts processes or arts objects that is the primary concern of this chapter.
- 2 I have been closely involved with CCAL since 2000 and until recently a member of its board of directors. I acknowledge this "insider" status and recognize that my response to its work is framed by that experience. All of the views and analyses expressed in this chapter are my own, and in no way attributable to CCAL.
- 3 See CCAL (n.d.d) for technical aspects of the power-washing process.
- 4 "Voices from Shandon" was a three-year program, culminating in the flag raising of 15 June 2013. Workshops with a range of community, youth, education and voluntary groups, and individual volunteers, centered on working with textiles and "invited participants to create their own visual voice through a creative exploration of flag making, symbolism and community" (CCAL n.d.e). The process was supported by Cork City Council's Arts Office and the Arts Council. Although site specific, it had a strong international dimension, with French artists Didier Gallot Lavallée and Andre Verrier, Bulgaria's *Art Machina* and coinciding with Ireland's EU presidency (Arts Council 2013a). "Voices from Shandon" was interdisciplinary, using multimedia and incorporating "visual voices" and "singing voices". Its project team included a composer, song-writer and music facilitator, working with around 100 children from local schools to co-create songs to celebrate the flags' unveiling (words and music at www.whatif.ie/voices/).

- 5 This account is necessarily partial—based on my reception of the images. It does not evaluate or represent the experiences of participants or the intentions of facilitators. (For video and textual accounts, see CCAL 2013; CCAL n.d.e; Hegarty 2013; LocalTVIreland 2013.)
- 6 CCAL has created an online gallery (www.whatif.ie/voices/) of the flags and the written testimonials of their makers.
- 7 Mercille (2013: 11) reviewed Irish newspapers—the *Irish Times*, *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent*—representations of government’s “fiscal consolidation” policies from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012, finding “significant support for fiscal consolidation” (2013: 11) and comparatively little evidence of opposition to austerity.
- 8 “Defensive instrumentalism” was predictable given the scale of austerity post-2008. Government budget proposals for 2010 targeted €760 million in social welfare cuts, followed in 2011 by reductions of an estimated €873 million (Mercille 2013). Harvey (2012: 13) contends that between 2008 and 2012 the community and voluntary sectors were disproportionately impacted by retrenchment; initiatives against drugs, family support projects and the Local Community Development Program lost up to 29%, 17% and 35% of funding, respectively.
- 9 Following implementation of the 2003 Arts Act, local authorities are obliged to “prepare and implement plans for the development of the arts within [their] functional area”, which might include “stimulating public interest”, promoting “knowledge, appreciation and practice” and “improving standards in the arts” (Ireland 2003).
- 10 The Council’s (2010) Strategic Overview 2011–2013 prioritized broadening participation and the creation of new and more socially inclusive audiences for the arts. Those commitments were re-iterated in its more recent strategy (Arts Council 2013b) and respond to recurring evidence of significant class-based, geographical, educational, age-related and other societal barriers to arts engagement in Ireland (Moore 1997; Lunn and Kelly 2008).
- 11 For an account of *Theatre of the Oppressed* praxis and its application in the UK, see Cardboard Citizens (n.d.), which uses *Forum Theatre* to engage with currently and formerly homeless adults. Abah (2007) discusses *Theatre of the Oppressed* and *Forum Theatre*’s contribution to participatory development in Nigeria. The group Stut, based in Utrecht, the Netherlands, used theatre with Dutch, Moroccan and Turkish communities to explore shared ways of living and sociability, and to probe perceived differences and contentious issues such as discrimination (Van Erven 2013). Connolly and Hussey (2013) interrogate some tensions in the use of such methods with community-based or adult learner groups.
- 12 The partnership established between the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and St Michael’s Family Resource Center in Inchicore during the 1990s synthesized commitments to community development, socially engaged arts practice and adult education. It generated powerful exhibitions of collaborative art that were hosted in IMMA; *Unspoken Truths* (1991–1996) and *Once is too Much* (1995–1998) (Davoren 1999; McGonagle 2007).
- 13 Coinciding with Cork’s designation as European City of Culture in 2005, the Cork Traveller Women’s Network initiated a participatory arts project centered on the building of a barrel-top wagon. The forced assimilation of Irish Travellers has marginalized their nomadic heritage and lifestyle. This project drew on Traveller traditions of carpentry, design, wheel-making, upholstery and decorative arts to collaboratively build the wagon; a symbolic representation of shared identity. It was later exhibited in Cork Public Museum (O’Connell 2005).

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16

EQUITY AND RESILIENCE

Planning and Developing Horizontal Networks through Cultural Districts

Tom Borrup

Introduction

Communities possessing greater social capital, social cohesion and capacity for collective action are more resilient and better able to address the interests of their members (Sampson & Graif 2009). Those communities that have explored and implemented new tools have found that building capacity is enhanced through thematic neighborhoods or cultural districts working in partnership with arts and culture organizations. Relying heavily on participatory methods and processes, these creative planning and community engagement practices are positively impacting communities.

Over the past two decades, creative cities, creative class attraction, arts districts, culture-led regeneration and creative placemaking have become common in the lexicon for economic revival of cities around the globe—and more recently small towns and even suburbs. These strategies present both opportunities and challenges. Many forays into creative arenas have contributed to unintended consequences such as growing economic inequity and social division.

Disparities in wealth and social benefits have increased in much of the post-industrial world at the same time that culture and creativity have emerged as forces in urban placemaking and economic development (Evans 2009; Kunzmann 2010; Pratt 2010; Zukin & Braslow 2011). Whether there is a cause-and-effect relationship remains a subject of debate. Planners, policymakers and other community builders have to be sure their efforts are contributing to equity and resilience and they are using all the tools at their disposal.

Planning scholar Patsy Healey advocates that planning professionals bring greater participation and imaginative powers to their work. “Strategy making too needs to be imaginative, sensitive, tolerant of diversity, sensitive to individuals and social groups and aware that futures in complex city regions emerge through the energies of the many, not the designs of the strategic few” (Healey 2004: 18). She places at the center of these efforts the building of horizontal relationships and more empowered local governance (Healey 2006). Horizontal relationships and networks are cited by numerous scholars of cultural district formation as characterized by dense and active grassroots leadership and activated by culture and the arts (Sacco 2010).

From outside the mainstream of planning and community development, the arts sector in the United States and in other parts of the world in recent years has stepped up to build its

own capacity as effective contributors to community building on physical, economic, social and civic levels (Borrupt 2006; Markusen & Gadwa 2010). They offer an array of tools that engage people to work creatively to envision, advocate and steward locally sensitive and sustainable neighborhoods, and they have learned to enter into partnerships with other key actors.

This chapter reviews literature and research conducted in 2013–2014 that examined the formation and ongoing management of urban cultural districts and their respective social and organizational networks. Case studies in Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Miami found strong horizontal networks present at the same time as relative community stability. These networks generated greater political efficacy and higher prospects for social and economic equity and resiliency. Where horizontal networks were weak, and where cultural activities were not employed in social bridge building, social and economic tensions were higher and development patterns out of sync with stakeholder interests.

The “Activator Effect”

Ashley (2014) describes community capacity as “the harnessing of internal and external resources to meet intended outcomes or adapt to changing circumstances” (p. 4). Such capacity enables communities “to do something rather than to just hope or plan”, she adds. Sampson and Graif (2009) argue this “collective efficacy” derives from broad-based social networks.

Emerging theory related to placemaking and cultural districts suggests culture can serve to build horizontal networks by building relationships that connect people and organizations from different sectors and professions as well as across ethnicities, class, and interests. Economists Sacco and Tavano Blessi (2007) call this “the activator effect of culture” (p. 4). Research also shows that cultural districts and the arts can have the opposite impact. It is critical to understand that one size does not fit all when it comes to culture and cultural district formation.

In the ongoing process of building cities, leaders and planners generally take the simpler route focusing on the built or perceived space (Lefebvre 1991), argues British cultural development pioneer and theorist Charles Landry (2000):

Planners find it easier to think in terms of expenditure on highways, car parks and physical redevelopment schemes rather than on soft infrastructure such as training initiatives for skills enhancement, the encouragement of a lively night-time economy, grants to voluntary organizations to develop social networks or social innovations and the decentralization of powers to build up local capacity and encourage people to have a stake in the running of their neighborhoods.

Landry 2000: 18

Investments called for by Landry too often come last. Results are not as immediately evident as constructing a new residential or retail block, yet this soft infrastructure has more efficacy in the formation of equitable, resilient communities.

Challenges of Urban Regeneration

Scholars from a variety of disciplines illustrate how cities throughout history demonstrate resilience because of their role as centers for creativity and production of knowledge, culture and wealth (Weatherford 1994; Hall 1998; Florida 2002). Many argue that these characteristics have fueled the current wave of urban regeneration (Landry & Bianchini 1995; Markusen & King 2003;

Montgomery 2005). At the same time that some are celebrating a rebirth of cities, globalization and the growth of the creative economy have been accompanied by heightened disparities (Evans 2009; Pratt 2010; Zukin & Braslow 2011).

Building a community requires much more than constructing clusters of buildings. It includes work that Bradford (2004), Landry (2000) and others argue has typically been outside the purview or skill set of many in the planning professions, as well as many elected and appointed public sector leaders who struggle with complex, interdependent systems requiring holistic, cross-domain solutions (Bradford, 2004; Sandercock, 2004). Meanwhile, modernist land use planning has not only separated uses but contributed to separating people and interests (Glazer 2007).

The historical emphasis on the built environment in city planning and placemaking has relied on the bulldozer and created solutions where people are generally in the way (Bradford 2004). Similarly, in a critique of city planning and community development, cultural theorist Roberto Bedoya (2013) argues that the process of making places has been tethered to visions for the built environment while people, cultures and especially those who are economically and culturally disenfranchised are not in the picture. This results in the troubling legacy of “acts of displacement, removal, and containment” (p. 20).

This array of challenges calls on the planning and community development sectors to adopt new approaches. Landry and Bianchini (1995) argue for cities in the post-industrial era to enact sweeping changes to established policy routines, planning practices and organizational forms. Cities require interdisciplinary practices that bridge cultural differences, remedy social inequalities and re-frame the conversation to merge economic, social, cultural and environmental goals (Hawkes, 2001).

Urban planner Leo Vazquez asserts that if planners are to truly engage with and address the needs of increasingly diverse communities, they must embrace new vocabularies to build cultural competency—understanding how to communicate and function within cultural environments different from their own.

Healey (1998) suggests planners respond through more collaborative approaches to emphasize ways of thinking and acting that encourage discussion of the qualities of places and address conflicts in non-threatening ways. This, she says, simultaneously builds capacity for problem solving both in planning and in the community in general. In these cases, there is less emphasis on technical expertise and more on social skills.

Canadian planner Greg Baeker (2002) recommends looking to artists: “The tools of the artist are an essential part of how we imagine cities: through stories, images, metaphors, exploring possibilities as well as critiques” (p. 24). In fact, social workers, artists and even those in the healing professions may be better equipped to building bridges and weaving social fabric, yet they are rarely engaged with planning, designing and constructing the physical landscape of cities (Dang 2005; Sarkissian & Hurford 2010).

In addition to sharing knowledge and developing deeper understanding, building relationships through creative planning processes can yield added benefits. These relationships subsequently help coordinate strategies and actions called for in plans. Inclusive planning processes can legitimate policy decisions and represent actual moves towards more participatory forms of democracy. Albrecht (2005) claims important products of inclusive planning include “strengthening of the social tissue” and enhancing “social capital and political capital as citizens and local politicians [take] pride in ‘their’ city” (p. 16). Reardon et al. (2003) call this the “empowerment approach” to planning.

Australian artist-planners Sarkissian and Hurford wrote in 2010: “Listening to stories, identifying common goals and forming partnerships in action: this is creative community

engagement—engagement that is as much about learning as doing”. For decades, community-based artists and non-profits have created environments and activities through which people open themselves to question and explore and to make things together. Artists have honed skills to deconstruct complex issues, evoke poignant personal and collective stories and fashion new stories. Community arts activities—from locally generated theater and mural projects to neighborhood festivals and youth-focused art, dance and music classes—are also more accessible, inclusive and usually more fun than most town hall meetings. Such activities can engage a wider mix of people while providing meaningful and satisfying experiences. Artist practices applied to planning and community development projects can take participants beyond the symbolic to where they form new bonds while learning and making things together. This takes planning to the level of co-creation and helps neighbors form new connections with each other, with differing ideas and with civic processes and institutions.

Cultural Districts and Cross-Sector Networks

Research in many parts of the world finds that creative or cultural districts often foster bridging of organizational and social structures to connect people across sectors, professions, ethnicity and class (Mommaas 2004; Sacco & Tavano Blessi 2007; Stern & Seifert 2010). Mark Stern and Susan Seifert (2010) found that “cultural clusters spur civic engagement; cultural participants tend to be involved in other community activities, and neighborhoods with many cultural organizations also have concentrations of other social organizations” (p. 263). They observed unique cross-sector partnerships in cultural districts that spur “higher levels of community building and civic engagement” (p. 265).

Approaching cultural districts as clusters of like enterprises, Italian economist team Sacco, Tavano Blessi and Nuccio (2008) argue they “can be regarded as a post-industrial adaptation of the old industrial district scheme, with several important qualifications” (p. 6). Key among those they found is the horizontal networking and role of culture as a connecting agent:

The crucial condition for viable culture-led local development is the existence of social governance mechanisms that encourage individuals and groups to give importance to intrinsic motivation and to link social approval and recognition to commitment toward knowledge-intensive activities and experiences.

Sacco 2010: 35

As unique economic clusters, another key quality of cultural districts is their compatibility with other land uses. Cultural production and consumption activities are generally complementary with mixed-use and residential neighborhoods (Sacco 2010). This has the potential to extend their horizontal nature beyond the creative and cultural sectors to include local residents and local actors from many sectors. Cultural districts, wrote management scholars Arnaboldi and Spiller (2011), are “characterised by interconnections between multiple systems (i.e. value chains) and a large number of stakeholders, who represent diverse and sometimes conflicting interests” (p. 642).

Field research described in this chapter found horizontal networks formed within cultural districts contribute to social cohesion and civic capacity. Further, horizontal networks in these place-based communities serve to engage a wider mix of actors who are better able to respond to complex local issues because the networks enable interdisciplinary problem-solving and provide motivational resources to maintain social cohesion and enable collective action. At the same time, research found that not all cultural districts formed effective horizontal networks.

The Dark Side of Cultural Districts

Cultural districts considered to have formed through top-down processes—as in those resulting from the heavy hand of planners, developers or policymakers—are widely considered devoid of social and organizational networks.

At the same time not all bottom-up districts produce positive social outcomes. Social scientists Zukin and Braslow (2011) describe a pattern in New York City in which “Unplanned or naturally occurring areas where artists work and live [result in] higher housing prices, more intensive capital investment, and eventual displacement and gentrification” (p. 131). They suggest that such consequences are not always unintentional or unanticipated. Cohesive, creative neighborhoods “are not the ultimate focus of public officials’ concern. Instead, the object of their industrial and land-use policy is to prepare the ground for private-sector real estate developers” (p. 33).

In assessments of cultural districts in Germany and the United States, Jakob (2011) and Ponzini and Rossi (2010) offer conclusions of who benefited and who did not—or who in fact lost ground—through cultural district development. They argue that cultural districts can end up benefiting economic interests to the detriment of lower-income residents, small shopkeepers and often artists. To prevent this, Mommaas (2009) calls for a turn in local policymaking, more reflexive involvement with cultural districts, and stronger involvement of the arts and culture sector in their planning and organization.

Presenting case studies of large-scale top-down districts in Asia, Lin and Hsing (2009) argue for the bottom-up approach. They cite the importance of engagement with a desired sense of belonging among residents, traditional cultural practices, heritage conservation, the process of local cultural festival organizing and environmental improvement. They argue that in this bottom-up model, what they called “community mobilisation” brings the dual benefits of involvement in placemaking decisions that encourage “local inhabitants to reshape a distinctive regeneration project and to enhance active citizenship in the long term” (p. 1322).

A number of scholars found more equitable distribution of economic and social benefits, greater resiliency and other positive results in cultural districts resulting from bottom-up organizing (Mommaas 2004; Chapple et al. 2011; Stern & Seifert 2005, 2007, 2010; Sacco & Tavano Blessi 2007). Authors suggest that inclusion of local artists, historical or symbolic resources, skill sets and local entrepreneurs and suppliers has a marked and positive impact on the success and stability of cultural districts. Such inclusion, they say, accrues greater benefit for stakeholders through the development of local stewardship, capacity, social cohesion and more equitable distribution of economic gains.

Case Study 1: Northeast Minneapolis Arts District

An undated brochure introducing the 2002 Northeast Arts Action Plan pronounced, “Supporting the arts and building community—at the same time!” Formal designation of the district by the city the same year followed an extensive planning process.

Almost a decade earlier, growing ranks of artists in this older industrial section of Minneapolis first organized an event to draw visitors to their studios. Art-a-Whirl, launched in 1995, grew into the signature event for the district, the name recognizing the movement required to visit hundreds of artists scattered among a large number of sites across a relatively large, mixed-use area. The event spawned the non-profit Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association (NEMAA) to work on behalf of the artists. Its 2002 brochure ambitiously stated, “Our vision is that one day Northeast will be recognized nationally for being a dynamic center for arts and culture” A dozen

years later, the national daily news and general interest publication, *USA Today*, named it number one among the “10 Best” arts districts in the country. By 2014, Art-a-Whirl featured over 500 artists, attracted tens of thousands of visitors and was supplemented by monthly gallery openings and other annual events.

With the gradual closure of most of its manufacturing facilities by the 1980s, Northeast Minneapolis was experiencing an aging population and slow decline. Its churches, local bars and restaurants, and extensive network of civic and social groups continue into the 2000s but with shrinking memberships.

The generational change sparked by the influx of artists was mostly welcomed by older residents. Some reported it was not so at first until the economic revival it precipitated became apparent. Neighborhood commercial areas and modest single-family housing stock reflected decades of disinvestment but by 2008 saw significant repair and repurposing. Numerous older industrial buildings filled gradually with artist studios. Dozens of long-shuttered corner stores quietly became artist studios. Vacant storefronts accommodated new restaurants, brew pubs and retail shops. Homes saw new roofs, porches, windows and landscaping. Changes reflect new, young homeowners maintaining and upgrading property and reinvesting in the neighborhood, a transition far from what would be considered gentrification.

Two neighborhood association leaders reflected on the phenomenon of artists as part of the neighborhood. “Artists are on boards and committees, some belong to the chamber, they buy houses and have great yards. They’re just part of the neighborhood”.

Everyone interviewed regarding the Northeast case affirmed that a decentralized and often informal network of organizations and individual leaders sustain the district, its identity and its activities. During the 10-year time since the arts district was formalized, leadership has been shared among several organizations. One interview participant described it as an “all hands on deck” environment in which one or more organization or volunteer picks up slack if another is tired or occupied with other issues. Organizations include NEMAA, Northeast Chamber of Commerce, North East Community Development Corporation, and Northeast Minneapolis Arts District that formed in 2014. A number of owners of large industrial buildings are active supporters of the district and maintain affordable space for artists.

Because the district spans all or part of four distinct formal neighborhoods, all of the resident associations consider they “own” the arts district. Neighborhood groups include significant artist involvement; they conduct long-range, place-based planning that emphasizes housing, business corridors, social amenities and quality of life concerns. Formally recognized and supported by the City, these associations maintain ongoing involvement with elected and appointed officials.

Case Study 2: Leimert Park

The South Los Angeles neighborhood of Leimert Park emerged as a focal point and home of African American artists and cultural activity beginning in the late 1960s. According to activists, artists, residents, local business owners, city planners and others, Leimert Park remains the most significant and cohesive cultural district and neighborhood for African Americans in Southern California.

One of the earliest master planned communities in the region, Leimert Park was built as a neighborhood for professionals in the late 1920s and early 1930s. According to City of Los Angeles Community Planner, Reuben Caldwell, “Leimert Park is an incredible example of an intact, complete community”. It includes mixed-income housing, community services and a commercial hub or village center that includes a historic art deco era theater facing an iconic park known as Leimert Plaza with a large central fountain.

The neighborhood is an organically clustered mix of artists, cultural venues and Afro-centric retailers with a stable middle-class residential area. The population is just under 80 percent African American, just shy of 12,000, and ranks among the highest percentages of residents over age 65 in Los Angeles County. Compared with the city in general, Leimert Park has not experienced rapid rises in real estate costs and has maintained a more stable population. Racial politics and marginalization of Black communities kept the neighborhood in a form of economic stasis while it grew its civic capacities and became a hotbed of traditional and creative culture.

Cultural entrepreneurs and social change activists Alonzo Davis and his brother Dale are widely credited with launching a cultural renaissance in Leimert Park during the height of the Black Arts Movement (Le Falle-Collins 2014). Their gallery opened in 1969, attracting and nurturing artists, filmmakers, musicians and others. It closed in 1990 after both Davis brothers left to pursue other interests. Through the 1990s, dozens of cultural entrepreneurs, retailers, small arts organizations and festivals were attracted to or established themselves in Leimert Park.

Another formative event was the 1992 Uprising, referred to in the news media as the Rodney King Riots. As civil unrest broke out across South Central Los Angeles, Leimert Park sat in the path of violence that left many commercial areas devastated. Stories recounted by many interviewees describe Leimert Park merchants and residents in the streets protecting Black-owned businesses.

Construction began in 2014 on a mostly underground light rail line, known as the Crenshaw Line. It both threatens the neighborhood and promises economic revival. When operations commence in 2019, a station at the Leimert Plaza will sit in sight of the Vision Theatre that itself is under renovation by the City Office of Cultural Affairs. Resident-led organizing, planning and neighborhood branding efforts kicked into high gear in 2013 in anticipation of change. Retired city planners and seasoned community activists are among the neighborhood leadership—people who know full well the positives and negatives of community transitions. Social bonding, political organizing, small business development and protecting of cultural space and identity are high on their list.

Information among Leimert Park leaders is largely shared face-to-face, on the streets, in shops and in meetings as well as through active email networks and websites. In 2005, a Business Improvement District (BID) was established to serve Leimert Park Village, the only African American BID in Los Angeles. Governed by a committee of property owners, the BID convenes open meetings every Monday morning that consistently draw 20 to 40 neighborhood stakeholders as well as representatives of elected officials, police and other public agencies. This forum was mentioned by most interviewees as an important source of information and serves as a critical coordinative space as well as a place to air disagreement.

Thick horizontal relationships formed in Leimert Park because of the active cultural scene, cohesive identity of the neighborhood and experienced community organizers in leadership roles. These relationships fuel the capacity of the neighborhood to organize quickly to address economic changes, development threats or other dynamics that are inevitable.

Case Study 3: Wynwood Arts District

The Wynwood neighborhood, with an overall residential population of some 7,000 sits just over two miles north of downtown Miami. The northern half is primarily residential and retains a history as a well-organized working-class Puerto Rican community but now with a more mixed population. The southern half of Wynwood is industrial and commercial with some residential including single- and multi-family housing. The area served as home to the Miami

garment and fashion industry from the 1920s. Diminished from its peak in the 1960s and now mostly Korean-owned (Piket 2014), fashion wholesale and retail establishments continue to operate on the south-western side of Wynwood.

In the late 1990s the district began to evolve to one known for art galleries. This solidified in the early 2000s with the arrival of the international art fair, Art Basel. The south-eastern edge of Wynwood remains home to several shelters and social service organizations for a growing population of homeless. These include the Miami Rescue Mission and multiple Salvation Army facilities. Nearby, on the eastern edge an enterprise called “Lock and Load” bills itself as one of the top attractions in Miami, an indoor firing range allowing customers “A Machine Gun Experience”. Across the street sits Johnson Firearms, a weapons retailer that promotes itself as providing “Guns for the Good Guys”.

This unusual combination of residents and widely mixed enterprises coexists within a few blocks, yet there is little cross-over resulting in some tensions as the area began to develop rapidly after 2008. Devalued real estate, in addition to a politically disenfranchised population and relative proximity to downtown and freeway access, make Wynwood ripe for speculation and investor-led transformation.

Developers and other property owners in the more industrial southern half opened their walls to graffiti artists in the mid-2000s and now promote the district as the largest outdoor museum in the world, with nearly 40 blocks of curated mural art. By 2012, development in Wynwood exploded. Art connoisseurs from around the globe tour and photograph Wynwood streets. One developer estimated in 2014 that 50,000 people visit each month.

With a 2013 population of over 2.6 million, metropolitan Miami Dade County is considered a young area that developed largely after World War II and exponentially since the 1980s driven by global tourism and its role as the “economic capital of Latin America” (Groenfeldt, 2015). Given such rapid multicultural and multilingual population growth, community building institutions are thin and young. Miami Dade has been cited as having the lowest civic engagement among major cities in the United States and with widespread political corruption (Ovalle 2014). This backdrop makes place-based horizontal organizing difficult.

The non-profit Wynwood Arts District Association (WADA) formed in 2003 with art dealers, artists, small businesses and a couple of arts organizations in the lead. By 2008 real estate developers became significant supporters. The 2012 map and guide produced by WADA boasts 125 attractions, including galleries, art spaces and incubators, restaurants, bars, cafés and the like. WADA experienced nearly a decade of success coordinating the interests of galleries, retailers, bars and restaurants, property owners and arts groups, providing security, sanitation, advocacy and event production. It drew on membership fees from galleries and arts groups and contributions from developers, the city and foundations.

A 2012 grant enabled WADA to undertake research and organizing that led to formation of a business improvement district (BID). The designated area includes 47 blocks and 409 properties, according to the BID director. Boundaries wiggle around residential parcels, non-profits and schools. The first-year assessment generated about \$700,000 to support activities defined by its seven-member board, comprised of owners and developers who control over half the real estate within the defined area.

The BID left WADA in an awkward position. Its largest financial supporters—developers and property owners—diverted their attention and funds to the BID. Services involving event security, sanitation, banners and other decoration were subsequently limited to the BID area leaving out some businesses, galleries and non-profits that had participated and received such services in the past. The Wynwood BID resulted in less transparency and less shared or

horizontal leadership across neighborhood stakeholders. Gallery owners within the BID area expressed a sense of disconnection from the forum and collegial connections WADA offered.

“The rate of change is at work against creating community”, said one gallery owner. Many people interviewed—some of whom were seen as leaders in Wynwood—had histories with the neighborhood of no more than one to three years. They were sometimes unaware of earlier efforts or leaders. Some involved in the non-profit sector had little knowledge of the for-profit sector. The reverse was also true. Horizontal networks in Wynwood are thin at best.

Discussion of Cultural Districts

Two of the three US cases illustrate horizontal network development benefiting local stakeholders. The third illustrates a lack of effective network formation in which insufficient social cohesion fails to advance broad-based stakeholder interests. At this writing, each district is subject to forces that could alter its current identity and stability of its population and businesses. Their stability and continued contributions to the vitality of their regions depend on their capacity to organize and act on the collective interests of stakeholders.

Leimert Park faces development pressures from the light rail line and an aging population. Full operation of the Vision Theatre, the city-owned performing arts facility will also fuel change. Northeast will eventually contend with transition in ownership and possibly new uses of a handful of large, older industrial buildings that house hundreds of artist studios. Wynwood is already dealing with escalating real estate values and rapid development that may radically re-purpose the district and its identity. The neighborhood stands at a precipice over which its creative sector and residents have little control. A small group of property owners exert inordinate influence over its identity and future. While their current interests are served by the presence of the arts and creative sector, maximizing the value of the real estate is the primary determinant of the future of the neighborhood.

Identity

Each of the cases embodies and exhibits a unique sense of identity and distinctive purpose as a creative or cultural district within their larger city regions. This is critical to the cohesiveness among stakeholders and to outside political and economic forces that help maintain the purpose, viability and standing within the larger urban context.

Northeast demonstrated a well-distributed internal identity, meaning the identity was widely understood and appreciated in different sectors. Multiple neighborhood associations, the Chamber of Commerce, local schools and businesses and many others advocate on behalf of the arts district and find ways to leverage its identity and substance on behalf of their own missions and activities.

Leimert Park began its transition in the 1950s towards an identity as an African American neighborhood, and by the 1980s as an Afro-centric cultural, retail and arts district. A generation of residents, local business proprietors and non-profit leaders connected through civil rights struggles developed a strong sense of ownership in neighborhood cultural and creative identity. The 1930s urban plan with compact vernacular architecture of the village center, along with a unique pattern of residential streets, distinguish Leimert Park and facilitate a clear identity of place. The sense of ownership shared by stakeholders has been profoundly internalized.

Wynwood began to take on a contemporary visual arts identity in the late 1990s, retaining an identity among some as a fashion wholesaling district. It is mostly known externally by its gallery scene and hundreds of buildings painted by graffiti artists. Internally within the southern

part of the neighborhood, there is intensive energy where creative entrepreneurs, design, fashion and media firms and art dealers focus on their own daily activities as do weapons dealers, social service workers and the homeless. In the residential northern part of Wynwood there is little connection—and little positive association—with the arts identity.

Established with Leaders Present

Northeast had 20 years of history as an active artist district by 2013, including more than 10 years with city designation. Many artists, advocates, observers, neighborhood activists and others involved in or present during the district formation remained engaged.

Leimert Park evolved over a longer period of time with deeply held, passionate attachment to the neighborhood exhibited by many people. While a multitude of cultural organizations and businesses had come and gone since the 1990s, many long-time residents, activists, business owners and organizational leaders remain engaged.

Formation of the Wynwood District began as early as the mid 1980s with the non-profit Bakehouse artist studio complex, but founders are no longer involved. Some gallery owners, developers and others brought experience with neighborhood transitions in New York and South Beach. For them, the process of building identity, activities and organizational infrastructure of a cultural district for the purpose of real estate development was like following a recipe. Some early players remained present but with less consistency of involvement. There was little “institutional memory” in Wynwood. Many leaders had no connection with and sometimes little knowledge of the relatively recent formation.

Political Context

Given the backdrop of well-developed systems of neighborhood-level organizing in Los Angeles and Minneapolis, numerous individual leaders in these two districts demonstrated capacity to move between business, the arts, government, residents and other stakeholders. Artists, non-profit leaders, local business entrepreneurs and neighborhood activists in those districts actively engage in a variety of interconnected networks. Many individuals in Northeast and Leimert Park contribute to horizontal networks by serving on the boards of arts groups, neighborhood groups and their Chambers of Commerce while being active within the artist community and city politics. Those leaders play key roles in linking and solidifying horizontal networks that enable greater capacity of the district to protect its identity, stability and role within the regional cultural and economic ecosystem. They operate knowingly within a complex socio-political environment in which they maintain considerable relationships with local policymakers.

Not that leaders and stakeholders in Northeast and Leimert Park are in full control of the fate of their neighborhoods, but they have a realistic appreciation for what is possible and understand the obstacles and the kinds of actions needed to assert a collective voice. In contrast, the relative speed with which Wynwood evolved, and the dearth of grassroots political infrastructure in Miami, have disabled similar organizing and capacity building. Wynwood stakeholders are unlikely to leverage the political clout to maintain a stable real estate climate for the creative sector and working class residents.

The Activator Effect

This chapter explored how culture activated horizontal organizational and social networks that enable cross-sector networking, coordination and collective action. The activator effect (Sacco

& Tavano Blessi 2007) was evident in Leimert Park and in Northeast. Populations of both Leimert Park and Northeast are fairly homogeneous in terms of ethnicity and culture. Cultural and creative activities in those districts appeared to foster and facilitate connections across interests, professional groups, residents, for-profit, non-profit and public sectors.

However, such results were not demonstrated in Wynwood. While culture and the arts are widely understood to possess bridge-building capacities across race and class, bridging work employing cultural activities and artists within the community was not purposefully undertaken there. At the same time, vertical networks of gallery owners, craft beer makers, filmmakers, technology innovators, property owners and others formed in Wynwood to advance the interests of their respective members. With the exception of property owners, they have little affinity to the geographic place outside its tenuous and rapidly changing affordability.

Conclusions

To combat the kind of precariousness often experienced in cultural districts cited by Mould and Comunian (2014), and to advance the goal of building equitable and sustainable communities, planners and other leaders need to coalesce stakeholders horizontally through forms of organization and networking that build collective capacity.

Research in these cultural districts found that horizontal social networks connecting various groups and organizations expanded the capacity of organizations and leaders within cultural districts to achieve greater impact in their quest to build and sustain the identity and substantive social, cultural, economic and creative assets of their neighborhoods.

Civic capacity and horizontal networks connecting residents, businesses, the arts, city government and others were largely absent in Wynwood. Stakeholders within Northeast and Leimert Park, on the other hand, possess sufficient capacity to mobilize and at least mitigate changes to the economic and real estate conditions that could push out artists, non-profits, creative enterprises and lower-income residents.

The three districts studied have much in common with hundreds of counterparts in the United States and around the globe. While there are variations in context, many economic and political dynamics are shared. Districts hoping to maintain residential stability and grow their resiliency, along with their creative and cultural assets, benefit from horizontal network-building strategies.

Focused, participatory planning processes, such as those conducted in Leimert Park in 2013–2014, and in Northeast in 2002 serve as one valuable tool. Planning activities can elevate awareness of district-wide, multi-sector interests and their interconnectedness. When such efforts are inclusive and foster cross-sector relationship building through creative planning process (Sandercock 2004; Healey 2006; Sarkissian & Hurford 2010), they can play a pivotal role in horizontal network and capacity building. Such planning activities that borrow from community organizing methods set in motion new alliances and collaborative efforts.

Especially appropriate are practices that engage relatively large and diverse groups of people in consideration of complex issues. These are not new to some in city planning and in the younger field of cultural planning (Ghilardi 2008; Borup 2014). Employing creative techniques and artists in facilitation, reinterpretation of issues and inclusion of an unusually wide mix of ethnic and cultural groups can have multiple benefits (Bianchini 2004; Hume 2009; Sarkissian & Hurford 2010).

If community developers, planners and policymakers expect to realize the economic and social potentials of the creative sector and bring about equitable, resilient communities, they must actively contribute to building the capacity for organizing and forming horizontal networks. Planners, local policymakers and other community leaders need to collaborate with those in

the creative sector to expand the tools in their toolbox and to bring people together across sectors, professions and stakeholder groups to identify shared interests, assets and challenges. Only then can communities work to co-create a vision, find collaborative solutions, navigate emerging challenges and serve as stewards of their own ambitions.

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17

COMMUNITY CULTURAL CAPITAL

Anakie, Australia

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Overview¹

In this chapter, community development is understood entirely as a Western idea. Regardless of how it is defined within the literature, the notion of community development emerges from within the Western culture and thus most always employs philosophical, ethical and epistemological discourses about what a community is and what its development ought to consist of. From this perspective, the “community” is viewed as social structures and field of social processes (Tesoriero 2010: 2; Kenny 2012: 8; Matarrita-Cascante & Brennan 2012: 297), on which individuals and groups (external or internal to these structures and processes) act with the goal of bringing about “development” (that is, bring about improvements, positive changes, sustainability and well-being). This is not to criticize the discipline and practice of community development, but rather to acknowledge that to understand “community” and “development” in other than non-Western contexts requires that we privilege the perspectives of other cultures, philosophies and epistemologies. A discussion of this would take a whole other chapter or even more. However, the aim here is to discuss community cultural capital, and so it is sufficient that we restrict the context for the discussion to traditionally Western communities.

The first part of this chapter introduces the concept of community cultural capital and provides an initial definition. It then outlines the theoretical origin of cultural capital as a conceptual construct, which is Bourdieu’s (2011) theory of individual cultural capital. We shed the neo-Marxian stance employed by Bourdieu to apply instead the concept to a community’s (rather than to an individual’s) intangible assets. We next spend some time considering the contested nature of community cultural capital. Indeed, we will see that although relatively new, the concept is already used in various forms within community development research and practice.

The second part of the chapter provides an example of how a community drew on its cultural capital to reinvent itself after a serious and debilitating economic setback, and then to emerge from this setback with a sustainable local economy and community life. This example draws on the decade-long research of the impact of drastic economic changes on the Anakie Gemfields community in Australia and its subsequent recovery. This research provides some examples of community cultural capital, and it indicates how it differs from other forms of capital.

An Introduction to Community Cultural Capital

As Nel (2015) points out, many communities possess hidden “gifts”. Indeed, “all communities, no matter how poor, possess strengths . . . [and] assets and energies that can contribute to a self-sustained, improved quality of life” (Nel 2015: 512). Community cultural capital is one such “hidden” gift that a community may be endowed with. An understanding of the concept is relevant to community development in at least two ways. First, the concept has the potential to explain how some communities can recover from adverse impacts while others cannot—even when elements such as strong social capital are present. Second, including community cultural capital within a framework for community development enables a more holistic and informed view of what a particular community is and, if necessary, of its capacity to change or to meet challenges.

Community cultural capital is introduced here as a relatively new concept. To be sure, others have used the concept in a less explicit way. For instance, when discussing policy practices within the LEADER² program across Europe, Rizzo (2013: 234) refers to community cultural capital as “the culture economy” which is made up of “local values”:

the third factor that has influenced the rise of qualified expertise in rural development is *the culture economy*; rural developers are responsible for supporting local values that have a key role in successful development processes. *Local values include traditional foods, regional languages, historical sites, and local knowledge.*

Rizzo 2013: 234 (emphases added)

This is clearly a useful observation; however, it is not clear whether Rizzo (2013) and others writing on similar community development topics view community assets of the kind described by him as “local values” as a form of capital. This, then, leads to a conceptual ambiguity, and thus creates the space for this chapter to clarify and solidify community cultural capital as a concept that is more accessible to scholars and practitioners of community development.

As with most other forms of capital (for instance, social capital), cultural capital is a form of metaphorical or symbolic capital (Hinton 2015). In the traditions of the Western social sciences, “capital” is understood as something that can be invested, manipulated and exploited (Adam Smith [1776] cited in Hinton 2015: 301). Likewise, as we will see in the case example outlined in the latter part of the chapter, community cultural capital can be one of the bases for community development, and which community members can exploit and invest in their community’s economic base.

However, as we saw from the example provided above, unlike other forms of capital, community cultural capital has not yet been adequately theorized. When forms of capital are discussed in the literature, community cultural is usually absent. A typical typology of the forms of capital includes: *natural capital* (natural resources, ecosystem services, aesthetics); *human capital* (abilities, knowledge, skills); *social capital* (bonding, bridging, reciprocity); *institutional capital* (public, private, non-profit sectors); and *economic capital* (harvested or manufactured products, built environment, financial resources) (Cocklin & Dibden 2005).

Community cultural capital is differentiated from other forms of capital because it consists largely of intangibles and other assets that are characteristic of a community in ways that cannot be fully or usefully categorized as any of the forms of capital listed above. One of the most common examples of community cultural capital includes local lore and traditions that provide the capacity to attract tourists to an area. Local businesses and entrepreneurs can draw on and convert this form of capital into information packages, tours, unique experiences and other such

services, which in turn are consumed by visitors to generate financial returns. These returns are usually invested locally and create employment, fund local industries and so on. However, community cultural capital can also refer to factors other than those associated with direct economic prosperity. For example, it may refer to a community's attributes that make it a place where people desire to live and to feel a part of. This does not refer to the quality of life, but to the attributes of the community as a whole that contribute to it—such as security, social cohesion, friendliness, opportunities, hobbies and so on.

A community accumulates cultural capital as a consequence of its history, economic base and local traditions. It differs from other forms of symbolic capital since normally it is not the result of current community social structures and processes (although these often reinforce and maintain it). It does not rely on or require elements such as trust networks, reciprocity, kinship and so on—it can exist and be transmitted from generation to generation regardless of these elements. Normally, a community's cultural capital cannot be monopolized or trademarked, and it cannot be removed or attributed away from the community.

Cultural Capital: The Theoretical Context

The concept of community cultural capital draws on Pierre Bourdieu's (2011) notion of cultural capital, which he applies to explain the immaterial resources that can enable an individual to succeed in life—some more so than others. Bourdieu (1986) identifies three forms of individual cultural capital. The first is embodied cultural capital, which is inside the individual and represents what they know and have the capacity to do (for instance, capacity to acquire education and qualifications). The second form is the objectified state of cultural capital, represented by material objects which can be obtained as a consequence of embodied capital. The third form of cultural capital is represented in socially institutionalized formats, such as academic qualifications which represent a “certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture” (Bourdieu 2011: 86).

Bourdieu uses cultural capital as a key concept within his theory of social reproduction to explain the apparent link between social class of origin and social class of destination (Sullivan 2007). In Bourdieu's schema, cultural capital results through the transference from parents to their offspring of “cultural codes and practices”. Put in a different way, “Cultural capital embodies the sum total of investments in aesthetic codes, practices and dispositions transmitted to children through the process of family socialization, or in Bourdieu's term, *habitus*” (Tzanakis 2011: 77). Bourdieu devised the concept from a (post-)Marxist stance, as a way to explain factors in the construction and maintenance of social inequality: cultural capital reproduces social advantage and disadvantage (van de Werfhorst 2010: 159).

Bourdieu's construct of cultural capital as a concept to explain social reproduction has been heavily criticized, not least for being “overwhelmingly contradicted by empirical evidence” (Goldthorpe 2007: 2). In its use here, however, cultural capital is not a means to apply Marxian theory to explain the social and economic circumstances of a community. Rather, we only take from Bourdieu the notion that, just as it can be with individuals, a community's inherent traits, qualities and characteristics can contribute to its “life chances”, well-being, sustainability and resilience. The difference is that whereas for individuals such traits and characteristics are passed on from generation to generation and are shaped by the individuals' class location, for a community they are acquired as a consequence of local history and development, traditions and ways of life.

If expanded and refined to inform methodology in community development research and practice, cultural capital may, as a concept, have the potential to aid understanding of the community's *embodied* cultural capital, reflected in such things as the capacity to tackle challenges and opportunities. The way it presents physically, such as the style of its buildings, its amenities, shops and industries, parks, roads, monuments and so on—these may be seen as the *objectified* cultural capital of the community, the material expression of the community's embodied cultural capital. Lastly, the *institutionalized* format of a community's cultural capital may be represented by such things as the more or less formal recognition it receives for its characteristics. For example, the local government's development plans which recognize the need for special land divisions, or the state government's injection of funds to assist with a local festival, or special event.

Cultural Capital as a Contested Concept

As a discipline, community development does not pretend or aspire to be a science, let alone an "exact" science. The community developer's discourse is anchored in contested if not subjective Western concepts, such as "empowerment" and "need analysis". Even the term "community" has long been considered an inexact term (in a classical paper published sixty years ago, Hillery [1955] identified no fewer than 94 definitions for "community" used at that time within the literature). Likewise, the notion of community cultural capital is a contested idea, which is likely to be difficult to quantify or articulate within research and community development work. This is not only because it refers to intangibles, but also because of the nature of a community itself. Therefore, it is to be expected that the format of cultural capital will differ from community to community.

Although community cultural capital differs from other forms of capital, it can be interdependent with social capital, public capital and human capital (for a discussion of these forms of capital, see Rainey et al. 2003). This interdependence has the potential to cast community cultural capital as being no more than an element of other forms of capital.

It is also worth noting that community cultural capital has the potential to be confused with the concept of "commons" (as property shared in common by community members). However, the former differs from the latter in important ways. Common property refers to tangible assets (such as the mineral spring nearby, which everyone can access), while community cultural capital refers to intangible assets (such as the local lore associated with the mineral spring's apparent miraculous healing properties).

In the next few paragraphs, I discuss some other possible contradictions that can result from the way the term *community cultural capital* has been used within academic explorations of the concept. What follows is far from a comprehensive list of all such contradictions. Rather, it aims to demonstrate briefly some of the ambiguities that can result from the contestability of the concept. This contestability is visible in the body of literature which traditionally informs community development, so it is important to draw out examples of different uses of the concept, to alert and inform the discipline of community development of potential definitional conflicts and to help avoid confusion when applied to community development scholarship and work.

To begin with, it is possible to use a largely unmodified Bourdieusian framework to gain a broader understanding of particular kinds of resources available for community development. For example, Greenspan (2014) provides a discussion based on empirical evidence on how the three forms of cultural capital (embodied, objectified and institutionalized) can assist a "multilevel" analysis of the cultural (and other) capital that may be available to non-government organizations that engage in advocacy. In a sense, this can be a valuable perspective on cultural capital as it may be identified *with* the individuals, groups and organizations that make up a

community (although different from the “strengths” approach to community development). However, this “multilevel” perspective of cultural capital has little capacity to explain the kind of intangible assets that are associated with the community as a whole, because such assets continue to exist even in the absence of individuals and groups that are currently part of that community.

Indeed, the example of the LEADER program in Europe has provided community development scholars with the opportunity to apply the Bourdieusian framework to explain interactions and development work by individuals. However, much of this work thus recasts analyses of rural and community development work into a revised framework for a class analysis that ends up explaining the behavior of individuals as actors embedded in new social supra-structures (classes). For example, Kovách & KucEROVÁ (2006: 2–7) discover a “projectification” class in their analysis of Czech and Hungarian LEADER programs: “the project class could be identified as a highly placed element in the social structure whose members reconverted their scientific, pedagogical, expert, managerial, administrative and power positions, thereby establishing a new social class with its own distinguishing features” (Kováč & KucEROVÁ 2006: 7). While interesting and valuable in a different sense, this use of the Bourdieusian framework in development analysis and practice has the potential to be confused with its application in the conceptual framing of community cultural capital. This is because an analysis of this sort poses the danger of embodying “assets” and attributes useful to development work only within actors, while it can diminish or even overlook the intangible assets and attributes of the community itself.

Another body of literature considers community cultural capital to consist of only such things as local art-based attractions, including art exhibitions, musical festivals and architecturally interesting buildings (Cheshire & Malecki 2004: 260). However, apart from being tangible, such assets may not (and often are not) “community” assets, but instead be owned by individuals or corporations. This kind of capital stands in contrast to intangible assets such as local lore, histories of interest to visitors, lived traditions and experiential activities.

In yet another small body of literature, which has recently emerged mainly from New Zealand, community cultural capital is equated with traditional social structures. Thus, Eames (2007: 31) explains community cultural capital as

the wealth created through celebrating and investing in cultural histories, values, ideologies, rituals, and programs. Cultural capital can be “spent” in economic, social and environmental markets to enhance social and economic capital.

Further on, Eames (2007: 32) argues that: “The concept of cultural capital underlines the importance of positive interactions between various cultural traditions and social styles, and development of mutual respect between cultural groupings”. However, this view of community cultural capital focuses on aspects of particular cultures or culturally produced behaviors and views an entire social culture, even a whole society as “community”. This perspective can illuminate particular aspects of some communities and possibly of their cultural capital. However, it may also lead to confusion since viewing a community’s cultural capital only as a reflection of the broader national or indigenous culture assumes that all national and indigenous communities are essentially the same.

Lastly, Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital may be applied too literally to explain community cultural capital. For instance, Dalziel et al. (2009: 19) claim that:

Cultural capital is a community’s embodied cultural skills and values, in all their community-defined forms, inherited from the community’s previous generation, undergoing adaptation and extension by current members of the community, and desired by the community to be passed on to its next generation.

While it may be true that a community as a whole would like to preserve its traditions and ways of life, it is not necessarily true that it is only its skills, values and customs that constitute its cultural capital. The definition is partial, in the sense that a community may also possess other intangibles, which are not necessarily embedded in individuals, but are associated with the community as a whole.

Case Example: The Anakie Gemfields Community

The following four sections draw on the empirical research of an Australian community in Central Queensland, which was established in the late 1800s and which grew and continued around small-scale sapphire prospecting and mining activities in the area. The study itself unfolded over approximately ten years but looked at a period of twenty-five years (1976–2001) in the life of this community (Teghe & McAllister 1997, 2004, 2005, 2006; McAllister & Teghe 2006). This research was selected as a case example here for two reasons. First, it was this research that led to the development of the concept of community cultural capital as discussed in this chapter. Second, the period over which the research was conducted covers two significant and contrasting historical stages in the community's life: the first represents drastic economic and social decline while the second represents community recovery and sustainable development.

The research was undertaken as a series of small community studies that initially intended to obtain an understanding and to record the unique nature and history of a relatively remote Australian sapphire-mining community. Interviews with locals and analyses of archival material were completed as part of this initial research (Teghe & McAllister 1997). However, the timing of the research also coincided with a period in the community's life when drastic changes were brought about by an influx of exploitative large-scale sapphire mining, which eventually led to the demise of the local small-scale mining industry. This prompted the researchers to focus their attention on these changes, and they set about quantifying and recording the effects of large-scale mining on the community. Secondary data derived from the Local Areas datasets listed in the *Census Characteristics of Australia* (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996), together with other national statistical data were analyzed to trace the community's changing fortunes during this period in terms of indicators such as rates of unemployment, people leaving, occupations, labor participation rates and income.

Later most of the large-machinery miners left, and the researchers began to observe a renewal of the community and set about to study and record this process. During this stage of the research, in-depth semi-structured, unstructured and some "follow-up" interviews were conducted with members of the Gemfields community. These included small-business owners, retired small-miners, shire councillors and other residents. Observational studies were undertaken of economic activities such as local tourism ventures and artisans producing jewellery unique to the Gemfields. In addition, further analysis was undertaken of the Census (ABS 2001) and other datasets (for instance, the average weekly ordinary time earnings [AWOTE] released by the Australian Taxation Office). On a range of socio-economic indicators, including employment, income, workforce participation, small-business activity, community services and so on, the research showed that the community was on its way to recovery (Teghe & McAllister 2005, 2006; McAllister & Teghe 2006).

It became apparent to the researchers that in the latter stage some people in the community drew on intangibles linked to the community to create small businesses, and in this way reinvent and rebuild its economic base. However, the researchers lacked a satisfactory theoretical and conceptual model to explain the link between these intangibles and the outcomes observed. At first, a Marxist approach was used to attempt to cast the demise of the small sapphire mining

industry at the hands of large-machinery mining as a clash between petty bourgeoisie and capital (Teghe & McAllister 1997, 2004). However, given the community's subsequent relative recovery, they found that this framework had poor explanatory power; moreover, it was not supported by the empirical evidence. The researchers subsequently employed the Bourdieusian framework (Teghe & McAllister 2005, 2006) and adopted the concept of cultural capital to provide a more feasible explanation for the community's revival and recovery.

Community Background and History

The Anakie Gemfields is a community located about 300 kilometers due west of Rockhampton (a large coastal town) in Central Queensland, Australia. It consists of two main villages, Sapphire and Rubyvale, which are six kilometers apart and straddle the Tropic of Capricorn. Two other villages (Anakie and Willows) are considered part of the Gemfields, but are relatively small and have played a minor role in the community's history. As mentioned, the community was established in the late 1800s as a consequence of the discovery of what are reputed to be the largest sapphire-bearing alluvial deposits in the southern hemisphere. Since then, it has been home to a varying number of people who initially made a living from small-scale sapphire mining, and later also developed gem crafts and tourism-based small businesses (Teghe & McAllister 2004).

Until the late 1960s, sapphires were mined by self-employed miners who worked with hand tools to sink shafts, and to excavate and process sapphire-bearing "washdirt". Anyone could get a Miner's Right (a licence to prospect and mine) which entitled them to prospect for sapphires on Crown land, mark out a mining tenement and build a residence on it, and to use public resources such as timber, gravel and water. The Miner's Right was abolished in 1989 when the state of Queensland changed the Mining Act to remove many of the rights that protected and privileged hand mining over large-scale machinery mining. The Gemfields population fluctuated over time, with as few as 200 miners and their families living there around 1900, then rising to about 1,000 by 1925, and eventually declining because of the Great Depression and World War II (Mumme 1988). The population climbed again after the 1960s, to reach about 2,000 persons by the turn of the millennium (Teghe & McAllister 2004).

Many of the current unique characteristics of the Gemfields community are a consequence of a local history that begun to unfold more than 100 years ago, consisting principally of sapphire mining and a pioneering life in a relatively remote and hostile location. These characteristics are reflected in the specialized implements of the small miner, the building styles which adopted local materials (for instance, houses constructed of "billy boulders"—local alluvial sandstone boulders coated in thin layer of glass-like coating), a thriving gem-faceting and jewellery cottage industry and a rich trove of local stories and sapphire mining lore (Adler 1992). Over this period, the hand miners (later referred to as "small miners") and their families who settled on the Gemfields built small towns which rivalled many other small rural and regional communities in Queensland in terms of services, amenities and local small businesses.

Globalization and the Destruction of the Community's Economic Base

By the mid-1970s, economic globalization began to impact on the Gemfields community. In the first instance, the world colored gemstones market came to be monopolized by overseas sapphire dealers based in Thailand. As their sources for sapphires began to dry up, Thai gemstone merchants looked to Australia as their next major sapphire supplier. Soon after, these merchants arrived on the Anakie Gemfields and began to undercut local gem buyers with short-term price inflation and a sapphire-buying spree. This attracted large mining operators to the area, who

brought along large earth-moving machinery and processing plants to the area to mine and process huge quantities of sapphire-bearing deposits. Soon, competition for access to these deposits sparked conflict between small miners and machinery miners. The latter obtained the support of the state regulators, who began to view the former as “anachronistic”, and opened up more local areas to machinery mining. The ideological narrative of neoliberalism permeated state policy at the time, based on the notion that the more economic capital was enticed, the more jobs would be “created” in the community and bring a host of other benefits to it, not least of which would have been rapid “development” (McAllister & Teghe 2006).

Within a few years (1976–1990), a phenomenal increase in production brought sapphire prices to an all-time low. Small mining collapsed as an industry on the Gemfields, with only some retirees and weekend hobby miners remaining to continue the small-scale sapphire mining tradition. Many people moved away from the area while others went on welfare benefits as the only means available to support themselves and their families. The richest sapphire-bearing deposits became entirely depleted, and the areas surrounding the main settlements of Sapphire and Rubyvale resembled a moonscape as a consequence of over a decade of intensive machinery mining. Contrary to the aspirations of the policy- and law-makers, who assisted the influx of machinery mining and the marginalization of small-scale sapphire mining, the analysis of the Census and labor data for the region showed that few permanent jobs were created, and unemployment actually rose to its highest level ever experienced by the community, reaching almost fifty per cent in 1986. Between 1976 and 1981, which represents the height of the machinery mining boom, the labor participation rate on the Gemfields rose by seven percent (from 50.1 to 57.0 percent). Then, as other sapphire fields opened up overseas, most Thai buyers abandoned the Gemfields and the machinery miners begun to go broke and leave the area. By 1986, the labor participation rate crashed to 32.0 percent. By the early 1990s, the community’s economic base was virtually destroyed (Teghe & McAllister 2005, 2006).

Patterns of exploitation and destruction by large-scale industries that can be brought to small communities under the cover of neoliberal policy are not new or misunderstood phenomena. The (now almost forgotten) classic comparative study of two Californian rural communities conducted by Walter Goldschmidt (1978 [1947]) between 1940 and 1946 demonstrated how one community that was economically dependent on the large farms which surrounded it did not do as well on a range of social indicators as another community supported by small, mainly individually operated farms. Other studies have subsequently supported Goldschmidt’s thesis (Wischemann 1990).

Cultural Capital and Community Recovery

Once the economic basis of the community was almost destroyed, small sapphire mining could not fully return to the area. However, research showed that, somewhat surprisingly, the community began to flourish again in terms of indicators such as employment, income, workforce participation, new buildings, small business activity, community services and so on (Teghe & McAllister 2004, 2005, 2006). These trends became apparent from extensive comparative analyses of local community data obtained from six *Census Characteristics of Australia* publications (1976–2001), and a selection of national and state surveys on income and labor market trends. By 2001, although still high, unemployment figures dropped from nearly fifty percent in 1986 to less than twenty percent. Labor force participation stopped falling and began to rise again (fifty-five percent in 1981 to thirty percent by 1990). Moreover, new employment opportunities arose for locals (for instance, retail employment rose from just under five percent in 1981 to almost twenty-five percent by 2001).

The research (Teghe & McAllister 2004, 2005, 2006) thus showed that once liberated from machinery mining, the community began to transform in positive ways. In about a decade, new and diverse local enterprises emerged, including tourism, artisan jewellery making, special accommodation, shops, restaurants, underground museums, art galleries, caravan parks and so on. What helped bring about this revival? What resources did the community draw on, now that the mining industry had been all but destroyed? To gain an understanding of how these development trends came about, the researchers undertook qualitative research within the community, interviewing community members, conducting participant observation and completing archival research that used public and private repositories of documents and artefacts.

The qualitative research indicated that most of the new economic base of the community was connected in some manner or other to sapphire mining traditions, history and lore. These traditions emphasized the pioneering spirit, self-reliance, resilience and the sense of adventure for which alluvial miners in Australia were known in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Blainey 1993). Miners from the 1890s Queensland gold “rushes” were first to prospect for sapphires on the Anakie Gemfields. They brought with them not only the culture of the “tough” and self-reliant individual prospector, but also the norms of “mateship” which defined partnerships between many of these individuals, and shaped the norms of the communities they established in what were often remote parts of Australia (Teghe & McAllister 1997). Mateships enabled them to join forces, not just for prospecting and mining deposits of sapphires, but also to support and take care of each other and their families. A “Miners’ Common”, of some 11,000 acres, was established at the very inception of the Gemfields community, within which “the miner was able to mine, build a dwelling and run a few livestock”—this is still in existence, and is the last of such “commons” in Queensland, though with the rights of use now heavily restricted (Gemfest & Festival of Gems Association n.d.). The industrious activities of miners driven by the allure of “striking it rich” and finding precious gemstones created a trove of Gemfields characters and mining stories. Sapphires of untold beauty and uniqueness that merited their own names, like the “Black Star of Queensland” and the “Four Presidents’ Heads” (huge sapphires from which busts of Washington, Lincoln, Eisenhower and Jefferson have been carved), were found. The character of the Gemfields is further discerned in local names, such as “Little” and “Big Bessie”, “Graves Hill”, “The Reward”, “Goanna Flats”, “The Willows”, “Ruby Hill” and so on.

This brief snapshot of the rich traditions, history and lore of the Gemfields soon became apparent to the researchers, who soon understood that most visitors or new settlers did not come to the Gemfields to see or coexist with machinery mining. They instead were eager to experience the thrill of finding a sapphire in the same way that the early miners did, by using handheld tools to dig and sort through “washdirt”. Some visitors preferred to watch their sapphire being faceted and set in a jewellery piece by a local artisan. For lunch, visitors could retreat into the coolness of the Rubyvale pub, built entirely out of local stone and ironbark timber logs, while in the evening they were likely to enjoy retiring to a billy boulder room at the Sunrise Cabins in the township of Sapphire, or to their trailer parked on the miners’ common among tall trees populated by parakeets.

This section of the chapter concludes with two examples of extracts from interview data obtained by the researchers to provide a glimpse of some of the aspects of the Anakie Gemfields that attracted newcomers and visitors, and which may be understood as constituting the community’s cultural capital:

The Gemfields is a resource; it is a resource of people digging, of people skills and producing and cutting [i.e. gemstone faceting]. And it is a fact that sapphires are just

a small part of this resource—it is the people and the characters, and the place, and the lifestyle.

*Interview with a local jewellery store and café owner,
cited in Teghe & McAllister 2005: 5*

I didn't like Brisbane, where I worked as a public servant, and being a rock collector, I knew about the Gemfields. I left my job after a few visits to the Gemfields. My wife wanted to come here as well. We didn't feel sorry to move here . . . We begun mining at Divide—invested all our life savings in tools for mining . . . the ground was deep, about forty to fifty feet, but we got good stones. The prices were good too . . .

Interview with local hand miner, cited in Teghe & McAllister 1997: 4

Lessons for Community Development

The overall discussion offered in this chapter is intended to contribute to a framework for understanding community cultural capital as a useful community development concept. One significant implication for community development scholarship and practice is that, clearly, cultural capital differs from other forms of capital that may be available to the community. It is different from social capital because it is not constituted of networks of trust and reciprocity (Putnam 1993; Bourdieu 2011). It is not human capital because it does not reside with, or is dependent on, people. It is also a fluid form of capital because, as with an idea or a poem, it can be used again and again, in new and innovative ways.

Community cultural capital consists of intangibles such as local traditions, history, lore and specialized skills. These are demonstrably community assets in that, as outlined in the example of the Anakie Gemfields community, they have been used by community members to create economic activities and returns. Such assets can be used to promote community resilience in the face of adversities, and increase its chances of sustainable development.

The form that community cultural capital takes is likely to be geographically and historically determined. The Gemfields' cultural capital is unique because of the community's location (on the largest Australian sapphire fields) and its history (sapphire mining). At the same time, it is apparent from the discussion offered in this chapter that community cultural capital is not necessarily tied to or defined by kinships or groups, nor is it "owned" by anyone in particular. This may render this form of capital less visible and harder to quantify or map by the community development worker. Therefore, this has implications for framing approaches to community development and projects. By not accounting for cultural capital as a resource may be an impediment to community development, and it can very well skew an assessment of the community's capacity to respond to change, challenges or opportunities.

Lastly, for community development as practice and policy, the example given in this chapter provides an insight into how sustainable development does not necessarily involve "attracting and keeping capital and labour—to become 'sticky' place" (Cheshire & Malecki 2004: 251). Indeed, efforts by outsiders to "improve" a community's economic base can have the opposite effect. In the case of the Anakie Gemfields, community development leading to recovery happened without external community development workers being involved. For community development, the implication is that a community's character and way of being is in itself an asset. Before any "development" is envisaged, the cost of losing this asset in the process should be considered. The concept of cultural capital can thus provide a conceptual platform from which to frame and validate any community development approaches. Of particular relevance to community development is the proposition that a community's sustainable development can

be facilitated by encouraging locals to make innovative use of intangible assets as a “cultural edge” (Turner et al. 2003).

For community workers, then, an awareness of the role which cultural capital can have as a factor in community economic well-being and capacity to adapt to change will lead to a more holistic approach to development practice. In the event, an awareness of community cultural capital can be useful in identifying and rendering visible the community’s hidden “gifts” as useful assets. In this way the community can be further empowered to use such assets to build on or to increase what already exists, or to successfully adapt to and counter economic change. Importantly, it can also aid the community development worker to facilitate a process that leads to a positive vision for the future (Nel 2015: 512).

Notes

- 1 I would like to acknowledge the contribution made to the research described in this chapter by my collaborator and friend, Dr. Jim McAllister, who passed away in 2014.
- 2 LEADER stands for Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale, which translates as “Links between the rural economy and development actions”. It is a program of rural development funded under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) between 2007 and 2013 (European Network for Rural Development 2015).

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PART V

Identity, Belonging and Connectedness



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18

THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

Opinions, Life Experiences and Definitions of Children, Young People and University Students from the Province of Buenos Aires

Graciela Tonon

Introduction

The trigger of this reflection is that the concept of community has been substantially modified in recent decades. These modifications change the traditional concept of belonging to a geographical space where people live, and has expanded to one of relationships among people in different social spaces. This may be related to the ideas put forth by Lechner (2002: 46), who points out that, in spite of widening contact zones and increasing transactions, modernization does not necessarily create social ties. In this chapter, opinions of 8- and 10-year-old boys and girls are presented regarding life in the community, the characteristics of community spaces and their life experiences in connection with their security/insecurity. Then an analysis is presented of young people's opinions regarding life in the community and the relationships among its inhabitants, as well as the latter's attitude towards the community. The chapter concludes by concentrating on community as defined by university students devoted to the study of issues related to the daily lives of children and young people.

Children's Opinions and Life Experiences in the Community

During 2014–2015, the project “Quality of life of children of 8 to 10 years old: a study at Buenos Aires Province” was conducted as an initiative of UNI-COM, Faculty of Social Sciences together with LOMASCyT Program of Universidad Nacional de Lomas de Zamora, Argentina. The project surveyed boys and girls, of 8 and 10 years of age, living in the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The sample was composed of a total number of 1,062 cases, 590 of which were 8 years old and 472 that were 10 years of age. In the 8-year-old group there were 298 females (49.5 percent) and 292 males (50.5 percent), while in the 10-year-old group there were 237 females

(50.2 percent) and 235 males (48.8 percent). A total of 204 10-year-old boy/girl cases and 236 8-year-old boy/girl cases were released in Greater Buenos Aires, while in the Interior of the province of Buenos Aires, the figures were 268 and 354, respectively.

Greater Buenos Aires is a geographical area that surrounds the country's capital (Autonomous City of Buenos Aires), and it is characterized by extreme economic and social situations; it is formed by neighborhoods which show clear signs of poverty, as well as gated communities of a high purchasing power. The Interior of the province of Buenos Aires is a vast geographical zone which shows the development of both densely populated cities and small towns, mainly devoted to farming and agriculture. Greater Buenos Aires consists of 24 districts, whereas the Interior of Buenos Aires province comprises 110 districts.

The reasons for the selection of Buenos Aires province as a work field, within the Argentine Republic, is the fact that the province of Buenos Aires is the most densely populated in the country—its total population in 2010 was 15,625,084 (INDEC 2012), which is approximately 40 percent of the total general population of the country. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), in 2010 Argentina's population totaled 40,117,096.

According to the last National Census released in 2010 (INDEC 2012), in Greater Buenos Aires there were 160,563 eight-year-old children and 169,468 ten-year-olds. In the Interior, the respective totals were 91,591 and 95,497.

One of the survey dimensions was related to life in the community and, in this connection, all children were asked to reply whether they considered that their neighborhoods offered enough spaces where they could play, and whether they felt secure when walking along the streets. In the case of 10-year-olds, they were further consulted whether they felt safe in some of the public places in their neighborhoods, such as churches or stores.

In the case of the 8-year-olds, the results show that 63.1 percent of them completely agreed on the fact that they could play and have fun in their places of residence, and 59 percent said that they felt secure when walking along the streets of their neighborhoods. The respective figures for the older group were 55.9 and 41.5 percent, respectively, and 48.7 percent completely agreed about the security they felt in public places.

These results demonstrate that insecure situations in public spaces, which are constantly mentioned by the media, are transformed into a life experience which is increasingly appearing in the children's accounts. When discussing the subject of security, Bauman (2006) makes reference to a consideration of "the world as stable and dependable . . . and further refers to acquiring the knowledge of self-efficacious behavior and the necessary abilities to face the challenge of living" (p.25). Yet it is undeniable nowadays that people feel more insecure not only on the streets but also in other life dimensions, and hence we agree with the aforementioned author in our belief that "insecure life is shared with insecure people" (Bauman 2006: 32).

Regarding the levels of satisfaction with life in their community, we have considered three direct variables:

- satisfaction with people in your area;
- satisfaction with the outdoor areas children can use to play;
- satisfaction with the area in general;

and a reference variable:

- satisfaction with your relationships with people in general.

In the case of children 8 years old, the results of applying a Likert scale of 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 4 (completely satisfied) are shown in Table 18.1.

Table 18.1 Satisfaction of Children, 8 Years Old

	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Standard SD</i>	
Satisfaction with: the people in your area	584	0	4	3.35	.993
Satisfaction with: your relationships with people in general	574	0	4	3.53	.819
Satisfaction with: the outdoor areas children can use to play	584	0	4	3.41	.931
Satisfaction with: the area in general	579	0	4	3.60	.752

Table 18.2 Satisfaction of Children, 10 Years Old

	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Standard SD</i>	
Satisfaction with: the people in your area	470	0	10	7.89	2.750
Satisfaction with: your relationships with people in general	469	0	10	9.12	1.790
Satisfaction with: the outdoor areas children can use to play	469	0	10	8.38	2.369
Satisfaction with: the area in general	470	0	10	8.80	2.141

In the case of children 10 years old, the results of applying a Likert scale of 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied) are shown in Table 18.2.

Regarding their relationships with people in general and with their neighbors in particular, it should be pointed out that, for both groups of children, the standards of satisfaction with people in general were higher than those of the relationships with their neighbors. In the case of 10-year-old children, the standard of satisfaction with people in general was 9.12 (on a scale of 0–10) whereas their standard of satisfaction with their neighbors was 7.89. The standard of satisfaction for 8-year-old children in their relationships with people in general was 3.53 (on a scale of 0–4), while their standard of satisfaction with their neighbors was 3.35.

On the other hand, the levels of satisfaction with the neighborhood in general, as well as with community spaces where they could play, show similar values in both population groups. In the case of 8-year-old children, the levels found were 3.60 and 3.41, respectively. For the older group, the levels were 8.80 and 8.31, respectively.

Regarding the three direct variables, for both groups the maximum value was reached by the variable “satisfaction with the area in general”: 8.80 for 10-year-old children and 3.60 for 8-year-olds.

Considering the differences by gender, 10-year-old boys/girls exhibited the greatest proportion of the highest satisfaction, with a gender difference for the girls (more satisfied than the boys). Note that in relation to the possibilities of playing in the neighborhood, the highest satisfaction values denote more conformity for the girls (52.14 percent) than for the boys (42.13 percent); regarding the neighborhood in general, the girls (58.55 percent) and the boys (57.20) in equal proportions were completely satisfied.

Tables 18.3 and 18.4 show the differences by age and gender for 8-year-olds; Tables 18.5–18.7 show the results for the older children (10 years old).

Table 18.3 Cross-tab: places to Play, 8 Years Old

		<i>Boy or Girl</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	
In my area there are enough places to play or to have a good time	I do not agree	22	21	43
	Slightly agree	11	13	24
	Quite agree	33	25	58
	Agree a lot	38	47	85
	Totally agree	182	177	359
Total		286	283	569

Table 18.4 Cross-tab: safe to Walk, 8 Years Old

		<i>Boy or Girl</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	
I feel safe when I walk in the area I live in	I do not agree	21	27	48
	Slightly agree	12	12	24
	Quite agree	31	36	67
	Agree a lot	50	44	94
	Totally agree	169	166	335
Total		283	285	568

Table 18.5 Cross-tab: places to Play, 10 Years Old

		<i>Boy or Girl</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	
In my area there are enough places to play in or to have a good time	I do not agree	18	18	36
	Slightly agree	8	8	16
	Quite agree	37	34	71
	Agree a lot	35	45	80
	Totally agree	138	126	264
Total		236	231	467

Table 18.6 Cross-tab: safe to Walk, 10 Years Old

		<i>Boy or Girl</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	
I feel safe when walking in the area I live in	I do not agree	15	25	40
	Slightly agree	22	27	49
	Quite agree	34	38	72
	Agree a lot	62	50	112
	Totally agree	103	93	196
Total		236	233	469

Table 18.7 Cross-tab: safe in Public Places

		<i>Boy or Girl</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	
I feel safe in public places in my neighborhood	I do not agree	7	16	23
	Slightly agree	9	16	25
	Quite agree	31	31	62
	Agree a lot	65	62	127
	Totally agree	122	103	225
Total		234	228	462

To conclude, the “low to medium” percentage of children who claim to feel completely safe when walking along the streets of their community: 41.5 percent (10-year-old children) and 59.0 percent (8-year-old children) ought to be taken into account, since these same children’s level of satisfaction with life in their communities in general exhibit high values: 3.6 (on a scale of 0–4) in the case of 8-year-old children and 8.8 on (on a scale of 0–10) for 10-year-old children. Yet, what is even more remarkable is the fact that, when consulted about their level of satisfaction with their personal safety, the average response in 10-year-old children was 9.4 on a scale of 0–10. These differences confirm the idea that, when people are consulted on general issues, their response values tend to be higher; on the other hand, when questioned on the basis of disaggregated specific dimensions, the values tend to be lower.

Young People’s Opinions and Life Experiences with their Community

During the period 2014–2015, a study was developed—The Project Young People’s Satisfaction with Life in the Country, by UNI-COM, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universidad Nacional de Lomas de Zamora: National Incentive Program for the Nation’s Teachers-as-Researchers. The major aim was to analyze young people’s opinion, by applying a Likert scale, ESCVP (Tonon 2011), which measures the level of satisfaction with life in their country, created by Tonon in 2009 and first published in 2011.

This was a cross-sectional descriptive study in which the subject was approached by the quantitative method, using a questionnaire containing identification data, questions about life in the community and ESCVP.

The questionnaire was applied to a simple random sample of 137 young people aged 18–21 and residing in the southern part of Greater Buenos Aires. Quantitative analysis of the data obtained was carried out through the statistics program SPSS 19.0. Tables 18.8 and 18.9 show the distribution of sampling by gender and age.

Regarding the questions related to life in the community, the young people were asked about:

- the level of satisfaction with life in their community;
- safety on the streets;
- their personal participation in community groups or organizations;
- the existence of meeting spaces for neighbors in their community;
- mutual help among neighbors;

Table 18.8 Sampling by Gender

		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Valid percent</i>	<i>Cumulative percentage</i>
Valid	Female	75	54.7	54.7	54.7
	Male	61	44.5	44.5	99.3
	6	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	137	100.0	100.0	

Table 18.9 Sampling by Age

		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Valid percent</i>	<i>Cumulative percentage</i>
Valid	18	35	25.5	25.5	25.5
	19	36	26.3	26.3	51.8
	20	38	27.7	27.7	79.6
	21	28	20.4	20.4	100.0
	Total	137	100.0	100.0	

- the way neighbors are organized to solve community problems;
- neighbors' care of the neighborhood social infrastructure.

On a scale of 0–10, the young people's level of satisfaction in the community reached a standard of 6.64. With reference to satisfaction, Veenhoven (1994: 4–5) defined this as the value assessment of something which involves both cognitive and affective assessment—applied either to evanescent matter or a stable attitude, taking into account that its determiners may be sought at two levels: the external conditions of the subjects' lives and their internal processes.

On a scale of 0–5, the level of satisfaction with safety on the streets exhibited a standard of 2.09. This personal experience coincides with the point made by Castel (2004) with reference to social insecurity, by stating that “modern societies are constructed on insecure ground because they are formed by subjects who fail to find—within themselves and in their environment—the capacity to ensure protection” (p. 13).

Regarding their participation in community groups or organizations, only 8 percent of the total number of young people admitted to having taken part, and of that total, 3 percent formed part of Catholic church groups with 2 percent taking part in community organizations. As for the remainder, they were not specific about the type of organizations with which they were connected.

When questioned whether neighbors had been organized to solve community problems during the previous five years, 46.0 percent gave an affirmative response while 49.6 percent denied their having done so; the remainder (4.4 percent) failed to answer. On the other hand, regarding their neighbors' mutual assistance when in need, 60.0 percent gave an affirmative answer while 33.6 percent answered negatively and the remainder (5.8 percent) gave no answer. It should be pointed out that the difference in the percentage of positive answers to these questions indicates that the percentage of cases of mutual assistance among neighbors was higher than the number of situations in which the neighbors may have organized themselves in order to solve

a community problem. This may be related to the existence of meeting spaces in the community, to which only 38.0 percent of the surveyed young people gave an affirmative response while 59.9 percent answered negatively and the remainder (2.2 percent) failed to answer.

This low percentage of affirmative answers has led us to conclude that these communities do not possess enough public and collective scenarios where its members may interact because, quoting Lechner (2002: 46–47), the new public places offer new rituals that do not necessarily create bonds of social cohesion. For a place to be considered a public space, it should be a space of encounter for collective expression of community life and daily exchange, as well as a symbol of collective identity—in which case we might say that a public space is a physical, symbolical and political space (Borja and Muxi 2000: 8, 41–42).

Regarding the neighbors' care of their neighborhood's social infrastructure, 48.9 percent gave a positive answer while 50.4 percent answered negatively and the remainder (0.7 percent) did not respond. In this respect the percentage of positive answers is also low, since it does not even total half of the total number of surveyed subjects, which indicates that the neighbors do not totally consider the social infrastructure as their own; and, though it virtually belongs to them, in practice only a few take care of it. This exposes one of the forms of erosion of community life. According to Lechner (2002: 46), in the early 21st century the neighborhood is perceived as alien, not as one's property, and thus considered to be lacking in emotional significance (Lechner 2002: 46).

University Students' Definitions of Community

Forty-two university students aged 20–60 years, and taking the course of Technician in Children and Family at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Universidad Nacional de Lomas de Zamora, were consulted on their concept of community; only three were male.

The reason for our choice of this population is the fact that they were enrolled on a course of studies oriented to everyday issues—including risk situations for boys, girls and young people—and were also devoted to the construction of strategies for the improvement of their quality of life.

All of the students consulted resided in Greater Buenos Aires, their jobs being diverse: office workers, baby-sitters, employees in state offices, factory workers and housewives. We identified one lawyer, one policewoman and one mid-wife. In answer to our request, each of the students, anonymously, wrote down their definition of the term “community” and handed it in to us.

After reading and analyzing all the answers we were able to classify them into four categories, each of which centered on the definition in some of the points related to the theoretical concept of “community” developed by the authors devoted to this topic:

1. The community as a group of persons sharing the same culture, traditions and customs.
2. The community as a place where people belong, related to their identity and to the family.
3. The community as a geographical space, place of residence or habitat related to social coexistence, mobility and sharing.
4. The community as a group of people living in a certain place (neighborhood) with common interests aimed toward the achievement of a greater good. This definition was given by the highest number of subjects (26/42).

It is remarkable that the most reiterated definition should be the one centered in the concept of community as the act of sharing a geographical space of residence, as well as common interests.

This definition coincides with the most traditional concepts of community and, clearly, does not include other outlooks that make reference to the present tendency to differentiate the existence of different kinds of communities in which people, in fact, do not share a geographical space yet do share common interests oriented to the achievement of a greater good for that group. In this sense, we may say that the definition of community associated to the idea of sharing a geographical space has persisted over the years.

Regarding common interests and the greater good, Cortina (2005) considers that pursuit of the greater good is inherent in politics and requires virtuous citizens (p. 71). This idea situates the community between the individual and the state, and thus the achievement of individual autonomy within a community demands the citizen's responsibility and loyalty towards the same (Cortina 2005: 82).

Final Remarks

In the children's opinions as well as in their life experiences, the community appears as a place where they feel satisfied, moderately safe and in which they acknowledge the existence of spaces where they can play, carry out activities and relate with other people.

In the young people's opinions as well as in their life experiences, the community is a space where they are moderately satisfied, though their degree of participation in community groups and organizations is low. They point out that there are few meeting spaces for the neighbors and, regarding the latter, they express that there is a higher percentage of cases in which neighbors have offered each other individual help when faced with a problem, than situations in which the neighbors have organized themselves to tackle some community problem. Finally, they responded that, in their experience, fewer than half the total number of neighbors take care of the community infrastructure. Regarding definitions of the concept of community, spontaneously constructed by university students and later analyzed and categorized, it was found that the most widely chosen category was the one that considers a community as a group of people who live in a specific geographical place and share common interests—which demonstrates the fact that the traditional definitions of the concept of community are still in force.

Espósito (2003) carried out an in-depth and extensive analysis of the origin of the term "community", by bringing up a definition of community that differs from the most popular and well-known concept. He (Espósito 2003: 25–26) points out that the first meaning that dictionaries give of the noun *communitas* is the one which makes sense, as opposed to ownership, for in the Latin languages "common" is that which is not one's own, i.e. what is beyond the boundary of private ownership, that which concerns us all and is therefore public—in other words, the opposite of private. Moreover, when referring to that which is considered public, we may remember Rabotnikoff who, in the early 1990s, stated that:

The public space, understood as the world in common, as an open space, and as the patrimony or institutional heritage of a community, should articulate the needs generated by an accelerated, traumatic, and excluding modernization.

Rabotnikoff 1993: 90

Thus, if public spaces are spaces common to everybody, those in which opinions are expressed, debates and joint activities take place and living in community is enjoyed, we can acknowledge the fact that community public spaces are an indicator of democracy (Tonon 2012: 27).

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FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO COMMUNITY EMERGENCE

A Conceptual Framework and Model to Rethink Youth–Community Interaction

Brad Olson and Mark A. Brennan

Introduction

This chapter presents a youth-engaged development model of community emergence to advance theory and practice of both youth engagement and community development. Recognizing the trend of academics and practitioners alike to treat these two fields as separate, the theoretical framework and conceptual model put forth can serve as an integrated approach to addressing the needs of both fields. Youth-engaged development has the potential to help realize the many developmental benefits that youth have to offer as leaders, civically engaged citizens and local organizers, while at the same time contributing to the emergence of community (Shaw et al. 2014).

This focus on youth engagement and social inclusion is not the result of wishful thinking about how our young people might someday benefit from today's token investments. On the contrary, our focus is about an urgent need to engage young people worldwide in a significant, substantive way. The reality is that one-third of the world's population is aged 15 or younger, and one-half of the population is under age 25 (UN DESA 2011). This “youth bulge” represents not just a statistical anomaly but also an unprecedented opportunity for action and community development.

Community development, particularly from micro-level approaches (interactional field theory, social capital), is advanced by diverse local groups participating and contributing to improve local well-being (Wilkinson 1991; Bridger et al. 2011). Attention to this need for diversity is most often focused toward socioeconomic status, gender, race and other characteristics. However age, particularly the active inclusion of youth and seniors, receives scant attention. It is important to consider all age groups. Both of the previously mentioned groups bring a large body of experiential (life experience, skills) and emerging bodies of knowledge (technological understanding, social media, global citizenship).

Youth have often been overlooked as potential contributors to the community development process for a variety of, often unsubstantiated, reasons. Included are the unfounded perceptions that they are not committed or dependable, are transient and lack the maturity to substantially contribute to local life. The research and practice literature suggest otherwise and indicate that youth, when engaged, are eager to take on long-term ownership of development efforts (Shaw et al. 2014). We must remain cognizant that engaging youth in their communities benefits both the youth participants and communities themselves. It is in these settings that an acceptance of youth as agents of change can prove transformational. Research on youth and program evidence show conclusively that societies are made better, more stable and more secure when youth are active participants (Dolan and Brennan 2016). We have an equally impressive body of knowledge proving that youth themselves are better off for being part of the process. Their engagement results in far stronger social, psychological and developmental competencies, leading to adaptability, resilience and a long list of positive developmental outcomes (see Table 19.1).

The active engagement and resulting significant contributions of youth to local life and beyond are receiving increased attention from a variety of sectors (community development, youth development, international development/security). This dramatic shift in how we view the role of young people represents a paradigm shift in policy, research and programming. It calls on us to honestly challenge age-old stereotypes, our own preconceived notions of youth efficacy and commitment, and to actively seek the inclusion of youth as our equals in social change. It calls

Table 19.1 Positive Developmental Outcomes of Youth Engagement

<i>Benefits to Individuals</i>	<i>Benefits to Communities</i>
Enjoyment, fun, and friendship	Creation of joint solutions to social and civic problems or inequalities
Enhanced skills in areas such as group work, research, needs assessments, planning, program evaluations, and media campaigns	Strong community networks, identity, attachment, and capacity
Capacity to participate willingly in the community and contribute to its betterment	Better recognition of young people as contributors to the development of their communities and society
Greater connectedness to community	Enhanced participatory decision making and democratic governance in community institutions
Greater social awareness	Renewal and sustainability of community development efforts through injection of new “lifeblood”
A positive sense of self and identity	
Enhanced social support, resilience, and well-being	
Opportunities to provide leadership of organizations	
Academic and career development	
Development of personal networks and social capital	

on societies to be open to the engagement of young people as current contributors to society and not simply adults in waiting.

To help meet this challenge, this chapter will begin with a discussion of engagement and the factors needed to effectively integrate youth engagement into local capacity building. Based on this information, the chapter describes a newly proposed conceptual framework and model for integrating youth engagement and community development efforts, called youth-engaged development. The framework is detailed to explain the interactional field theory upon which the model rests, followed by an in-depth description of the model's design, domains and conceptual areas. Finally, recommendations for how educators, practitioners and local leaders can operationalize the model are made using a table of descriptive criteria to shape their work. The new approach put forth in this chapter is meant to serve as an intellectual rationale for engagement initiatives in various settings, one that helps link theory to practice.

Background

Approaches to Community Development and Youth Development

Academics and practitioners alike approach community development in different ways based on their own experiences and theoretical assumptions. Community development can be interpreted as a process of change, a program of planned activities, an outcome or desired change or an ideology of action (Garkovich 2011). As a process, community development can be practiced through a technical assistance, self-help or conflict approach. Technical assistance involves using specific technology and expertise to initiate a targeted or planned change within the community. The self-help approach seeks to bring local people together to identify and address their own needs. The conflict approach to community development assumes that in order for change to occur, there will be a challenge to the status quo and those in power. As a program of planned activities, community development is characterized by projects, programs and initiatives that seek to improve the local setting and population. As an outcome, community development is the desired impact on the physical locality, individual population or local conditions (e.g. social, employment, educational, environmental, health, recreational). Lastly, as an ideology of action, community development seeks a desired end or change through specific actions that are based on a set of beliefs. As a result, there is no shortage of community strategies to be studied by academics or implemented by practitioners and local people.

Similarly, youth engagement seeks a wide range of impacts and outcomes. Shaw et al. (2014) conceptualize these under a series of discourses. Youth engagement can be focused toward *Citizenship/Democracy*, where youth contribute to collective decisions while acquiring recognition of their voice in decision making. *Positive Youth Development* focuses on building the behavioral, cognitive and moral life skills necessary to be an active and functioning member of society. Engagement also facilitates *Belonging/Affiliation*. In this setting, youth establish social networks, ties to their locality and attachment to the people and place where they reside. This is important in that all provide a basis for community viability through increased interdependence across networks that facilitate community agency and action. Shaw et al. (2014) also identify *Care* as a central discourse. At the personal level, this builds strengths in adversity, builds empathy and prevents the escalation of problems. These benefit the community through social supports, service provision and more effective programs and services. Lastly, *Social Justice* is achieved when engaged youth seek to ensure civil and human rights for themselves and their fellow citizens.

Youth engagement can also be viewed as a continuum that includes from one end to the other: intervention (youth services); development (youth development); collective empowerment

(youth civic engagement and youth leadership); and systematic change (youth organizing) (Shaw et al. 2014). Youth civic engagement can range from formal to informal in nature, and take place at local, regional, national or international levels. Youth engagement is an activity “characterized by agency on the part of young people, as well as collective action toward social change that is youth-led and directed” (Shaw et al. 2014: 302). Youth engagement includes community service, volunteering, mutual aid, advocacy and campaigning, youth media and social entrepreneurship.

These two disparate, yet intertwined, approaches parallel each other. To bring them together into coordinated actions and mutually beneficial frameworks, a mechanism, logic and operationalized theory are needed. We suggest an interactional approach to community and youth development called youth-engaged development that meets this need. With this integrated approach, targeted action can be taken to better engage youth through community development and foster opportunities for more inclusive community interaction and participation across all age groups.

The Need for a New Integrated Approach

There is a need for a more inclusive approach to community development, one that engages the creativity and energy of youth to build more resilient, adaptive communities. Such an approach must not only bridge the social gap between adults and young people but also ensure that both groups are represented and active in local decision making.

Framing a Model around Interactional Field Theory

We seek to advance the study and practice of both youth development and community development by presenting a new conceptual model that integrates the two fields called the youth-engaged development model of community emergence. Previous work has sought to develop youth through civic engagement or community experiences or sought greater participation of youth in existing forms of community development. The youth-engaged development approach seeks to build community (emergence) among various social fields around a mutual interest in youth engagement. The model attempts to identify and organize several conceptual criteria necessary for integrating approaches to youth development and community development. The model requires researchers and practitioners alike to rethink their notions of community, social interaction and the role of local people, including youth, in its development. The model applies theory and concepts from the community development and youth development literature. Prior to describing the model in detail, a summary of interactional field theory is provided to better understand the model’s underlying theoretical framework.

Interactional Field Theory

We approach community development from an interactional field theory perspective. From this view, community emerges when individuals within a physical locality collectively act across different social fields to address common, general, place-relevant matters (Kaufman 1959; Wilkinson 1970, 1991; Bridger et al. 2011). The model is organized on the principle that interaction and engagement at all levels facilitate the development and emergence of community. The model incorporates several core concepts of interactional field theory including social fields, social ties, interaction, community agency and collective action.

Social fields are special interest groups, collections of people who share a common and specific interest or issue of concern (Kaufman 1959). Social fields are dynamic. They are made up of

individuals, groups, organizations and other formal and informal associations that discuss, advocate and act on specific interests such as education, economic development, health, environmental protection, religion and much more. Social fields are unbound. Individuals can belong to one or more social fields, with the social fields themselves waxing and waning in membership and activity as individuals enter, interact and take action in pursuit of their interests, exit, and re-enter over time. Nonetheless, members are characterized by a connection to the field's common interest.

Social fields and community are based on human connections in the form of *social ties (bonds)*. Social ties can be classified as *weak* or *strong*, indicating the strength of a given relationship or bond between two individuals (Granovetter 1973). Weak ties (bonds) are typically seen between acquaintances or newly formed relationships. Alternately, strong ties (bonds) represent closer relationships between people, such as family and close friends. Strong ties can develop from initial weak ties as relationships grow and increase over time through interaction and collaborative work. Both types of ties can exist among individuals within and across social fields. Weak ties present the unique benefit of creating awareness of community issues and revealing opportunities for related action/involvement by expanding one's social network. Awareness of such issues and opportunities to act might not otherwise be evident through a smaller social network consisting of strong ties alone.

Social ties are formed and strengthened through *social interaction*. Interaction can be both formal (purpose-driven or work-related activities) and informal (casual, social activities). Places and opportunities for individuals to interact and socialize are called *venues for interaction* (Wilkinson 1991). Increasing the number of venues for interaction increases the opportunity for individuals to form weak and strong ties among one another, both within and across social fields. Interaction is key to enhancing community by establishing and extending social networks as well as making them stronger and denser. It is also the key to cutting across social fields and bringing fields together to address common, general needs that benefit the collective. When this takes place, the *community field*, or community, emerges. This ability and capacity for collective action is called community agency (Wilkinson 1991; Luloff and Swanson 1995; Bridger, Luloff and Krannich 2002).

Community agency reflects the adaptive capacity to manage, utilize and enhance one's resources (Brennan 2005; Bridger et al. 2011). Social interaction enhances the local population's awareness and ability to act. Individuals and social fields are made aware of mutually concerning issues through social interaction and communication. Through this process, agency emerges. Agency means having access to greater intellectual, physical and capital resources that extend beyond individuals, social fields and potentially the locality itself. Awareness, desire and the capacity to address local concerns are of little good unless put to action. When local people act collectively across social fields to address mutual issues and enhance their general or collective well-being, they complete the community equation. In doing so, they create a structure or mechanism for future action.

Kaufman (1959) identified three key elements of the interactional (field theory) model as: (1) the persons (actors/participants) involved; (2) the associations or groups through which action takes place; and (3) the stages/phases of action over time. Community participants are defined by their position (e.g. social rank, material possessions, age, gender), memberships (e.g. clubs, associations, organizations) and behaviors within local society, indicating some degree of involvement in local affairs. One can be heavily involved in local policy making or simply affiliate with the locality based on residence and use of public services. Community groups are collections of people, both formal and informal, that engage in community activity. In any given locality, groups of people gather and form together over time. Groups can be formal or informal, meet regularly or as needed. Some groups are more oriented toward community action (efforts

that benefit the collective population or build community structures) than others due to their mission/focus or membership, but all groups are capable of contributing to local well-being. Lastly, community action can be viewed as a series of stages or phases. These are less explicit steps and more broad activities that lead to achieving some vision or goal. The phases are described later in detail, but include: initiation or spreading awareness/interest; organization of sponsorship; goal setting and strategy formulation; recruitment of participants; and implementation/achievement (Kaufman 1959; Wilkinson 1991).

From an interactional field theory perspective, community is an emergent and dynamic phenomenon. Individuals and social fields may often work separately toward their own respective interests, but when faced with a place-based issue of mutual concern, local residents have the potential to participate and address that issue through the emergence of community. It should be noted that not all residents are required to, or do, participate in the community field (the emergent community mechanism or structure). Some individuals may be more involved than others and over time, key individuals may emerge as local leaders who consistently act in the community field. These local leaders are often well respected by others and can be valuable assets in the community development process. Ultimately, community is strengthened when: more social fields, groups and individuals participate; diverse interests are represented; social ties and networks expand; norms and processes for communication and interaction are established; interaction increases; agency increases; and action increases.

Strengthening the components of community represents *development of community*. Development of community is process-focused. Projects may succeed or fail, but the process of people coming together to discuss and act upon issues is often of greater value than the outcome. It is this adaptive capacity to work together that matters. In contrast, *development in community* is characterized by work that supports or leads to the production of physical infrastructure, economic capital and other, often tangible, goods within a locality. Development in community is outcome-focused and is what often comes to mind when people hear the term community development (Brennan 2005; Bridger et al. 2011). Both forms of development are beneficial and necessary, but it is important to make this distinction as practitioners use the model to plan youth engagement and community development-related activities.

Youth and Social Fields

When viewed as participants in the emergent community process, youth are valuable members of the local society that can interact with other members to pursue common interests. Such interests are at the core of social fields and there are many subjects in which youth can share a mutual interest with their adult counterparts. For example, youth are likely to have an interested stake in topics of education, recreation, local employment opportunities for high school graduates, or college preparation programs. Any interests or topics relevant to young people's future and well-being have the potential to unite them and other adult members within a given social field. Opportunities exist within the social field to foster communication, engagement and interaction that can lead to greater acknowledgement of young people's value and contribution to local development.

When viewed as the central focus or interest of a social field, youth issues and the development of young people can form the basis for initiating and organizing a social field in and of itself. Individuals and groups may share a specific concern around youth issues related to education, health, crime and risky behavior, employment or civic participation in elections. These youth-specific issues can become the central interest that unites various individuals and groups and spurs them into action to address those issues. This coming together of others around the needs

of youth represents the formation of a social field. As the base of concerned members grows and extends into other fields, there is the potential for the community field to emerge as members act to address a youth-related issue. Furthermore, youth-related social fields can help foster greater youth–adult interaction by attracting more young people to participate in local affairs to address issues that directly concern them.

Stages of Youth Engagement as Venues for Interaction

Venues for interaction facilitate the emergence of community by enabling members from within and across social fields to interact, develop agency and act collectively to address a common need. Venues can be formal (e.g. committees, meetings, clubs) or informal (e.g. social gatherings, public spaces, local establishments where residents can congregate). The degree of formality may change depending on the issue, individuals involved and timeline of any desired action or project, but the significance of any venue is the opportunity to bring different people together to interact.

In order to encourage greater youth participation in the community-building process, practitioners, educators and other local leaders should seek to interact with their youth populations through youth-specific venues. Such venues should allow youth to voice their own interests and concerns as well as learn of those held by other (adult) members. In this context, insight from the youth engagement literature can help identify specific venues for interaction that not only engage youth, but also prepare them to take on local issues and contribute to the emergence of community on their own.

Youth engagement can be viewed as a spectrum or continuum that encompasses different stages or levels of development. At each stage, youth become more competent, responsible and participatory in the democratic and civic processes of building community. Shaw et al. (2014: 303) present a youth engagement continuum based on the 2003 Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing, which has been recreated in Table 19.2. The continuum offers a valuable way to shape venues for interaction around different stages of youth engagement. The continuum increases in the level of youth engagement from left to right. When identifying possible venues for interaction, we feel that the upper three stages (youth leadership, civic engagement and youth organizing) represent the most valuable forms of engagement to aid the emergence of community. These three stages encourage the active participation and interaction of youth with their peers and adults. On the other hand, the lower two stages (youth services approach and youth development) represent internal development and, while important and necessary to address deficiencies, do not encourage the same level of interaction and engagement with other members of society as the other three stages. The lower two stages are shown in the table for reference, but the primary focus of the remaining discussion is on the upper three stages, where youth take on active roles in local affairs.

The following descriptions of three youth engagement stages (youth leadership development, youth civic engagement and youth organizing) summarize the information found in Table 19.2 and complete the theoretical framework for the youth-engaged development (YED) model. Each stage builds upon the previous one and demonstrates the value of establishing and strengthening successive opportunities for youth to engage in local affairs. The stages of engagement are later used to contextualize the model's conceptual areas.

The first stage, *youth leadership development*, establishes the knowledge, skills and abilities to solve problems and make decisions around activities within the community. Formal and non-formal educational programs can provide explicit leadership development and training, but youth must be given opportunities to put that training into practice. Venues for interaction at this

Table 19.2 Youth Engagement Continuum

<i>Intervention</i>	<i>Development</i>	<i>Collective Empowerment</i>		<i>Systematic Change</i>
Youth services approach	Youth development (YD)	Youth leadership (YL) (includes components of YD plus)	Civic engagement (CE) (includes components of YD and YL plus)	Youth organizing (includes components of CE, YD, and YL plus)
Defines young people as clients	Provides services and support, access to caring adults and safe space	Builds in authentic youth leadership opportunities within programming and organization	Engages young people in political education and awareness	Builds a membership base
Provides services to address individual problems and pathologies of young people	Provides opportunities for the growth and development of young people	Helps young people deepen historical and cultural understanding of their experiences and community issues	Builds skills and capacity for power analysis and action around issues young people identify	Involves youth as part of core staff and governing body
Programming defined around treatment and prevention	Meets young people where they are	Builds skills and capacities of young people to be decision makers and problem solvers	Begins to help young people build collective identity of young people as social change agents	Engages in direct action and political mobilizing
	Builds young people's individual competencies; provides age-appropriate support; emphasizes positive, self-identity; supports youth–adult partnerships	Youth participate in community projects	Encourages young people in advocacy and negotiation	Engages in alliances and coalitions

stage involve youth taking on greater leadership responsibilities and decision-making roles within local groups, including those predominantly made up of youth as well as adult organizations.

The second stage, *youth civic engagement*, informs youth of their collective, social and political identity within local society. Here, youth are encouraged to learn about political power, negotiation and ways to advocate on behalf of their own interests. It is important for youth to view themselves as equal and important members of society that have a voice. Civic engagement is more than just getting young people to vote. While voting is a clear form of civic participation,

youth should be encouraged to advocate on behalf of their own interests and take action beyond the election cycle. Venues for interaction at this stage require youth to contribute their time, resources and energy in order to actively exercise their local, civic power.

The third and last stage, *youth organizing*, involves youth growing their base of support to become their own social change agents and advocates based on what matters most to them. At this stage, youth actively take on roles in the local governing structures, be they in elected government or other local decision-making capacities. This stage goes beyond having individual youth in positions of leadership and power. Instead, youth grow as a social group, capable of mobilizing their peers and others to take direct action in support of youth priorities. Again, political mobilization during an election year is an easier venue for interaction to imagine, but youth organizing can extend beyond elections. At this stage, youth may even organize to the point of resembling their own social field, which is a clear indicator of their ability and responsibility to participate in the emergent community process.

The theoretical framework can be summarized as follows. Youth are inherently a part of local society with unique needs and interests. Youth and adults thus have a mutual responsibility to support greater youth participation in the community development process. The exclusion of youth in community building risks not only alienating a growing segment of the population, but also risks stifling innovation and creativity based on different, youth perspectives. According to interactional field theory, community emerges from the interaction, agency, and action of members from across different social fields to address mutual, place-relevant matters. Opportunities for youth to join, lead and span local social fields positively contribute to the emergence of community. The three stages of youth engagement presented above provide guidance on how to foster greater youth participation in the community-building process. The proposed model seeks to operationalize the theoretical framework through these different stages of youth engagement using familiar concepts from the community development literature.

The Youth-Engaged Development Model of Community Emergence

Youth engagement and community development are complex and dynamic. It is important to have a clear understanding of how the theory and practice of each converge to form the youth-engaged development model of community emergence. This chapter has already presented a theoretical view of community emergence and the importance of engaging youth in different ways; however, a model is needed to help translate the framework into observable and actionable practice.

The model presented in Figure 19.1 operationalizes concepts of community development through the stages of youth engagement to form the new model of youth-engaged development (YED). From this perspective, youth are encouraged and prepared to contribute to the emergent community process through different participatory roles or stages of engagement, which are represented as venues for interaction.

YED is a logical and well-suited mechanism for young people to contribute to their own personal growth as well as the emergence and growth of their communities. YED involves youth interacting, communicating and collaborating with their peers, practitioners, educators and local leaders through one of three stages of engagement. The model focuses on an issue of local concern and the venue for interaction (i.e. stage of engagement) through which youth and other participants seek to address that issue. The model places the issue and venue for interaction at the center of three intersecting domains, which further delineate six conceptual areas. The model identifies important characteristics of youth-engaged development in an effort to help identify and support local youth engagement opportunities.

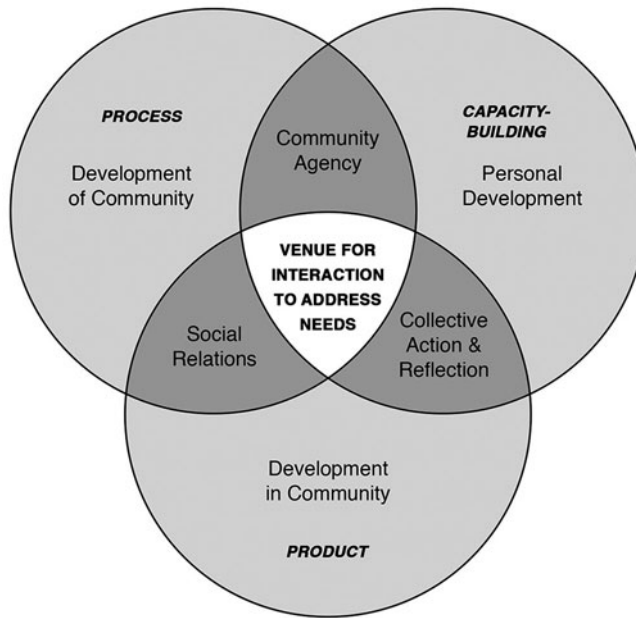


Figure 19.1 Youth-Engaged Development (YED) Model of Community Emergence.

Model Domains and Conceptual Areas

The model is made up of three domains (*Process*, *Product* and *Capacity Building*) that have been arranged in an intersecting manner to represent a tri-Venn diagram. Three of the model's six conceptual areas represent types of development (*Development of Community*, *Development in Community*, and *Personal Development*) and have been positioned within the above domains respectively. The remaining three conceptual areas (*Community Agency*, *Collective Action and Reflection*, and *Social Relations*) are located within the intersection of the three domains. The interrelated nature of these domains further reflects the complexity of community emergence and related development work.

The domains are meant to focus users' attention on three overarching areas that characterize the purpose of the YED model of community emergence. The Capacity-Building domain of YED seeks to develop both the individual youth participant through personal knowledge and growth and the collective social group(s)/field(s) through greater civic knowledge, action and reflection. The Process domain of YED recognizes that youth engagement and community development are dynamic processes that develop and change over time. Young people and adults contribute to the emergence of community through processes of communication and social interaction. Lastly, the Product domain of YED acknowledges the outcome-based aims of community development, focusing attention on the tangible and intangible results/goals that seek to address local needs, solve local problems or enhance local well-being.

The model's conceptual areas serve to operationalize the theoretical framework by identifying several relevant terms/concepts from the community development and youth engagement literature that can be identified and practiced through a YED approach to community emergence. It is important to understand that all of the conceptual areas are valuable to the emergence of

community and share relationships based on their overlapping domains. The following paragraphs detail the defining characteristics of each conceptual area, which have been derived from the interactional field theory framework. It should be noted that while the domains and conceptual areas are intended to aid planning and facilitation efforts, the YED model stops short of identifying concrete metrics for assessment and evaluation as such items warrant further research.

Development of Community is at the center of the Process domain and is focused on the social interaction that enhances human connections to build community capacity. Purposeful interaction and communication between individuals leads to the development of weak and strong social ties within and across social fields. Social ties allow for information to be shared, resources to be identified and action to be organized. Development of community represents the strategic investment in strengthening relationships and social networks for both present and future action. In doing so, this type of development enables the whole (i.e. a coordinated group of locally active participants) to become greater than the sum of its parts (i.e. an uncoordinated group of individuals acting alone).

Development in Community is at the center of the Product domain and is focused on the outcome(s) or end result(s). An outcome can be characterized as the solution proposed, intervention enacted or product created to address a local need/issue. Development in community seeks to enhance the well-being of local people or local conditions in some way, be it through tangible or intangible results. This type of development can take on many different forms, including the production/development of: physical capital (e.g. infrastructure, tools, environmental management); intellectual capital (e.g. plans, ideas, draft agreements or solutions); financial capital (e.g. fundraising, leveraging investments, matching funds); social capital (e.g. formal partnerships or alliances, professional networking and mechanisms for greater representation and advocacy); or human capital (e.g. recruiting and training volunteers, educational outreach and developing the labor force).

Personal Development is at the center of the Capacity-Building domain and is focused on cognitive, social and psychological changes within the youth participants who contribute to the emergence of community, though other (adult) participants may reflect these changes too. The conceptual area involves developing the capacity of youth based on the descriptive changes/outcomes identified earlier in the three stages of youth engagement. The six Cs of positive youth development (competence, confidence, character, connection, caring and contribution) also provide guidance for describing the personal growth of youth participants (Learner et al. 2005). Furthermore, personal development can be characterized by intellectual growth (e.g. Bloom's cognitive taxonomy) concerning issue-specific content knowledge.

Social Relations is the conceptual area that lies at the intersection of the Process and Product domains and is focused on the perceived quality and maintenance of the relationships among participants. Participants' perceptions of goodwill, trust, reciprocity and sense of commitment to relationships can determine the likelihood of future collaboration and the continuation of community emergence. These perceptions are likely to be influenced by participants' perceptions of the socially interactive process (development of community) and the issue-specific product work (development in community). Participants' perceptions about the process and product(s) could be positive, negative or mixed. For example, the end goal or outcome was achieved, but the process was plagued with problems or conflict. In another scenario, the work fell short of its intended goal or desired result, but a process or set of norms was established that may prove useful in future efforts. Individuals' perceptions and evaluations may vary, but logically, having positive feelings about working with others and seeing a project succeed should result in a willingness to participate again in future development efforts. Interactional field theory places greater emphasis on the process rather than the outcome; establishing positive processes and

norms not only helps overcome project challenges and setbacks, but also provides a guide for future efforts, extending collaboration beyond the life of a single project or issue.

Community Agency lies at the intersection of the Process and Capacity–Building domains and is focused on the adaptive capacity of participants (as individuals and as a collective) to manage, utilize and enhance their resources to address local issues. Agency also refers to the knowledge of and ability to work through local channels of power and (democratic) decision-making processes to garner support and advocate action. The different stages of youth engagement provide opportunities for greater social and civic participation in local affairs. Fostering greater youth participation enhances community agency by revealing new perspectives and identifying alternative ways to enhance local resources.

Collective Action and Reflection lies at the intersection of the Product and Capacity–Building domains and is focused on the collective action that occurs to address the issue and how such action is improved and communicated for future community-building efforts. Building local relationships and developing local resources is only beneficial if such potential is put to action. Here, participants collectively put their agency (resources) and capacity (knowledge) into action to address the issue (resulting in a product or outcome). Reflection helps reinforce what worked and identify what can be improved for future community action. Reflection can vary in terms of formality, but it should be purposeful and focus on how the collective action came to exist. Such reflection inevitably causes one to look at all aspects of the model, but we feel such reflection is most valuable when performed after such collective, community-focused action has taken place. Purposeful and meaningful reflection can help reinforce learning, encourage continued development, and build upon past successes.

It is worth commenting on the order in which the above YED model's components have been presented. The model is not designed to be cyclical or reflect a prescriptive order of events, though some conceptual areas are generally (and logically) exercised before others (e.g. establishing social relations to build community agency, which leads to collective action; and collective action depends on personal development and capacity to create a product or produce an outcome). Rather, the model intends to capture the dynamic and complex nature of community emergence through several unique, yet interrelated conceptual areas. Furthermore, the model is designed around the notion that integrating youth engagement into development strategies will result in more inclusive and resilient communities. The model represents a tool for both planning and observing community development efforts by calling attention to key concepts and their role in the emergence of community. Equipped with a better theoretical and conceptual understanding of the model, we end the chapter with a discussion of its potential utility and application.

Application of the Model

Ultimately, the model aims to achieve a more holistically minded and representative development regime, one that engages all segments of the population to enhance local well-being and build local capacity. The goal is to reach a point where local development regularly engages segments of the local population that have previously been excluded, youth being chief among them. This model can help practitioners, educators and local leaders go beyond the ceremonial youth/student appointments or token youth stakeholder session to realize the benefits of integrating community development and youth development work. By doing so, they will not only enhance local well-being in the present, but will also train youth, the next generation of educators, practitioners and leaders, to do the same in the future.

Overcoming the status quo can be difficult. Obstacles such as tradition, precedence (or lack thereof), familiarity, power and politics, budget limitations and more threaten to discourage

this new, integrated approach to youth and community development. Still, we outline three contexts in which the model can be applied:

1. Existing community development entities that seek greater youth participation to expand their stakeholders/beneficiaries or replenish their ranks with newer, younger participants.
2. Existing youth development entities that desire to increase their impact on community development and increase local support for youth-related issues.
3. Future or existing entities looking to plan new development projects and programs aimed at building community capacity through greater individual engagement (youth or otherwise).

The authors acknowledge that youth and community development work is highly varied and dependent on the given situation and need. As a result, it is difficult to illustrate the model's application using specific cases (real or hypothetical); to do so would only limit the model's interpretation and thus limit its potential utility. Instead, the authors seek to further explain the model's utility by outlining a series of characteristics that can be used to apply the model to both current and future development efforts. Table 19.3 presents a matrix of several categories (*setting, format, model conceptual areas* and *phases of community action*) that the authors feel to be most relevant to each of the three stages of youth engagement. The intersection of each stage with a given category reveals specific characteristics that describe a potential venue for interaction. The matrix allows

Table 19.3 Descriptive Characteristics Shaping Venues for Interaction

<i>Stages of Youth Engagement</i>	<i>Youth Leadership Development Youth participate in community projects</i>	<i>Youth Civic Engagement Youth work in advocacy and negotiation</i>	<i>Youth Organizing Youth engage in alliances and coalitions</i>
Setting	Secondary schools Post-secondary schools Non-governmental organizations	Secondary schools Post-secondary schools Non-governmental organizations Governmental/political institutions	Grassroots Post-secondary schools Non-governmental organizations Governmental/political institutions Political parties
Format	Non-formal Formal	Non-formal Formal	Informal Non-formal Formal
YED Model Conceptual Areas	Personal development Development of community Social relations	Personal development Community agency Development of community Social relations	Personal development Collective action & reflection Development in community Development of community Social relations
Phases of Community Action	Initiation Organization of sponsorship	Goal setting and strategy formulation Recruitment	Implementation

one to classify existing programs/projects based on its category and stage of engagement. A brief explanation of each category is presented below.

- *Setting*—the organization/place in which youth-engaged development takes place. Types include: grassroots; primary and secondary schools; post-secondary schools; non-governmental organizations; government/political institutions; and political parties (Shaw et al. 2014).
- *Format*—the (educational) delivery mechanism in which youth are engaged or instructed for personal development—typically defined by the presence or absence of systematic instruction, rigid curricula/training and institutional structure; types include: informal, non-formal, and formal (La Belle 1982).
- *YED Model Conceptual Areas*—see previous explanation of the YED model.
- *Phases of Community Action*—events that occur in the process of building the emergent community field and lead to community action. The phases include: initiation (identifying and spreading awareness of common needs that may serve as a potential focus for collective action); organization of sponsorship (coordinating and integrating resources and actions within and across segments of the population); goal setting and strategy formulation (developing a common vision/goal that exceeds individual and group-specific priorities and identifying the actions/steps of measureable progress necessary to achieve the vision/goal); recruitment (gathering and organizing local supporters (residents) to carry out the planned actions/steps); and implementation (formally committing resources and actions to achieve the planned actions/steps and overall vision/goal) (Kaufman 1959; Wilkinson 1991).

Conclusion

The concepts identified within the model can be used to better frame effective youth and community development initiatives that are mutually beneficial to both groups. More important, it directly links the two groups into a concerted effort to improve local well-being. The model can also be extended to adult, senior and other audiences as well to help ensure social inclusion and broad-based participation in local development. Overall, the model can be used to increase leadership, civic engagement and collective action inclusive of all groups of people. Program developers would find it particularly useful in positioning specific development initiatives (developed *in* the community) in the context of wider capacity building (development *of* the community). Future research can further empirically test and operationalize this model to explore the specific strengths of connections and concepts within the model. Equally important, program and policy makers can at the same time use the model to critically frame and design current applied efforts. With such logic, theory and research in place, efforts to develop youth and community capacities will be at hand.

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BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF YOUTH

Narratives of Community and Belonging among Young People Attending Youth Cafés in Ireland

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Introduction

The literature on community and community development has arguably been quite adult-centric in focus, with less attention given to communities of children and young people. Interventions involving young people tend to be framed in terms of youth development, rather than community development. Drawing on findings from a national study of youth cafés in Ireland, we argue that youth development initiatives of this nature have facilitated the emergence of place-based communities of young people, characterized by solidarity, trust and shared norms. In particular, we argue that the distinctive features of the youth café model, including an emphasis on participation, equality and youth ownership, encourage young people to see themselves as having responsibility for their communities. The chapter starts with a brief overview of the literature in relation to youth, youth development and community development, before proceeding to describe the youth café model and the policy context for the emergence of youth cafés in Ireland. We then move on to outline the methodology underpinning the study, present key findings and discuss the implications of the findings in terms of youth and community development.

Young People, Youth Development and Community Development

“Youth” or adolescence is a time of transition and growth, one that is marked by significant biological, psychological and social changes. While the youth phase is commonly one of exploration, self-reflection and boundary-pushing (Lalor et al. 2007), it is argued that the experience of youth has been affected by the changing nature of society in recent decades (Cote 2014). In the past, the transition to adulthood tended to follow quite a traditional path, structured according to gender and social class. By contrast, young people today can construct their own “choice biographies”, with freedom to actively create their identities, reflect on their options and be pro-active about their futures (Thomson 2007; Farrugia 2013; Furlong 2013). Children are

increasingly likely to grow up in a lone parent or step-parent¹ family (Allan et al. 2011). The collective security traditionally provided by church and community has declined, while technology and social media have assumed an increased importance in young people's lives (see Buckingham and Willett 2006).

Research shows that the social, economic and cultural resources that are embedded in young people's "social ecologies" shape and reflect how they negotiate and respond to the challenges of modern life. In particular, supportive relationships with at least "*one good adult*" remain critical to the well-being and transitions of young people (Thomson 2007; Dooley and Fitzgerald 2013). The African proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" highlights the role of community in positively influencing the development of children and youth. The importance of a positive relationship between young people and the community of which they are a part is emphasized by youth development theories (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Lerner et al. 2009), ecological models of development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006) and social capital theory (Putnam 2000; Billet 2014). Community engagement and belonging is associated with positive outcomes at individual and community levels in areas like mental and physical health, safety and happiness (Schaefer-McDaniel 2004; Ferguson 2006). For example, Cheng et al. (2014) found that young people who felt a sense of connection to their neighborhoods were more hopeful and less likely to be depressed.

Whereas historically young people were viewed as passive recipients of community support, over recent decades a more active conception of young people's roles as fully engaged citizens is accorded increasing prominence in policy and research (Zeldin 2004). This represents a strengths-based approach to youth development that recognizes the capabilities of all children and youth to change their circumstances, and the significance of people and organizations in social ecologies to help them in effecting positive social change. These trends reflect changing conceptions of young people in society strongly driven by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and advances in the sociology of childhood, which challenge those working with children and young people to examine how they share power with young people (see Devine 2000). It is argued that community participation enables young people to democratically engage as citizens with their communities and society, leading to better decisions and services for young people, while strengthening skills and self-esteem among youth (Sinclair and Franklin, 2000; Lansdown, 2001; Checkoway 2011).

The importance of involving children and young people in community development initiatives is emphasized in the literature. As Brennan et al. (2007: para. 2) state, "youth must be fully engaged and involved in change efforts at the community level if they are to learn to function as effective members of society". This growing literature on young people and community development is commensurate with research on youth participation and Positive Youth Development (PYD). A common thread in these approaches is their focus on young people's agency in shaping their own communities, youth imaginings of communities, civic engagement and the significance of young people's voices in community planning and community organizing (see Ginwright and James 2002). Other comparable concepts such as "youth led community organizing" (see Delgado and Staples 2008), "youth led community building" (Camino 2005) and "youth led decision-making" (Blanchet-Cohen et al. 2014) are also accorded prominence in the literature. Drawing on approaches from the Positive Youth Development (PYD) literature for example, Camino's (2005) work on "youth led community building" notes the importance of engaging youth in problem solving, goal setting and policy planning for enhancing youth leadership, instilling managerial skills in children and youth and the significance of participatory approaches for offsetting risk factors to do with poverty, neglect and other forms of social marginalization.

The Youth Café Model and the Irish Policy Context

Defined as dedicated “safe” spaces for young people to “hang out” with peers, youth cafés are drug- and alcohol-free environments, designed for relaxation, recreation, entertainment and, where appropriate, as a site for information, advice or even direct service provision (Prince’s Trust 2005; Forkan et al. 2010). Youth cafés are run according to core youth work principles, such as equality, respect and inclusion, while youth participation in the running of the youth café is strongly emphasized. Children and youth, ranging typically from 12 to 18 years of age, assume leadership positions in designing and managing the space in conjunction with adults.

The youth café model has become increasingly popular in the UK, Ireland and Australia over the past decade. For example, 163 youth cafés were in operation across the Irish state in 2013 compared to just one in 2000 (Forkan et al. 2015). Youth cafés are promoted as distinctive youth forums that are led *by* young people *for* young people (ibid.). Brady et al. (2015) suggest that the appeal of the youth café model to young people in Ireland relates in part to the “structured informality” (Nolas 2014) of the model. This approach combines an emphasis on structured activities such as games clubs or volunteering initiatives with informal activities like “having a break”, and giving young people the opportunity to form social bonds through less structured activities. This mix of structured and unstructured activities means that youth can simply “hang out” or engage in more structured programs depending on their own needs and the availability of specific youth programs in youth cafés (Brady et al. 2015). Types of clubs and programs that are offered in youth cafés include games clubs, homework clubs, dance and music, which are usually quite informal. This is complemented by specific programs in areas like sexuality and health and referrals to specific youth services (e.g. mental health).

While youth cafés can be interpreted as distinctive policy narratives that are enshrined around principles like inclusivity and youth participation, they may also be read as part of wider recognition in Irish policy about young people’s roles in “developing” and participating in communities. This is reflected in key policy documents including *The National Children’s Strategy* (Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs 2000), which stresses how communities foster children’s development, and *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2014), which establishes five national outcomes for young people in Ireland, one of which is that they are “connected, respected and contributing to their world”. Also, the *National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making 2015–2020* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2015) recognizes the contribution that children and youth make to the spaces and places they inhabit. It states that “children spend much of their time taking part in community activities in green spaces, playgrounds, parks, streets, libraries and cultural spaces” (p. 13).

A deeper analysis of these Irish policy documents reveals a growing recognition on behalf of policy makers about children’s interactions with physical and social space and actively reshaping their communities. For example, *The National Children’s Strategy* (2000) emphasizes how communities provide valuable social support for children and youth. However, this contrasts to later policy innovations such as *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2014) and the *National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making 2015–2020* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2015), which focus attention on young people as actively reshaping the meanings of community for future generations. In the Irish context, these policy developments are precipitated amidst a growing unease among citizenries about the subsequent negation of children’s rights from Irish social policy agendas (see McGregor 2014), public inquiries into child sex abuse and neglect, and the collusion of state actors and senior Catholic clergy to effectively “cover up” allegations of child abuse as evidenced in the infamous *Ryan Report* (2009).

Despite the widening of youth participation in policy making, many children and youth in Ireland and internationally are still effectively marginalized from governance arenas due to societal prejudice, stereotyping and traditions (see Brennan et al. 2007). As a result, the many positive impacts of young people in virtual and geographical communities remain largely unrecognized and undocumented. Until recently, there was a sparse theoretical and empirical literature on how different forms of space that young people inhabit in everyday life (e.g. institutional spaces, virtual spaces and youth spaces) impact on young people personally. However, there is now a growing recognition that young people's lives are intricately linked to the spaces they inhabit every day (see Nairn et al. 2016). Data presented later in this paper underline that youth cafés impact powerfully on many young people who frequent them. In particular, youth conceptualizations of community, belonging and place are intricately bound to social relationships, knowledge and practices that develop in youth café arenas.

Methodology

This paper forms part of a national mixed-methods study of youth cafés in Ireland conducted in 2013/2014 (Forkan et al. 2015). The results presented here pertain to the qualitative aspect of the study, which explored youth perspectives on the role of youth cafés in their lives. From the 163 youth cafés in operation in 2013, a purposive sample of 10 was selected. The sampling criteria aimed to account for variations between cafés in population density, socio-economic profile, urban or rural status, the length of time in operation, café size and whether they were volunteer-led or run by national youth work organizations such as Foróige or Youth Work Ireland (YWI). A total of 102 young people aged between 11 and 19 years participated in the qualitative study (55 males and 47 females).

The qualitative study was informed by the “My World Triangle” (Scottish Government 2015), which adopts a “whole child perspective” and focuses on the factors and risks that shape and reflect developmental outcomes for young people (*ibid.*). In focus groups, we asked young people why they come to youth cafés, what they do in their spare time besides coming to the café and about their relationships with peers and youth workers in the space. We also asked questions about times when they felt that attending the youth café might have helped them. We then asked young people to write down the things they like best about youth cafés and the things they dislike. Participants were subsequently shown the “My World Triangle” and were asked to think about their experiences in youth cafés relating to the headings listed on the “My World Triangle” like “feeling safe”, “being confident in who I am” and “being there for me”. They were then asked to talk about their experiences under these headings to the researcher or to write down stories about times they felt safe in the youth café, when it helped them to feel more confident and when staff and volunteers supported them. To avoid bias, we also asked young people about times when they may not have felt safe in the café and when they did not feel supported by staff or their peers. This was done to give a balanced view of children's experiences.

Qualitative materials were analyzed in two phases. In Phase I, Thematic Analysis (TA) of transcripts and field notes was completed by the second author of this study. TA is defined as “a theoretically flexible approach” to data analysis and as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke 2006: 2). In Phase II, Discourse Analysis (DA) of interview materials and Post-it notes was completed by the lead author. The approach to DA adopted for this study followed Hajer, who defines discourses as “an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices”.²

Drawing also on Ruiz (2009), we interpreted youth discourses as social products, as imbued with knowledge, as distinctive forms of texts and as indicative of young people's agency and social power. In applying DA, we also drew on Schön and Rein's (1996: 89) definitions of "frames" as "schemata of interpretation that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within their life space and their world at large rendering events meaningful and thereby guiding actions". In doing so, we mapped the overarching discursive frames that young people draw upon to define their experiences and perceptions of youth cafés, the impacts of the cafés on young people's lives and how young people conceptualize community, place, identity and belonging. The following section of this paper presents the main qualitative findings of this study around youth narratives about youth cafés which are interlinked with concepts of identity, community and belonging, and are imbued with young people's desires to contribute to the areas in which they live.

"I Feel like I Belong Here": Discourses of Community and Belonging in Youth Café Spaces

Qualitative evidence for this study suggests that the majority of young people feel deeply connected to youth cafés and forge deeply seated social bonds to the people who frequent them (e.g. young people, volunteers, youth workers). In interviews, the majority of young people described youth cafés as a "*family*" and regularly used terms like "*my space*" and "*our place*" to describe what the café means to them. The majority of young people stated that the café was a distinctive community in itself where young people have greater autonomy in deciding what is best for them. When discussing the meaning of community, young people alluded to the deeply emotive bonds that often develop with volunteers and youth workers in these spaces. Indeed, many young people commented on emotionally painful events the youth café helped them to cope with like bullying, "coming out"³ and experiences of parental violence or substance abuse at home. Narratives of belonging and community in the youth café space are reflected in the following interview quotations where young people talk about why they attend the space:

We are like a family. He's like my brother. She's like my sister . . . We're like a family here and we support each other.

Male interviewee, age 17

Definitely we're a family. In fact, we're closer than family. I'm closer to him than I am to anyone at home . . . Our volunteer is like a mother to us all.

Male interviewee, age 15

I walk 4 miles just to be here every day . . . I love coming here. It's my second home. These people are like my brothers really and if you have a problem you just tell the youth worker and he helps you to work it out. . . . I also escape from home where it's a war zone so I can chill out completely and get some perspective.

Male interviewee, age 16

The majority of young people who were interviewed stated that they feel like they belong at the youth café. When talking about the meaning of belonging, they frequently alluded to two things; (1) the closely knit social bonds that frequently developed with volunteers and youth workers, and (2) their relationships with the youth café space itself. This was also comparable to how young people talked about youth cafés as places that were distinctive and important to

their everyday lives. The places that young people frequented regularly like youth cafés, schools, sports clubs and the home were seen as integral to their everyday life worlds, their routines, practices, knowledge and identity. However, many young people stated that they felt a lower sense of personal connection or belonging to institutional spaces like schools and feel out of place at home. Evidence of young people's sense of belonging in youth café settings is reflected in a quotation from a male interviewee below who talks about the café as "our place":

This is our place and it will always be our place. I'll always remember coming here and the people as well.

Male interviewee, age 17

Youth workers and volunteers further encourage young people to decorate the youth café spaces as they would like them, and murals, drawings and paintings by young people are displayed in many youth cafés. Youth visions of community and belonging, and discourses about what the spaces mean to them personally are expressed in these mural drawings which also represent the values and ethics of the café space and young people's relationships with each other (Real 2013). Moreover, these paintings are indicative of how young people interpret place, community and belonging as sensory, spatial and deeply emotive experiences. Notions of belonging, community and connectedness to place are further evident in the following quotation from a boy who recounts the personal significance of a mural, which he helped to decorate in a youth café in an urban setting:

It signifies the people who come here and who we are and what we mean to each other and this was our place and we knew about it and developed it and understood it. And we decorated it. We know this place. It isn't just bricks and mortar. It's about us and who we are.

Male interviewee, age 17

Youth Cafés and Decision Making: Agency, Power and Labeling

In interviews, the majority of young people discussed the meanings of participation and power, frequently stating that they feel marginalized from most societal decision-making processes. Indeed, the vast majority of young people stated that they live in an adult-centric world, where adults make the rules about life "while we are expected to follow them" (female interviewee, age 16). Young people frequently commented they lack agency to shape the world around them due to the levels and types of control that are placed upon their personal freedoms, primarily by adults. In one focus group in particular, young people commented that they feel that they are constantly labeled and judged by adults, especially their parents and teachers, because they are adolescents. As one girl stated, "they think they know all about us because they think they know the behaviours that go along with being a teenager" (female interviewee, age 16). Significantly, however, many other young people perceive that they are judged by wider society and by adults that they meet in everyday spaces such as cafés, restaurants and on public transport (e.g. buses, taxis, trams). This was mentioned by a number of young people in a focus group in one urban setting especially:

You meet people every day and you instinctively know they are judging you and thinking "oh they're just stupid, what do they know?"

Female interviewee, age 15

For many young people, attending the youth café was an escape from adult societal control and the café was also viewed as a means of subverting it. In contrast to decision making in other spaces which were primarily adult-centered, youth cafés were seen as one of very few spaces where they can demonstrate their own agency and positively shape the world around them. As one female interviewee commented: “we built it for ourselves . . . it was our vision along with the youth workers” (male interviewee, age 14). Young people frequently stated that the café was a site where they could exercise their own autonomy and decision-making agency which they felt they were unable to do elsewhere in society. As one young person stated: “restaurants and shops don’t really want young people . . . here we make the rules and we accept people” (male interviewee, age 15). This is further evident in the following quotation where a young person talks about the youth café as a type of community where young people feel that they belong and are respected and where they can exercise their agency:

We feel like we belong here and sometimes young people don’t belong anywhere. We’re sometimes seen as the “dirty little teenagers”. We don’t belong at home, at school or anywhere else. Here we make the rules . . . We say what we do and the youth workers support us to make our own decisions.

Female interviewee, age 16

“Being Myself”: Acceptance, Pretense, and Authentic Selves

Notions of “judgment”, “acceptance” and “pretense” figured prominently in focus groups. In the main, youth cafés were seen as a distinctive youth community that was comprised of predominantly like-minded individuals who wished to escape from the pressures of life and “who don’t judge anyone and where everyone is welcome” (male interviewee, age 13). The notions of acceptance, participation and inclusion were central to how young people conceptualized community in interviews. There was also evidence of high levels of youth engagement in the management of the spaces and in decisions about what services the café might offer to future generations of young people. Feeling accepted by their peers and by youth workers were very important to the young people interviewed.

Many youth reported that they feel under pressure in wider society to consume alcohol and “soft drugs”, which were seen as important symbols for “fitting in”. However, the majority of young people commented that they did not feel under pressure in youth cafés to conform, and most welcomed the fact that the spaces are drug and alcohol free. In other domains, however, such as school and home, young people stated that they feel pressurized into hiding their “authentic selves” so that they would “blend” more easily into the crowd. When discussing the meaning of the authentic self, some youth talked about “being my real self”, “really being who I am” and “being the best that I can be” (male interviewee, age 13). Young people also commented on how they conceal their authentic selves from others to maintain social status in social groupings outside the café. However, many commented on the pressures of trying to conceal their true identities from their peers at school, from family members and when hanging out with friends. Youth cafés, however, were connected very strongly with the notion of “being yourself” and with the freedom to express various aspects of diverse ethnic, cultural and sexual identities that were sometimes seen as “taboo” at school and in other social groupings:

You never let the mask slip . . . You have to pretend you’re something you’re not.

Female interviewee, age 17

The pretending is hard . . . I find it hard to pretend all the time to be someone that I'm not and trying alcohol and stuff that I'm just not ready for and I'm not into.

Female interviewee, age 14

In focus groups, young people recounted complex narratives about the challenges they face in daily life. The importance of youth cafés in their everyday life worlds was measured by the extent that these were seen as valuable sources of informal social supports by young people to help them to cope with difficulties like mental health issues, stigmatization and labeling. Social supports are both formal and informal and range from acts like giving people a break from stressful routines (Daro 2015) to more structured forms of support provided by counsellors, mental health professionals and specific interventions. Pinkerton and Dolan (2007: 220) discuss the importance of social support during adolescence, especially as young people often struggle to cope with “a range of major physical, emotional and social changes”. Drawing on Pilisuk and Parks (1981: 122), McMahon and Curtin (2013: 2) define social support as “a range of interpersonal exchanges that include not only the provision of physical assistance, emotional caring, and information, but also the subjective consequence of making individuals feel that they are the object of enduring concerns by others”. Young people spoke regularly of the importance of having a space where they could access informal support on issues like mental health, sex and contraception and the importance of having a supportive group of friends in their lives. One of the most poignant narratives was relayed by a girl who regularly took “soft” drugs but occasionally used “hard” drugs in the past. She sought help from counselling services for drug addiction after she received a referral from the youth café and experienced much informal support from youth and volunteers in the youth café:

I took drugs from when I was a kid, like 11 or 12 and my sister she's two years older . . . I remember when she was taking heroin, we were lying in bed one night and she was sweating cold sweat. Like cold sweat. . . . That put me right off. I stopped the next day but it was really hard . . . Having the support of the people here really helps though . . . That someone supports me and doesn't judge me . . . That I come here and I can talk to the youth workers is so important.

Female interviewee, age 18

Similar experiences to do with alcohol consumption were reported by young people at a number of youth cafés across Ireland. Young people often attributed changes in their alcohol consumption to informal supports from youth workers and feelings of belonging, and they felt they were not being judged by peers attending the café:

This place has really taught me that I can think for myself but that I'm also part of a really good group of people and that I properly belong and fit in and no one judges me and that's the best feeling.

Female interviewee, age 15

Giving Back to Society and Creating Child-Friendly Communities

Through the emphasis on youth participation, youth cafés encourage young people to have an influence and to feel a stronger sense of connection and responsibility towards the places and spaces where they live their lives. One respondent described how she feels she is contributing

to her community and to future generations of young people by founding a youth café and in making decisions about how it is run:

You feel like you are part of something bigger here. It's to do with the community now, but also the young people who will come here in the future.

Female interviewee, age 17

When describing what their towns and cities meant to them, many young people portrayed a great pride in their place and spoke about the youth café as a space for “giving back” to their communities. In one youth café for example, young people talked about the café as their way of reclaiming spaces and recreating new visions of their community. This particular town was characterized by high levels of unemployment and people took drugs regularly near to the café site. Young people who were interviewed mentioned the importance of recreating more positive visions of their town and what it means to the people who live there. Youth cafés were seen as important for (re)creating youth-led communities and for rethinking the meaning of spaces in local towns and villages:

We really want to show that our town is better than all that and that it's a good place and the café is our way of giving back to the area as well. It's important to us and for the whole community. Like our town is nice but you wouldn't know that unless you lived here.

Female interviewee, age 16

Youth cafés were important for building communities of acceptance among children and youth, and helping young people, to “find their place” in society. Young people who were involved in setting up the cafés also spoke of the importance of the café to future generations and to the area more generally. However, they also felt that the importance of the café to the local community largely went unrecognized and that adults were generally uninterested in the good work of the café spaces:

I don't think most of them are interested in what happens here . . . I don't think most of them actually know what it does . . . They think it's a place we come to when we're in trouble or just to hang out but it's more than that.

Male interviewee, age 15

Discussion

Community has traditionally been defined as encompassing the elements of solidarity between members such as common identity between members, shared norms and shared knowledge (see Agrawal 1997). While place has also traditionally been synonymous with community, the connection between place and community over the past century became increasingly tenuous as processes of modernization blurred the boundaries of well-defined communities (Brennan et al. 2013). However, Bradshaw (2013) argues that, while social relations outside their immediate communities have assumed increasing importance over the past decades, people continue to have attachments to their local communities. For young people aged 12–18 years, access to mobile communication technology has given access to social networks on a global scale that was unimaginable to previous generations. It has been argued that, in an increasingly urbanized and globalized society, opportunities for young people to develop a sense of place

or belonging are reducing (Inglis and Donnelly 2011). The data presented in this paper, however, highlight that young people value and embrace opportunities to join and create communities in their localities and underline the potential of dedicated youth spaces to enhance their sense of belonging, place attachment, self-confidence and community participation. The findings concur with Whitlock's (2007: 500) assertion that well-being is intrinsically linked to a sense of belonging and meaning within larger social and community groups.

Evidence presented in this chapter further suggests that the youth café model is significant for fostering mainly positive understandings of community that are built upon inclusivity, belonging and participation. Here, community is defined not only as a geographical or spatial entity but as an emotive, knowledge-based and imagined understanding that is grounded in shared knowledge, social learning and shared experiences (see Moran and Rau 2016). The meanings of youth cafés in young people's lives were found to be deeply emotive, reflecting personal struggles pertaining to sexuality, mental health, conflicts with friends and family members and fears of being socially ostracized by others. Young people's discourses about youth cafés are therefore indicative of how young people perform different aspects of social identities, discourses of community and sense of self in competing social arenas. Importantly, this research underlines the importance of facilitating youth to engage in conversations with each other and with adults about the meaning of community and belonging, and for re-visioning the types of communities that young people want to live in. This approach is commensurate with a growing body of studies on youth participation in community development which emphasizes youth imaginings and discourses of community, knowledge co-creation and the creativity of children and young people in virtual and spatial communities (Zeldin 2004; Christens and Dolan 2011; Loader et al. 2014).

This study further suggests that youth cafés constitute important platforms where young people learn and exercise many of the necessary principles and skills underpinning community development practice. Aspects of youth-led community building resonate with the youth café model which stresses the importance of instilling planning, managerial and problem-solving skills in children and youth. Sherrod et al. (2002: 267) argue that taking responsibility can help young people to feel "at home rather than out of place" in their communities. Similarly, youth-led community planning emphasizes the importance of youth participation in community projects as a means of generating "powerful learning for program, organisational and community improvement" (London et al. 2003: 98). This definition emphasizes the learning payoffs for children and youth through engaging in community projects, and the positive impacts on local areas. Christens and Dolan (2011) similarly argue that youth-led community organizing produces significant effects at a number of levels as it weaves together community development goals, youth development and societal change. They offer children and young people opportunities to engage in community decision making with adults and to reflect on the types of communities they want to build for future generations. This includes commitment to people and place, management and delegation, self-awareness, critical reflection on the meaning of community and the role of the self and "others" in recreating diverse meanings of community and belonging.

In addition, orientations towards civic action appear to have been generated among youth through their involvement in youth cafés. Young people who were interviewed expressed desires to "give back" to their communities, and viewed the youth café as a way of improving the lives of future generations of young people. In doing so, they drew upon intersecting discourses about place, identity and the types of communities they would like to live in, which related directly and indirectly to their experiences with youth workers, volunteers and their peers at youth cafés. Youth cafés were seen as powerful spaces for enhancing youth involvement in the

communities in which they live and for affording young people greater autonomy to make decisions in a primarily adult-focused society. That said including young people in community development planning must be prefigured by a strengths-based approach which underlines the importance of youth as active agents in the communities where they live, and in shaping future imaginaries of what places might be and could be for future generations. Kudva and Driskell (2009) underline the importance of organizational practices and the design of public policies in facilitating or constraining meaningful participation. The youth café model is explicitly based on principles of participation, inclusion and empowerment, which are instrumental in creating a welcoming, supportive and capacity-building environment for young people.

In the Irish context and elsewhere, more research is needed into how young people conceptualize ideals like sustainable community development and belonging and the extent that marginalized youth feel included in the management and development of youth café spaces. As highlighted in this paper, youth cafés offer great potential in enabling young people and adults to co-create new meanings of community that accord emphasis to young people's needs and desires, but which also take account of discourses of other community dwellers (e.g. adults, older people and persons with different levels of ability). This research is unique in the Irish context as it yielded significant data on youth communities in youth cafés, young people's perceptions of cafés, how youth cafés as "dedicated" safe spaces for children and youth impact on young people's lives, and the importance of informal social support to children and youth attending youth cafés. Despite significant capital investment into youth cafés in Ireland, these data were unknown by Irish policy makers and are significant for policy planning for children and youth nationally. Future longitudinal research planned from this study focuses on decision making in youth cafés and how perceived skills and benefits reported by young people (e.g. enhanced resilience and perceived social support) are transferred into other aspects of young people's lives and whether these skills are maintained over time. Other future projects emerging from this study focus on the extent that marginalized youth in Irish society (e.g. Travellers, immigrants, children with disabilities) actively take part in decision making, delegation and management within youth café spaces, and how power relations that emerge in these arenas both help and hinder the participation of so-called marginalized young people in youth cafés.

Conclusions

Findings presented in this chapter suggest that youth cafés constitute powerful sites for youth engagement in community decision making; they strengthen critical thinking, capacity building and enhance youth empowerment. Importantly, data presented here imply that participating in youth cafés inspires greater critical dialogue among children, youth and adults about the meanings of community and belonging, and how to build more inclusive and participatory societies. While more research is required on the youth café model in Ireland and elsewhere in how it engages marginalized groups in decision making and management of the space, data presented here are encouraging about the roles and levels of responsibility typically assumed by youth in café arenas, and the types of skills that youth learn in these settings. Significantly, this chapter corroborates a burgeoning corpus of literature on youth participation and strengths-based approaches to childhood and youth which underlines the importance of youth participation in decision-making arenas for the fuller realization of children's rights. Overall, how young people perform and negotiate competing definitions of identity, community and belonging in spaces like youth cafés is highly significant for how they understand their own roles as active agents in society and as community developers in their own right.

Notes

- 1 In Ireland the number of lone parent families has increased substantially, as documented from figures released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Figures from Census 2002 and Census 2006 show strong increases in lone parent families from 2002 to 2006. Figures provided by the CSO from 2011 show that 215,315 lone parent families resided in the Republic of Ireland, most of whom lived as one-parent families. Approximately 17,378 lone parents were living in multi-family households for the same period. Please see CSO (2012: 22) for more detail.
- 2 Please see www.maartenhajer.nl/?page_id=14
- 3 “Coming out” refers to the self-realization that one is sexually attracted to members of one’s own sex and may also refer to revealing their sexuality to other members of society.

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INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION DECISIONS AND HAPPINESS

The Migration Happiness Atlas as a Community Development Initiative

Martijn Hendriks, Kai Ludwigs and David Bartram

The main purpose of community development is to improve community well-being. An adequate well-being measure is needed to examine whether our efforts in developing more thriving communities are fruitful. This requires a measure that captures people's notion of what constitutes a good life. Better objective well-being conditions, such as income and education, are mostly instrumental for a more pleasant and satisfactory life (Veenhoven 2000). This fits in with the notion that, eventually, everyone wants to be happy. Therefore, the emerging science of happiness and its subjective measures of well-being have been embraced by community well-being and development scholars (Kee et al. 2015).

The immigrant community is a prominent group that needs support in reaching their well-being goal because recent studies show that a considerable proportion of immigrants do not become happier through migration (Hendriks 2015). This is particularly true for migrants moving to similarly or less developed countries (Bartram 2015). Although the majority of migrants moving to a more developed country do become happier (Nikolova and Graham 2015), there seems to be a significant group of immigrants who do not feel happier upon their move to the more developed host country (Stillman et al. 2015). A key reason for these disappointing outcomes is that many immigrants have false beliefs regarding whether migration can be beneficial to them and in which destination they can expect to reach the greatest happiness (Hendriks and Bartram 2016). Most notably, immigrants tend to underestimate (the impact of) the severe social capital costs that come with migration, such as leaving behind friends and family and the loss of community.

A well-developed immigrant community is key to the happiness of its members. A prominent example is that the sense of community that immigrants feel from assimilating into an immigrant community can compensate to some extent for leaving behind their friends, family and community in their home country (Hombrados-Mendieta et al. 2013). Several organizations specifically exist to connect individuals within immigrant communities, such as the global organization InterNations, which focuses on connecting expats. Less attention has been given to the role of immigrant communities in transferring knowledge to people considering migration,

known as *potential* immigrants, on how to make the most out of migration. The process of transferring knowledge goes relatively automatically for immigrants who are already assimilated into an immigrant community, because migration experiences are a primary conversation topic among immigrants. In contrast, people considering migration lack accurate knowledge about what they can expect from living in their considered destination countries. Immigrant communities are often not sufficiently organized to accurately inform potential immigrants on how to make the most out of migration, and organizations that are specialized in helping potential migrants to make more accurate choices are scarce. This is unfortunate given that positive migration outcomes do not only require that immigrants have a good understanding of how to optimize their outcomes after arriving in the host country, but also require that migrants only move when they can potentially benefit from migration in the first place.

In this chapter, we discuss how greater happiness in immigrant communities can be stimulated through bottom-up community participation by transferring knowledge from existing immigrants to potential immigrants on (how to maximize) the happiness outcomes of international migration. This form of community participation can be beneficial across diverse immigrant groups including refugees, expats and migrants for family reunion. Although this chapter concentrates on migration decisions, we want to emphasize that the benefits of immigrant communities acting collectively go well beyond the impact of transferring and expanding knowledge. For instance, the process of helping potential immigrants can stimulate a greater sense of community in the immigrant community and can benefit the assimilation of potential immigrants into the community.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. In the next section, we introduce the emerging science of happiness. The following section then discusses the issues migrants face in making accurate migration decisions, after which the importance of immigrant communities acting collectively is outlined. In our projects, we have been amazed by the willingness of immigrants to share their daily life experiences to help their (for them often unknown) successors in achieving better happiness outcomes from migration. The desire of immigrants to learn from each other in developing a happier life has motivated us to develop and launch a tool in which immigrants can build on each other's experience. This tool, called the Migration Happiness Atlas, is presented in the penultimate section. The atlas provides a platform for immigrants to spread factual knowledge about happiness outcomes of migration. The common issues revealed by the Migration Happiness Atlas provide important input for evidence-based choices, more accurate expectations, and the development of problem-solving resources. Finally, we present our conclusions and discuss future prospects.

The Science of Happiness

Happiness can be defined as the degree to which an individual favorably judges the overall quality of his or her life. In evaluating the progress of individuals or communities, happiness studies use straightforward questions such as “Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?” and “How satisfied are you with your life, all things considered?” These measures allow individuals to personally judge (1) the importance of aspects (e.g. some people evaluate “becoming rich” as more important than others); (2) whether a situation is good or bad (e.g. people think differently about the optimal degree of income inequality); and (3) how satisfactory their outcomes are (e.g. an economically deprived individual might appreciate an extra euro more than a wealthy individual). These subjective/internal measures complement objective/external well-being measures, such as income, education level and life expectancy (united in the Human Development Index). Although these external indicators are more precise, they do

not give a satisfactory indication about overall personal well-being or progress because only a limited number of aspects are included, the importance of its determinants is predetermined and the outcomes are externally judged. Although people are well able to judge their own happiness, happiness measures also include methodological limitations (e.g. wording effects, ordering effects, social desirability bias). Nevertheless, personal happiness evaluations are sufficiently adequate to greatly complement external well-being indicators in evaluating social progress (Stiglitz et al. 2009; IOM 2013; OECD 2013). Therefore, the self-declared happiness levels of individuals constitute a valuable proxy for their overall well-being, and the aggregation of individual happiness levels gives a good indication of community well-being.

Happiness Issues for Immigrants

Migrants would have no particular need to learn from each other if, in any situation, individuals (1) have complete information and (2) make rational choices. These standard assumptions of conventional economic theory are unrealistic in general—and certainly in the context of migration; people’s revealed preferences can diverge from their experienced outcomes because both assumptions are rarely (if ever) met.

Incomplete Information

When deciding to move to another country, immigrants base their expectations on imperfect information about the host country. Many immigrants have spent little or no time in the intended destination country. Thus, what makes them believe that their lives will be improved by moving to that country? This question is easy to answer for refugees, because almost any place is better than the place they are fleeing. In less urgent migration instances, however, most people who want to relocate to another country base their judgment on information coming from personal contacts (often those living in the destination country), online sources and the news. Some migration streams are driven by a romanticized media representation of the country (Mai 2004). Pajo (2007: 192) describes the way these representations sometimes feed a sense that some countries are better than others, a “social imaginary of the world as a hierarchy of countries”—a notion that does not guarantee that the *experiences* of migrants there will be better.

Migrants are also frequently motivated by the good stories of their personal contacts that live in other countries. The issue is that people tend to highlight the upsides of their migration experience while keeping the downsides to themselves (Carling 2008; Sabates-Wheeler et al. 2009). Those inaccurate representations can be deliberate: For instance, to justify their migration choice against the skepticism of others (or even to assuage their own self-doubts). But they can also be unintentional: in the comparisons people often make between their pre-migration lives and their post-migration lives, many immigrants unconsciously interpret information in ways designed to confirm and rationalize their choice to migrate (see Nickerson 1998 on confirmation bias; Roese and Vohs 2012 on hindsight bias; and the self-affirmation theory of Steele 1988). Consequently, immigrants sometimes provide erroneous advice even though they genuinely want to help others from the same origin to make the best possible migration choice. The following quote (posted in the Ellis Island Museum) from an anonymous Italian immigrant in the early 1900s has become emblematic of the way misinformation can lead to disillusioning outcomes:

I came to America because I heard the streets were paved with gold. When I got here, found out three things: first, the streets weren’t paved with gold; second, they weren’t paved at all; and third, I was expected to pave them.

Many immigrants still tend to have an overly positive view about the destination country, something that can undermine their happiness outcomes after arrival (Benson and O'Reilly 2012; Mähönen et al. 2013).

Rationality of Choices

Following neoclassical economics, a key assumption in some migration theories is that immigrants make the best possible migration decision given the available information (i.e. immigrants are rational actors; Harris and Todaro 1970; Stark and Bloom 1985). Psychologists, led by Kahneman and Tversky (1979), have convincingly challenged this assumption in a more general sense by revealing the extent to which irrationality characterizes human decision making. A migration-related example is that Americans from the Midwest overestimate the happiness gains that could be gained by moving to California (Schkade and Kahneman 1998). The authors explain these excessive expectations with reference to a “focusing illusion”: these Americans from the Midwest overestimated expected benefits by focusing on easily observable differences in life circumstances, such as California’s warmer climate and more relaxed atmosphere. Several migration scholars have argued that an excessive focus on material conditions and other life circumstances when making migration decisions is also evident for international migrants (Bartram 2011; Olgiati et al. 2013; Hendriks and Bartram 2016).

Focusing illusions is an important issue in happiness literature because people generally (i.e. not only immigrants) encounter difficulties in predicting what will make them happy (Gilbert 2006). Happiness researchers argue that the excessive focus on life circumstances is rooted in a common underlying assumption that better life circumstances (i.e. objective well-being) inevitably lead to greater happiness (i.e. subjective well-being) (Kahneman et al. 2006). The “impact bias” is an important driver of this erroneous assumption. The impact bias implies that individuals tend to overestimate their expected (positive) emotional reaction to circumstances and events, because they underestimate the degree of adaptation to changes in their lives (Wilson and Gilbert 2005). For example, a new car brings more happiness than the old car only for a very limited time (if at all)—while an enjoyable activity (particularly one involving engagement with other people) tends to remain enjoyable. Taking insufficient notice of adaptation leads to placing undue weight on life circumstances in one’s migration decisions because people tend to adapt more to life circumstances than to the more intrinsically valued experiences and activities (Lyubomirsky et al. 2005; Frey and Stutzer 2014). Another reason for the excessive focus on life circumstances is that people are overconfident regarding their ability to capitalize on better life circumstances (Weinstein 1980).

However, as discussed in the introductory section, there is more to a happy life than good life circumstances and good life-abilities. Examples of other aspects that are important for the happiness of migrants are the quality of their social networks, their perceptions about themselves and others, and their daily life structure (e.g. what activities do they perform). Moreover, there is heterogeneity between people’s actual circumstances and their interpretation of those circumstances. These differences are caused by temporal comparisons (e.g. a yearly income of \$30,000 makes an individual happier when the individual previously earned \$20,000, as against previously earning \$40,000); social comparisons (a yearly income of \$30,000 makes an individual happier when one’s peers earn \$20,000 instead of earning \$40,000); and depend on the process (a yearly income of \$30,000 makes an individual happier when earned with a pleasant job than when earned with a dreadful job). Thus, happiness includes a relative and cognitive component (Brickman et al. 1978; Clark et al. 2008). This component is particularly relevant to happiness outcomes for migrants given the existence of a common status trajectory. Some migrants end

up in low-status jobs in the destination country (because their educational qualifications are not recognized, or because of language difficulties, or simply because of discrimination). If they held middle-status jobs in the origin country, then migration has led to a decrease in their relative position, i.e. relative to a local reference group. Once they begin to compare themselves to others in the destination country (perhaps while continuing to compare to others in the origin country, see Gelatt 2013), their happiness might suffer from this decline in status. Nevertheless, people tend to underestimate the extent to which these less tangible aspects influence their happiness (Frey and Stutzer 2014). This is particularly problematic in the context of migration, because immigrants tend to experience a severe loss of social capital, community and status and a major shift in their daily life structure.

The Consequences for Migrants' Happiness

Migration seems to be the right decision for those immigrants who do become happier through migration (thereby implying that they also achieve other goals). The World Migration Report (IOM 2013) reveals that people moving to countries at a considerably higher level of development generally become happier. Nikolova and Graham (2015) validated this finding by using more thorough matching techniques, confirming that Europeans moving to more developed European states generally become happier after the move. However, migration streams toward more developed countries do not *always* result in greater subjective well-being. Convincing evidence comes from a natural experiment in which Tongan residents hoping to move to New Zealand were entered into a random drawing. The “lucky” migrants and the “unlucky” stayers were similarly happy before migration, but the migrants were unhappier than the stayers a few years later even though the migrants’ incomes had tripled (Stillman et al. 2015). The happiness consequences for migration streams between similarly developed countries or towards less developed countries are more often (though not always) non-positive (IOM 2013). Hendriks (2015) collected all empirical findings regarding the happiness consequences of international migration. His review confirms that, counter to what one might consider common sense, a considerable share of voluntary immigrants do not become happier through migration. A primary driver of these negative migration outcomes is the loss of social capital and community, which is insufficiently replaced by their new social relationships in the host country (Hendriks et al. 2016).

In addition to happiness consequences for individual migrants, one must consider the consequences of migration for family members and others in the origin community. Migration is typically not solely an individual decision but rather a household decision (e.g. Stark 1991); people migrate not only for their own well-being but also for that of children and other family members (e.g. through remittances). From this angle, migration is sometimes a sacrifice one makes for the sake of others, rather than an attempt to improve one’s own happiness. However, it is not apparent that migration generally results in greater happiness for those who benefit from the remittances. Smith describes the outcomes for some left-behind children as a “transnational disaster”, as increased financial well-being does not compensate for parental absence and its consequences for the development of children (2006: 237; cf. Dreby 2010). More generally, Cardenas et al. (2009) find a positive effect of remittances on origin-household happiness but Jones (2014) finds a negative effect; Gartaula et al. (2012) suggest that outcomes depend on contextual factors describing the specific situation of the origin household in the local community.

The possibility of “inaccurate” migration decisions does not arise only in relation to people who migrated but did not become happier. Some people *could* benefit from international migration

but have not considered or opted for it. Although this possibility has not yet been a serious research topic in the migration literature relating to happiness, it is an assumable proposition given that people are generally averse to risk, uncertainty and loss (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). Some people prefer to stay in their comfort zone (their home country), even though they have a reasonable chance to become happier by moving to another country; more risk-seeking people are generally more likely to migrate (Balaz and Williams 2011). A better understanding of migration outcomes would decrease people's sense of risk and uncertainty, and thus, their distorting effects on migration decisions. Better migration decisions can be facilitated by improved knowledge regarding the happiness consequences of migration and other forms of external support that facilitate better migration decisions.

The Importance of Collective Action

Governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations can support individuals in making better migration choices by providing more comprehensive and accurate information regarding how an immigrant is likely to experience life in the destination country. These organizations often aim to support individuals in making a well-informed migration choice by informing them regarding official admission and integration procedures, what they can expect from living in their destination country, what their destination society expects of them, and other practicalities (e.g. how the health system works in their host country). However, there are limitations to the influence of public and non-public institutions on immigrants' choices. When considering the consequences of migration, people tend to have limited confidence in information generated by public institutions (Nye et al. 1997; Norris 2011).

Immigrants hoping to learn about potential migration outcomes frequently turn to others in their social network who have direct experience of international migration (De Haas 2010). The information provided by the people they consult is often useful, but it also comes with important limitations. One issue, discussed above, is that individuals considering immigration can receive distorted information from established immigrants. A second issue is that migrants have heterogeneous migration outcomes due to demographic and socio-economic differences, the particularities of one's origin and place of residence, one's migration motivations and many other factors (e.g. Bartram 2013). This point implies that one should consult with peers with similar characteristics. However, most individuals have only a limited number of people in their social network who have experienced international migration, and the number of migrants with similar characteristics is likely to be very small indeed (perhaps even zero). A third issue is that consulting immigrants who moved years ago may lead to outdated insights, given that migration experiences and outcomes may change over time due to changes in migration policies and in the destination society. Consequently, in hindsight, it sometimes turns out that the information received from one's limited social network is a poor representation of what immigrants will actually experience (as exemplified by the quote from the anonymous Italian immigrant above).

Thus, the individual considering immigration can obtain a better indication of his or her potential migration outcomes when relevant information is available from recently migrated peers who have similar characteristics. A well-organized and collectively acting community is better placed than individuals to communicate the type of information potential migrants can use productively. The active voluntary involvement of a group of immigrants in generating and transferring knowledge that immigrants could not separately generate and transfer is a perfect example of how effective community development can improve people's well-being.

Yet, stimulating immigrants to share information based on personal reflection is not sufficient for enhancing the possibility of optimal migration outcomes. The problem of memory bias implies

that we cannot simply trust feelings of regret or past happiness when evaluating potential future migration outcomes (Roesse and Vohs 2012). A method that mitigates the impact of memory biases but still performs well in measuring one's overall migration outcome is needed. Asking individual immigrants about their happiness both before and after migration can solve this issue. However, surveys of this type are scarcely available because they require coordinating data collection across at least two countries. A solution of some migration scholars is to collect happiness assessments of many immigrants and then compare these to the happiness assessments of non-migrants with similar characteristics (e.g. through statistical matching methods; IOM 2013; Bartram 2015; Nikolova and Graham 2015). Similarly, an evaluation of what destination constitutes the best fit for a certain immigrant (group) can be made through comparing immigrants who live in different destination countries/regions but whose individual characteristics are similar. Hence, cooperation between researchers and the immigrant community can help overcome key problems in promoting favorable happiness outcomes in immigrant communities.

The Migration Happiness Atlas

The overall goal of the Migration Happiness Atlas is to support migrants in making better migration decisions by enabling them to make a more informed choice. For this purpose, the Migration Happiness Atlas makes customized empirical evidence available on the happiness outcomes of migration. This information is based on the voluntary involvement of immigrants in transferring information on their migration experience. The current section will explain this recently developed initiative.

Why an Atlas?

The happiness outcomes of migration are highly dependent on the migrant's origin and destination. For instance, Turkish adolescents living in Sweden are considerably happier than their counterparts living in Norway, even though the native adolescents in these countries have similar happiness (Virta et al. 2004). Similarly, Bartram (2013) shows that the happiness outcomes in a host country depend on the immigrants' origins; he finds that Polish migrants to Western Europe become less happy on average, whereas Russians, Turks and Romanians do become happier when moving to Western Europe. It is even likely that there is an interaction between the country of origin and the destination country; one immigrant group might become happier in destination country A than in destination country B, whereas the reverse is true for another immigrant group. Although this interaction has not yet been empirically tested, it is a reasonable assumption given that cultural and linguistic similarities (among other similarities) cause some destination countries to constitute a better fit with certain immigrant groups than other groups. Therefore, migrants cannot simply trust the general finding that moving to happier or wealthier countries makes one happier. Instead, differences between migration streams (the interaction of the country of origin and the destination country) need to be considered as well as differences within migration streams, because happiness outcomes also depend on individual characteristics.

Ultimately, the Migration Happiness Atlas provides customized information to a potential immigrant on his or her potential happiness outcomes when moving from one's current place of residence to the considered destination. The Atlas is interactive, which means that an individual considering migration can first select one's current place of residence, one's considered destination and some personal characteristics (e.g. age, gender, education level, migration motive). The provision of these characteristics is shown in Figure 21.1a. An algorithm uses the provided information to calculate one's potential happiness development. The happiness outcomes are

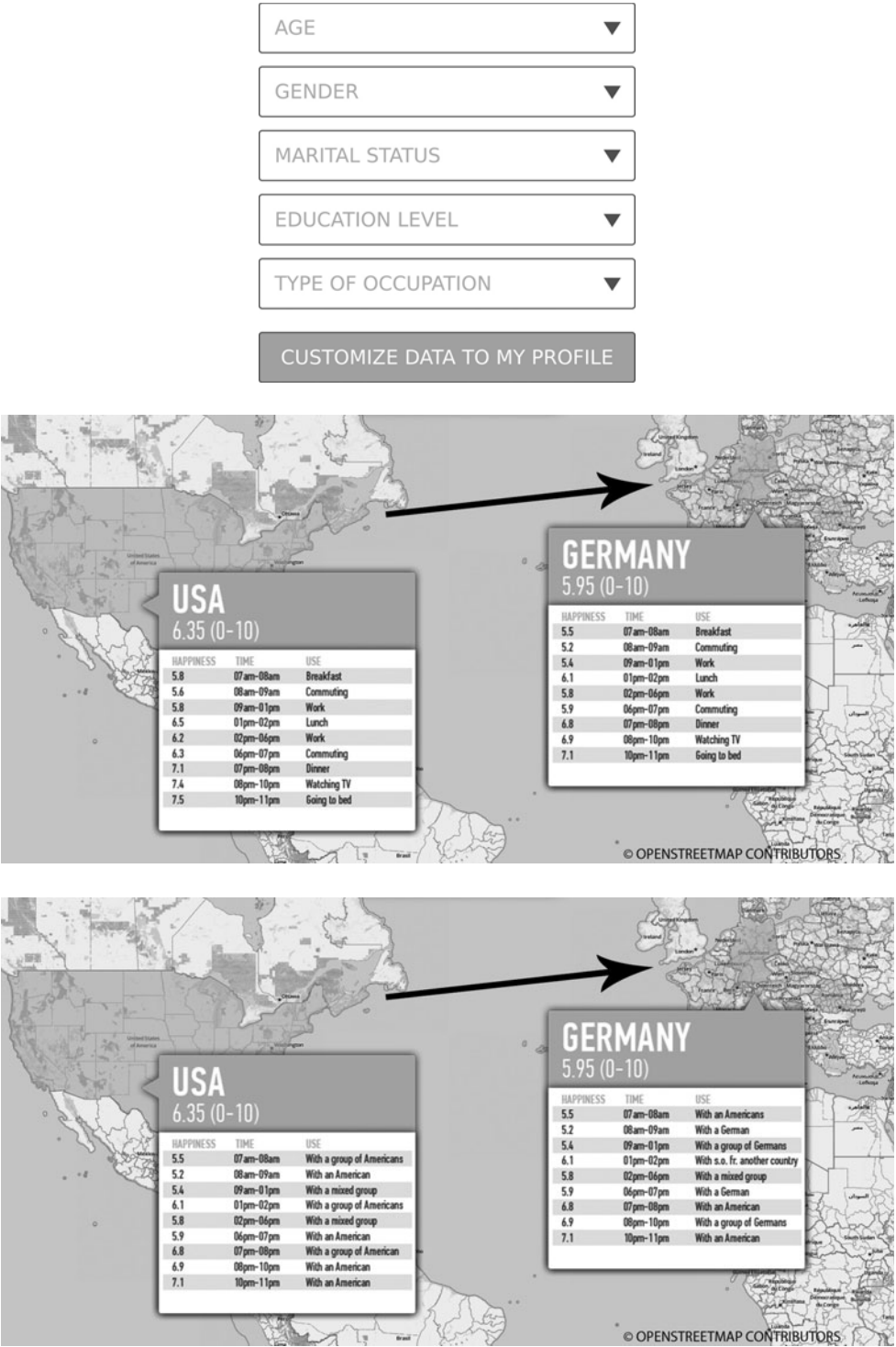


Figure 21.1 a (top), b (middle), and c (bottom) Visualization of the Migration Happiness Atlas.

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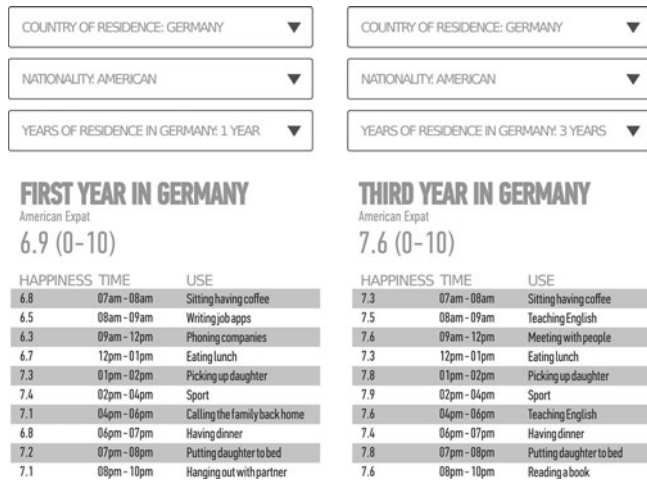


Figure 21.1 d Visualization of the Migration Happiness Atlas continued.

presented in an atlas to offer people the opportunity to compare different destinations around the world. Figure 21.1b provides an example of the Atlas specified as American expats moving to Germany (which will be further discussed below).

Why Include Daily Life Happiness?

In Figure 21.1b, we include information on episodic happiness (see the happiness diary) next to the overall outcome of happiness (happiness would be 6.35 when staying in the USA and 5.95 when moving to Germany). Further information on daily life includes information on happiness and time spending by social setting (often based on nationality; Figure 21.1c) and location (e.g. being in public space or at work). The happiness diaries are not strictly needed for making inferences about happiness outcomes because the overall happiness outcomes are already indicated by general happiness measures, such as the measure “Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?” Nevertheless, for three reasons, the happiness diaries have great complementary value to these general happiness measures.

First, it is important to distinguish between the happiness of the remembering self and the experiencing self (Kahneman 2000). People strive both for the direct experience of happiness and the creation of “happy” memories. However, people’s memorized feelings often diverge from their actually experienced feelings (Redelmeier et al. 2003). Therefore, it is beneficial to communicate to immigrants the happiness outcomes for the remembering self (through the general happiness measures that rely on memory) and the experiencing self (through measurement methods that capture daily life experiences and minimize memory biases; see below).

Second, understanding the reasoning why a certain decision is optimal is the basis for the individual’s willingness to make an informed choice. Therefore, presenting only the mean happiness difference between the considered destination country and home country is insufficient to have a serious impact on the immigrant’s choice behavior. Many factors that can affect a person’s happiness remain unrevealed when using only reflective self-report measures. In a study comparing the happiness of internal migrants and locals in Düsseldorf, Germany, we show that daily life issues are vital in explaining the overall happiness of migrants (Hendriks et al. 2016).

A substantial part of migrants' happiness disadvantage was explained by daily life issues, such as their lower momentary happiness while being with friends and less time allocated to happiness-producing activities (e.g. sports and social leisure). Therefore, including detailed information on the episodes in daily life in which immigrants feel happier or unhappier than back home will be more convincing to individuals than only including the overall happiness measure.

The third strength of considering daily life issues is that it provides information on a person's lifestyle. With this information, the lifestyle that produces the most happiness for a particular type of immigrant can be identified. Thus, the data on daily life happiness do not only benefit the immigrant's migration decision but also support immigrants post-migration in adopting a happiness-producing lifestyle. This can be relevant for both potential and existing immigrants. For instance, it can teach immigrants the importance of making efforts to connect to others, possibly via assimilating into communities, after arrival in their destination country. Another example is that a potential or existing immigrant can develop more accurate expectations about one's future happiness by comparing the happiness outcomes for different migration phases (e.g. by comparing the happiness outcomes one year after migration to the happiness outcomes three years after migration; see Figure 21.1d).

The Data

Facilitating informed choice is a very ambitious and challenging goal to realize in practice because it requires abundant data and, like most researchers, we have limited resources in terms of money and time. First, one must review all existing empirical studies concerning whether (particular types of) migrants have become happier through migration (Hendriks 2015). These findings are included in the Migration Happiness Atlas. Although this is a useful approach, it provides limited information because the current number of studies is small and the data do not allow for detailed analyses (the studies lack information on daily life happiness).

Therefore, we have started to collaborate with immigrant communities to collect data on the (daily life) happiness outcomes of migration at low cost (either through a longitudinal design or by comparing migrants and stayers). Immigrants are motivated to participate by their community leaders, the prospect of helping their fellow immigrants in becoming happier, and the opportunity to realize benefits for themselves by reflecting on their personal migration experience and lifestyle (previous research has shown that happiness-tracking tools have a modest positive effect on the happiness of the participants; Ludwigs 2016). Offering large monetary incentives is not strictly necessary for acceptable response rates due to the participants' intrinsic motivation (Groves et al. 2004).

The Happiness Analyzer

The Migration Happiness Atlas is based on a new instrument to track and measure happiness: the Happiness Analyzer. This survey tool allows immigrants to be actively involved in obtaining and spreading knowledge on the happiness outcomes of migration. The Happiness Analyzer is an application that is downloadable on the participant's own smartphone, tablet or PC and was developed by the Happiness Research Organization to measure happiness in a detailed and efficient way (Ludwigs 2016; www.happiness-analyzer.com). The approach to the smartphone application is displayed in an "Onion-model" (Figure 21.2).

The outside layer of the model provides the basis of the model. This basis is a happiness module that collects information on happiness based on reflective and general happiness questions. The happiness module is based on the OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-Being (OECD

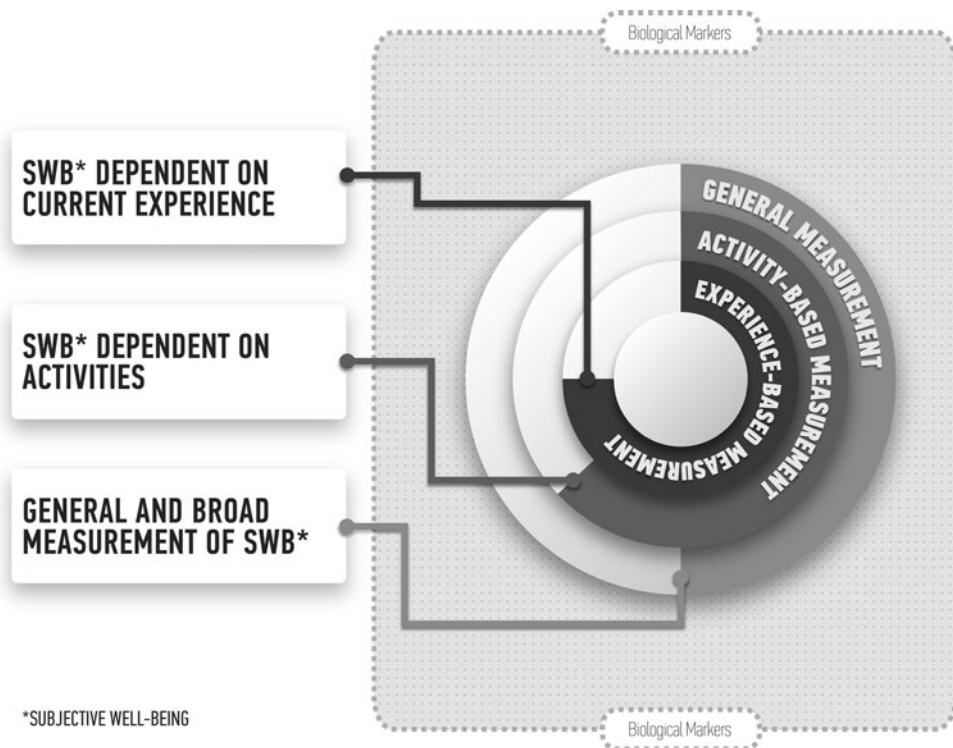


Figure 21.2 The Onion Model.

2013). The OECD proposes to measure three elements of subjective well-being. The first element is life evaluations, which are reflective and cognitive judgments of a person's life. An example question is "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?", answered on an 11-point scale (0 = extremely dissatisfied; 10 = extremely satisfied). The second element is affect, which means a person's positive and negative emotions and feelings. Affect is measured by the positive and negative emotions a person indicates to have experienced in the days before the survey (Diener et al. 2010). A third element is eudemonia (i.e. having a meaningful and purposeful life), which is measured by the flourishing scale (Diener et al. 2010). The happiness module is integrated in a baseline questionnaire that additionally includes questions on the participant's personal characteristics as well as migration-related characteristics and post-migration practices. Examples of characteristics relating to migration are the migration motive, language proficiency, intended length of stay and one's pre-existing social network in the host country. Examples of post-migration practices are one's social and cultural integration.

The second layer of the onion model addresses the limitations of the first layer (i.e. the reflective happiness measures) by collecting information on the day-to-day issues of immigrants. The Happiness Analyzer includes the Day Reconstruction Method (DRM) to zoom in to immigrants' daily life experiences (Kahneman et al. 2004). In the DRM, respondents complete diaries of the previous day in which the feelings experienced during each performed activity are reported. The DRM first asks people to reconstruct their previous day by summarizing their day in episodes (e.g. 7:30–8 am breakfast; 8–9 am commuting to work, etc.). Next the individual indicates where he or she is and with whom. Finally, participants rate how they felt

Yesterday

14:39

54%

+

What did you do yesterday? Fill in a diary entry!

Important: Please specify the whole day! To add an episode, click on a time slot. To directly set the episode's duration, hold your finger on a time slot until the new episode pops up. Slide down to adjust the duration, release to confirm.

00:00

00:15

00:30

00:45

01:00

01:15

01:30

01:45

02:00

02:15

02:30

02:45

03:00

03:15

03:30

03:45

Delete

Add Episode

Done

From: 20:00

To: 20:15

What did you do?

On the move

By car

On Time

Where were you?

Elsewhere

In a vehicle

Who was with you?

Friends

Friend (m)

Done

Yesterday

Next

How happy did you feel during the individual episodes? Please rate!

Going to bed/Sleeping

00:00 - 07:00

Home

Partner

unhappy

happy

Eating/Breakfast/Meat

07:00 - 08:00

Home

Partner

unhappy

happy

On the move/By car/D..

08:00 - 08:30

Elsewhere/In a vehicle

Alone

unhappy

happy

Working/Paid

08:30 - 13:30

Work

Colleagues/Several

Figure 21.3 DRM screenshots.



How do you feel right now?	
unhappy happy	
What do you do?	
Getting up	On the move
Studying	Working
Private communicat...	Eating
Housework	Relaxing
Multimedia	Exercising
Leisure time (day)	Leisure time (eveni...
Taking care of	Going to bed



How do you feel right now?	
unhappy happy	
What do you do?	
Eating	✓
Lunch	✓
Meat	✓
Where are you?	
Work	✓
Who is with you?	
Colleagues	✓
Colleague (m)	✓
Next	

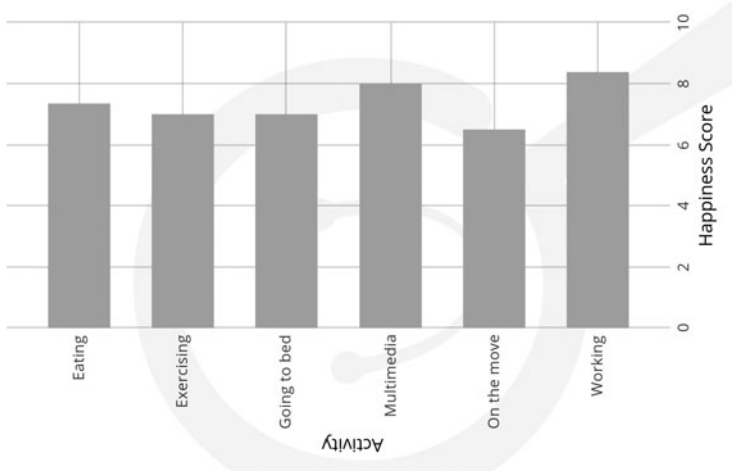


Figure 21.4 ESM screenshots.

during these episodes in terms of happiness. As a result, detailed information is created about how the respondent is feeling while doing a certain activity, with certain people, and in a given location. Screenshots of the DRM procedure can be observed in Figure 21.3.

The third layer is generally an optional layer and asks respondents to report their momentary feelings and actions at short notice after receiving each of several signals distributed throughout the day. This methodology, developed by Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter (2003), is called the Experience Sampling Method (ESM). It includes similar questions to the DRM (see Figure 21.4). However, a key advantage of the ESM over the DRM is the greater ecological validity; self-reports are provided in the moment and the environment in which the respondent truly experiences the feelings. Hence, the ESM is more precise than the DRM. However, the DRM facilitates better comparisons between daily episodes because it covers the entire day, whereas the ESM covers only certain moments of the day. Consequently, it is not strictly necessary to use both the DRM and the ESM but it is valuable to do so because of their complementary value. Questions specifically relevant for migration studies are added to the DRM and ESM, such as “What is the nationality of the person(s) you were with?” and “What is the language you were speaking during this activity?”

Additionally, with people’s permission, their location can be tracked. It is also possible with the smartphone application to add objective biological markers to our measurements, such as pulse and skin reactivity. Moreover, to collect qualitative information, participants can place notes, voice recordings or pictures in the DRM and the ESM. All the data a participant puts in the application are graphically displayed to ensure high participant motivation.

An Example of a Migration Happiness Atlas Project

Randall Birnberg, a leader of the American expat community in Germany, expressed the willingness of American expats to participate in this project. Their goals are (1) to support American expats who consider moving to Germany, as well as American expats living in Germany, to make better decisions on migration and integration; and (2) to help immigrants gratify their social needs by the improved social capital and sense of community that follow from being involved in a community project. Within two months, a low-cost panel had been started including more than 1,000 American expats living in Germany (www.american-expat-app.com). This project illustrates the willingness of immigrants to be part of a community development process that improves the happiness of their fellow immigrants.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the value of community development in solving an important issue in immigrant communities. The issue of concern is that a considerable proportion of immigrants do not become happier through migration, which contrasts with their expectations and aspirations. The main cause of these disappointing migration outcomes is that many migrants have inaccurate expectations regarding their migration outcomes. Immigrants in the destination country have abundant expertise on migration outcomes and are thus well placed to provide accurate information on this topic. Unfortunately, however, immigrant communities are currently not sufficiently organized to transfer and expand knowledge from individual to prospective immigrants.

We discussed a science-based initiative, called the Migration Happiness Atlas, which supports immigrant communities in generating and communicating more accurate information regarding the happiness outcomes of migration by collecting information on (how to maximize) the

happiness outcomes of migration. This initiative is based on the active voluntary involvement of immigrant communities in the process of transferring and expanding knowledge to prospective migrants. The Migration Happiness Atlas aggregates and transforms the information provided by immigrants into customized and interactive evidence on the potential happiness outcomes of migration for a prospective migrant based on the personal characteristics of the prospective migrant.

Ultimately, the joint effort of researchers and immigrant communities to encourage the right people to migrate will lead to more thriving immigrant communities. Moreover, the process of helping potential immigrants can stimulate a greater sense of community in an immigrant community and can benefit the assimilation of potential immigrants into a community. More generally, this chapter illustrates that a constructive community offers the opportunity to push beyond individual understanding.

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IDENTITY IN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Koordoormitj¹ is the Essence of Life

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker and Jim Ife

Introduction

Family, kinship, relatedness and connectedness are the basis of Aboriginal worldviews and the philosophy that underpins the development of Aboriginal social organization

Grievs 2014: 3

When considering the idea of community development with Indigenous communities, it is essential to examine the concept of “community” from an Indigenous perspective. To start with, it is essential to define what the authors mean by Indigenous and Aboriginal in the Australian context. The term Indigenous is a common term used mostly by Australian politicians and government departments to refer to the first people of Australia and according to this definition it includes Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010). Prior to colonization, there were an estimated 200–250 language groups that comprised Aboriginal people throughout mainland Australia (Bourke 2016). Thus, there was much diversity because Aboriginal people are not homogeneous (Walker 2016). Even today the diversity still exists and so much so that some Aboriginal people of the mainland identify with their language groups today. Some may be searching for their ancestral lands while others identify strongly. For others, the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suffice. In Western Australia for example, the lands of the first author, the term Aboriginal is a commonly accepted term among the first peoples, while on the eastern border of Australia, Indigenous is the preference, however, the term First Nations is starting to appear in the literature and in conversation. In this paper, we will use the term Aboriginal.

Much community development has been conceptualized from an essentially Western modernity view of “community”, within the context of Western societies where traditional community has been eroded, and where “community development” seeks to find other ways to bring people together to realize their humanity. This inevitably assumes a context of Western modernity, but to impose this perspective on Indigenous communities is both colonial—in that it seeks to impose a different worldview—and insulting—in that it devalues and denies the validity of the Indigenous experience.

This chapter therefore will describe an Australian Aboriginal worldview of “community” by illustrating the differences from Western concepts of “community”. In particular, Aboriginal understandings of “community” through the lens of Aboriginal identity will be used to describe the connections with family, kinship, country and culture as these become synonymous with the notion of “community”. A sense of place and a sense of belonging will be explored as these are two important concepts of Australian Aboriginal identity and which are at the heart of “development” for the Aboriginal community. Finally, this chapter will describe the strengths of identity and belonging that help strengthen Aboriginal community development across the lifespan. More specifically, we will show how these concepts work together to achieve community development so that practitioners and professionals working with Aboriginal people can journey towards a sustainable, strong and culturally grounded “community”.

Australian Aboriginal Worldview

Western scientific ideologies and paradigms have often told Aboriginal stories within frameworks that are not inclusive of Aboriginal ways of knowing, ways of being, and ways of doing. For Aboriginal people, their worldview provides the basis in which to live, learn, survive (Martin 2003) and thrive. According to Arabena (2008: 4), worldviews are “interconnected, interrelated systems including constellations of concepts, perceptions, values and practices that are shared by a community and direct the activities of its members”. More specifically, Aboriginal worldviews contain of a set of values, morals, and lore which dictate and guide behavior, attitudes, and perceptions. Collectively, Aboriginal Australians’ worldviews are based on the principles of relationships, respect, connectedness, and meaning.

Some Indigenous scholars contend that Western scientific research paradigms benefit individualism and objectivity (Tuhiwai Smith 2003; Bessarab & Ng’andu 2010) but do not honour the communal and relational Aboriginal worldview. Indigenist research is a term coined by Indigenous academic Lester Rigney, which provides the basis for understanding the lived experiences (narratives) of Aboriginal people and which “are powerful instruments by which to measure equality and social justice” (Rigney 1999: 116). Indigenist research privileges the Aboriginal worldview and in doing so favors giving voice to Aboriginal people.

Mead (n.d.) reports there are six differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal worldviews:

1. Aboriginal people orient in a spiritual society whereas non-Aboriginal people tend to have a more scientific view of society whereby proof is required.
2. In Aboriginal society, “everything and everyone is related” (p. 2) and identity is formed from connections with others and country. Non-Aboriginal society is “compartmentalized” and identity is a result of material objects and one’s employment/title.
3. Aboriginal people are content to make do with what they have and the environment they live in. They are “be-ers” Whereas, non-Aboriginal people are “do-ers” such that life is about progression and whereby they use the environment to progress further. . . . forward.
4. The nature of time for Aboriginal people is cyclical, whereby time comes and goes. It is non-linear. Non-Aboriginal people’s concept of time however, is linear with structure, a finite end and an alignment towards the future.
5. A small system of authority exists for Aboriginal society and the giving of authority is based on relationships with others, age and cultural wisdom. Non-Aboriginal society tends to have a large system of authority whereby relationships are developed out of roles assigned to individuals in the system.

6. Well-being, especially being comfortable, is important for Aboriginal people and this is monitored by the quality of relationships with others. For non-Aboriginal people, feeling comfortable centers on the success experienced as a result of achieving individual goals.

An Aboriginal worldview provides ancient yet relevant Aboriginal ontology (perspectives of reality) and Aboriginal epistemology (Aboriginal ways of thinking about or knowing reality). The experiences and perceptions engaged by Aboriginal people have meaning that is unique and related to all living things. These meanings will be influenced by the values as reflected in the Dreaming stories. Aboriginal realities are shared by using narratives (stories) and these stories use cultural and archetypal metaphors to “explain the unexplainable”. Thus, there are endless realities and possibilities in Aboriginal worldviews and non-Aboriginal community development practitioners, scholars and students need to transcend from the rational and material to ground themselves in the spiritual and relational, if they are to fully comprehend Aboriginal realities.

A non-Aboriginal person will not be able to access the meaning(s) in the same way as an Aboriginal person, because “too often, the non-Aboriginal researcher appropriates the cultural knowledge and experiences of their Aboriginal participants, and then, using the theoretical frameworks of Western knowledge, reinterprets those experiences and presents it as their own” (Wright 2011: 28). Hence, the expectations and constraints for community development are influenced and guided by “the other’s” worldview. So when exploring Aboriginal community development, scholars, practitioners and students can benefit by taking into account Aboriginal worldviews to utilize Aboriginal ways of thinking in order to gain “authentic” and culturally appropriate knowledge of an Aboriginal reality.

What is Community?

So what constitutes “community” from within an Aboriginal perspective? In seeking to answer this question we will be doing so with reference to the Australian Aboriginal experience, and although there are many commonalities with Aboriginal experience elsewhere, we cannot claim that our discussion is universally applicable. The authors are an Aboriginal (Wadjuk Noongar) woman from the south west of Western Australia, with experience in community development practice and research interests in racial identity and self-esteem across the lifespan and a white male Australian academic with a long interest in community development, who has found Aboriginal worldviews (both from dialogue with Aboriginal colleagues, and from extensive reading of Aboriginal authors) to be both challenging and rewarding in his rethinking of community development. Recognizing our backgrounds, and limitations, it is, as always, up to the reader to make whatever sense they can of our discussion, from within their own cultural context.

In considering Aboriginal understandings of community, there are six key elements that need to be discussed, though from an Aboriginal perspective they are thoroughly intertwined and cannot be separated. They are: family/kinship, elders, country, gender, decision-making and the spiritual or sacred.

Family is fundamental to Aboriginal understandings of community. Aboriginal people are very aware of the importance of extended family and corresponding kinship ties, and when two Aboriginal people meet the first thing they will do is work out how they are related. From an Aboriginal perspective, you cannot even think about community without ideas of family, and thus family (in its extended sense) is always the lens through which community is understood. One cannot distinguish community from family, and hence to undertake community development requires an awareness of multiple and complex family and kinship obligations.

This is very different from conventional white Western understandings of “community”, which are removed from ideas of family. To have family members on a management committee, for example, might be frowned upon as “nepotism” in the white Western context, but from an Aboriginal perspective it would be both natural and unproblematic.

Elders hold a special place in Aboriginal cultures (Turner 2010). Unlike the “youth culture” of Western modernity, where the young and vigorous are valued and the elderly are marginalized, elders in Aboriginal cultures are highly valued for their experience and wisdom. Many community processes can only be initiated if elders are consulted and included in on-going discussions, and any community development process must include ways for elders to be actively included and their wisdom both sought and acted upon.

Aboriginal people retain a fundamental connection to land, or country, as an essential part of their humanity. The connection with country is both spiritual and profound, in a way that white Westerners cannot appreciate except in much more superficial ways (Wallace 2009). It is often expressed through ideas of totem, and totemic obligations to care for the natural world. This has a strong impact on Aboriginal people’s identity, and on any understanding of community. Therefore community development for Aboriginal people must contain a strong connection to land. Although “virtual communities” have become important for many community practitioners, Aboriginal community development must be place-based and recognise the deep significance of land or country to Aboriginal people.

Gender is always an important element in community development, and this is also true with Aboriginal communities. Traditional Aboriginal society incorporates complementary and equally valued roles for men and women (Sveiby and Skuthorpe 2006), and part of women’s role has always been the nurturing, maintenance and strengthening of family and community. Although men also have important roles in community development, it is absolutely essential that community development in Aboriginal communities draw on the strength and wisdom of women.

Decision-making in Aboriginal communities can be very different from conventional white ways of making decisions: formal meetings, debate, resolutions, voting, and so on (Sveiby and Skuthorpe 2006). In Aboriginal communities in Australia, the process of “yarning” is the norm; talking over, under, around and through an issue, sharing stories, until a consensus is reached. This can be a most effective form of decision-making, and though it may take longer than a formal vote, it leads to a more satisfactory outcome in that everyone involved will own the decision, and everyone will have contributed to it. It is very important that such decision-making traditions be respected when working with Aboriginal communities.

Finally, a sense of the sacred, or the spiritual, is fundamentally important in the Aboriginal experience, and must be respected (Turner 2010). Western modernity has embraced the secular and tended to devalue the sacred in its understanding of community, but this is well outside the Aboriginal experience. Aboriginal spirituality is intimately connected to the land, and to stories of the land and of the past, which are of both spiritual and educational significance (Wallace 2009). To think about community, without a connection to ideas of the sacred and the spiritual (very different from conventional “institutionalized religions”), is to miss a vitally important aspect of Aboriginal experience.

Hence a starting point for anything called “community development” with Aboriginal communities is to appreciate the very different connotations “community” has for Aboriginal people. The same, of course, can be said of “development”. Aboriginal people around the world have been the victims of so-called “development”, and the very idea of development carries with it colonialist overtones, as if development is a linear progression and requires programs of “inclusion” which can readily become assimilation. Rhetoric of “close the gap” implies that

the colonizing culture is superior, and “they” have to become more like “us”. This, of course is fundamentally at odds with the values of community development as more broadly understood in the literature, with its emphasis on empowerment and self-determination.

Aboriginal Identity across the Lifespan

As stated above, identity is a part of the Aboriginal reality and hence community development. Racial identity will now be explored across the lifespan. For the purposes of this chapter, racial identity will be used synonymously with Aboriginal identity and is defined as “a social construct that is shaped and determined by the interactions individuals share with others and with social structures” (Kickett-Tucker 2009: 121).

Most of the work about identity is derived from the field of psychology and founded from the work of Erikson (1994). According to psychologists and social scientists, identity is important in the development of an individual’s well-being and particularly that experienced within their communities (Usborne and Taylor 2010; Berzonsky et al. 2011). An identity gives an individual purpose in life . . . a role that defines “who they are, what sort of person they are and how to relate to others” (Hogg and Abrams 1988: 2). This explanation determines that identity is a social construct and thereby the interplay of experiences with others has an impact on identity formation. Critical to Aboriginal identity is a sense of place and sense of belonging an individual not only possesses and demonstrates but also feels toward their family, their kin, their community and wider Aboriginal communities. Hence, Aboriginal identity is determined as self-identification and being accepted by other Aboriginal people based on connection to kin, culture and country (Kickett-Tucker 2009).

When exploring identity for Australian Aboriginal people, much of the literature is focused upon the adult population and does not explore children or youth’s Aboriginal identity (Kickett-Tucker 2009). The very few studies that do exist, report Aboriginal children and young people’s identity in the academic achievement domain (Purdie et al. 2000; Purdie and McCrindle 2004; Craven and Marsh 2005; Kickett-Tucker 2005, 2008; Bodkin-Andrews and Craven 2006). We therefore know little of what contributes to the Aboriginal identity across the lifespan and how this manifests in the development of Aboriginal communities. It is important to have this knowledge because of the importance of Aboriginal identity for individual development:

A strong racial identity and related self-esteem is like a hub of a wheel. Because without the hub, the wheel can go nowhere. Like the hub, racial identity is the centre of a child’s and youth’s wellbeing . . . it is their spirit and without it, they can be steered by outside forces which determine how fast to go and which direction to travel.

Kickett-Tucker 2009: 130

Research tells us that identity forms across the lifespan even before a child’s language has developed (i.e. six months of age), they are able to recognize physical differences in people (Katz and Barrett 1997). We also know that from about three to six years of age, a child can ascertain differences in others by skin colour (Quintana and Vera 1999). Children aged 6 to 12 years can determine the racial identity of others in terms of differences in traditions, customs, culture and languages. It is by 14 years of age, that children start to comprehend their racial identity with the association of social class. It is also by this age that pre-teen identity formation is significantly influenced by the images and messages used by parents, families and communities. During the teenage years, external sources (such as the media) and individuals (such as teachers, police, sport heroes, singers, actors) have a major influence on identity and thereby it is also

during this critical development that teens' images, expectations and perceptions of their Aboriginal identity frame their adult life (Erikson 1994).

During adulthood, Aboriginal identity is not so linear or straightforward. What influences Aboriginal adult identity is the relationships with the past and present and those which affect the future. This is evidenced by the life stories of Aboriginal adults who were taken away from their families and placed on missions throughout Australia as part of the 1905 Aborigines Act.² Those taken from their families are known as the "Stolen Generation". In the following quote, by Stolen Generation survivor Mr Chris Jackamarra (2002: 42) it is evidenced that the past has affected their present. The writer's own parents were taken by the government welfare officers and placed on missions as children themselves and then he himself was also taken:

they [mission] taught us that we were white, but they never taught us to be prepared for what was out in the world. That there was racial prejudice, stereotype casting and things like that . . . we were robbed of our identity and culture and that bothered me, from that day to this actually. It is something that I was never taught and I am still just learning it now.

Identity is formed by the knowledge and feelings attached to family, kin, culture and country (Forrest 1998). Some are content with their Aboriginal identity and for others, it remains a constant challenge to identify or be accepted and therefore identity may be a source of great comfort and/or pain. According to Erikson (1963), identity development during critical periods such as those during transition from teenage years, to young adult, middle age and to mature age is influenced by social structures and interactions with others. Aboriginal identity is therefore continually influenced by external sources such as media, police and schools who provide their own information about identity for Aboriginal people (Kickett-Tucker & Coffin 2011). The information about Aboriginal people used by these institutions is not necessarily positive, culturally appropriate or even the truth, yet these institutions serve as major socializing agents and continue to perpetuate an image, a stereotype and an untruth of Aboriginal people. This information is not filtered and those who are young or not in a position to question the supposed authority or the content transmitted will receive contaminated knowledge about their kin, culture and country . . . all of which contribute to their perception of and feelings toward their Aboriginal identity. This is particularly important regarding the development of the identity of Australia's First Peoples because past (and current) state and federal government legislation (such as the 1905 Aborigines Act) have had devastating intergenerational effects upon cultural continuity, language, family structure, kinship systems, community, health, well-being and lore (Swan and Raphael 1995; Clark 2000) and each of these has negatively and significantly impacted the identity of Australia's Aboriginal nation. Behaviors are influenced by a set of values however these were severely interrupted and as values such as respect, responsibility, relationships and reciprocity were disturbed resulting in a break in cultural practices that weakened kinship networks, child-rearing practices, lore, rites of passage, traditions, decision making, governance and order.

Despite the struggles of the past upon Aboriginal culture, language and identity, Aboriginal people continue to survive and in some cases thrive. Aboriginal identity for instance, is reported to be a critical element of an Aboriginal person's sense of self (Kickett-Tucker 2009). Research reports that a strong racial identity helps to develop resilience so that skills and knowledge are developed to assist the individual to overcome and cope with life's challenges (Jackson and Sellers 1996; Niles 1999). In doing so, individuals are in control of their well-being and this has a positive impact on their self-esteem (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2002; Umana-Taylor and Fine 2004). More specifically, Chandler and colleagues (Chandler and Lalonde 1998; Chandler

et al. 2003) found in their study of First Nations young people in Canada, that a strong racial identity is a protective factor against self-harm and suicide.

Importantly, the strength of an individual's Aboriginal identity is important to how an individual evaluates themselves and thus arrives at a measure of their self-esteem (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2002; Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004). The connection between Aboriginal identity and related self-esteem is important because it then generates a story and an image in an individual's mind about how and what to do and be as an Aboriginal person. In turn, these mind maps, stories and images influence their subsequent behavior toward fulfilling their idea of their Aboriginal identity.

There are two issues that impact Aboriginal people and community development: (1) identity conflict and (2) coping strategies for racism and discrimination. First, Aboriginal identity is impacted by two realities, one that is private and the other that is public (Beckett 1988). What this means is that Aboriginal people, particularly those residing in urban areas, may develop an identity for the wider society and another for the Aboriginal community. The potential is that Aboriginal people may have to develop two identities and they may conflict with each other (Dudgeon and Oxenham 1989). A good example is that of education whereby Aboriginal children may enter a mainstream primary school and attempt to belong to the system that is alienating to their own values, beliefs and morals. Howard (1988) points out that Aboriginal children will continually ask themselves, "who am I?" Second, it has been reported that Aboriginal people who have low or unfavorable levels toward their racial identity and related self-esteem may also possess limited racial coping strategies. For instance, in a study of urban Aboriginal children, it was found that those who reported low levels of salience and knowledge toward their racial identity also had similar levels of related self-esteem. In some of these cases, children who reported racist incidents (i.e. predominantly name calling from a non-Aboriginal child at school) usually exercised only one strategy for dealing with the perpetrator and this was either to walk away (passive) or confront them using a physical act such as hitting or shoving them (Kickett-Tucker 2009). Johnson (2005) asserts that in this case, limited racial coping strategies are indicative of low self-esteem. So for Aboriginal community development, the challenges of identity conflicts and low self-esteem need to be considered.

Aboriginal Identity, Sense of Place and Belonging

As mentioned in the section above, the concept of place and a sense of belonging have a bearing on the development and acceptance of Aboriginal identity for the individual. So what does this mean for community development?

Aboriginal community development is about growing and building people from the womb to life's end. It's about people who walk alongside each other in their life's journey. It's about relationships. Aboriginal community development is about people.

Kickett-Tucker 2017

It is a universal practice, that when Aboriginal people meet each other, that they often greet with the familiar statements of where are you from and who are your people? (Bourke 2016). The statement, "who are your people?" defines the kinship connections between people whereas the statement "where are you from?" talks to the traditional and/or custodian lands or country from which one identifies with and belongs to.

The connections held by Aboriginal people to others include their family as well as their kinship. Family consists of members in the nuclear family as well as their extended family (such as cousin, uncles and aunts). Kinships are more complicated and are defined as an intricate system

of connections between immediate and extended members based on biological relations (blood kin), marital relations (affinal kin) and specified roles such Elderships (classified kin) (Pattel 2007). The purpose of the kinship system not only provides a basis for sense of belonging and acceptance to an individual but it also equips individuals with vast knowledge of the family genealogies, histories, links with ancestors and ancestral lands (traditional and custodial country). In short, kinships teach the Aboriginal worldview of the most important concept in being Aboriginal and that is the connection to people and “country” (Muswellbrook Shire Council Community Services Team, no date). The connections made to people and place via kinships provide a great source of information and inspiration for the maintenance and continuation of culture and languages, but is also vital in establishing and maintaining identity, rites of passage, behavior and values such as respect, sharing and caring (Lohoar et al. 2014). According to Daylight and Johnstone (1986), kinships provide emotional and psychosocial support to its members because of the established cultural obligations, responsibilities and roles for living in harmony with each other. In sum, an Aboriginal person’s racial identity is their truth and their truth lies in the connections they have to their kin and country.

Aboriginal community development therefore must rest upon the foundations of being Aboriginal as this includes the tapestry of connections between and among Aboriginal members of the community and country. Importantly,

community development can only be truly enacted if there is a strength based approach to activate and build upon the numerous and complex relationships meandering and weaving across people and places throughout the past, present and the future.

Kickett-Tucker 2017

Aboriginal Identity: The Strength for Community Development across the Lifespan

Racial identity is a strength of the Aboriginal community and can be utilized in a positive and strength-based way not only for inspiring a community but also for its development and sustainability over time. In order for practitioners and scholars to understand and comprehend this, the lens through which to view community development with Aboriginal people must be that of the Aboriginal worldview that favors sharing, caring, respect, connections to family, kin and country. Contained in this worldview are racial identity and culture of which both are intimately connected. Identity is a process that occurs over time and culture is a practice that teaches customs, values and beliefs, also over time. If we explore the components of racial identity from the previous section mentioned above, we uncover a number of characteristics of identity that when explored in a positive and strength-based paradigm, then we will view identity as the solid foundation for Aboriginal community development.

A culturally appropriate framework for exploring identity and the interplay in community development is the cultural security model of the 4 R’s: respect, responsibility, relationships and reciprocity (Koya Aboriginal Corporation 2008). First, identity connects kinships and in doing so, provides the roles, rules and responsibilities of individuals and including how to interact with others. A critical component of racial identity for Aboriginal people is the respect shown via the kinships to older people and particularly those who are Elders of the community. Elders particularly are considered precious assets who although may have been members of the Stolen Generation and have seen many changes to Aboriginal society, they are however resilient survivors. They are the story keepers who hold the customs, lore and traditions. Elders are the cultural transmitters who ensure culture is passed from one generation to another.

Second, identity sets out the responsibilities of individuals, kinships and community. For instance, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, children as young as 6 months can identify differences among people (Katz and Barrett 1997) and since the Australian Aboriginal population comprises almost half of children and young people (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012), then here is a large quantity and rich quality of valuable assets to ensure identity is taught and culture is transmitted. In the Aboriginal family and kinship systems for example, it is the responsibility of all members to care and raise children (Lohoar et al. 2014). It is also the responsibility of the Elders to pass their cultural knowledge and skills to the young people (Palmer 2003).

Third, identity is important in defining, creating and maintaining relationships (Pattel 2007). This is achieved in the way that identity helps individuals map out who they belong to and who belongs to them. It sets the foundation for relationships and how to relate to others based on the roles in their kinship they are born into. Ultimately, because relationships and sense of belonging and acceptance are high priority elements for Aboriginal identity, then it has a role in developing and sustaining the well-being of individuals and that of the collective community (Usborne and Taylor 2010; Umana-Taylor et al. 2004).

Finally, reciprocity is a key element of being Aboriginal as it means to give back to others what you receive (Wikipedia, 2016). It is an obligation that is central to the worldview and consequently the values held by Aboriginal people. If we turn to the definition in this chapter of racial identity, we see that it is a social construct that is dynamic and develops over time in response to the experiences we have of others including socializing agents (such as the Aboriginal community). Given this definition then, it is important to Aboriginal people to share the knowledge and skills they have of their identity and culture with others. The reciprocal nature of sharing means that they will receive knowledge, confidence and skills in turn. If we examine this process closely for community development, it is evident that reciprocity is a circular, yet holistic process that fits nicely with the nature of identity and its interplay with community development for Aboriginal people.

Tracks for the Journey toward Aboriginal Community Development

Is it possible for non-Aboriginal community practitioners to work with Aboriginal communities? The dangers of colonialist and assimilationist practice are strong, and need to be acknowledged at all times. Clearly it is better for community practitioners themselves to be Aboriginal, but there will be times when non-Aboriginal practitioners find themselves in this role. A non-Aboriginal practitioner may be able to help the community negotiate the institutions of the dominant settler culture, but despite this they will never be fully effective in “doing community development” with Aboriginal communities. We would suggest, however, that non-Aboriginal practitioners can play important roles in Aboriginal communities, under certain conditions. First, the practitioner needs to be critically self-aware, understand her/his location as part of the dominant colonizing culture, and be ultra-conscious of the dangers of colonialist practice. Second, the practitioner must be aware of the history of invasion, colonization and dispossession, and the devastating impact this has had both at individual and community level. Third, the practitioner should seek to work humbly and respectfully in genuine partnership with Aboriginal people, especially Elders, and respect and act on their wisdom and understanding. Fourth, the practitioner must resist imposing her/his agenda on the community; it is the community’s agenda, and the community’s struggle. Finally, the practitioner must understand the idea of working in solidarity, being alongside Aboriginal people in their struggle for recognition and control of their lives. It is their struggle; a non-Aboriginal practitioner may be able to support and assist

that struggle, in solidarity, but that struggle is always owned by the Aboriginal community itself, and not by the non-Aboriginal practitioner, however skilled, sensitive and supportive that practitioner may be.

This way of working may well run counter to the expectations of managers, employing organizations and funding bodies, whether government or non-government. A non-Aboriginal community practitioner will often need to negotiate with such bodies, in an attempt to create a space that allows for Aboriginal ways of knowing and acting. This may require education, negotiation, advocacy and sometimes confrontation. A community practitioner, while mediating between the different ways of being of Aboriginal communities and white bureaucracies, must always respect the primacy of the former, and find ways for white Western managerial bureaucracies to respect and adapt to the worldviews of Aboriginal communities, rather than the reverse. This may be the way in which a community practitioner can be most effective in working with Aboriginal communities: finding ways that can create the space for those communities to work in their own way, and finding resources to support those community processes.

Conclusion

Aboriginal communities face serious problems, such as violent behavior, alcohol and drug abuse, crime, poor health, poor education, poverty, unemployment and so on. These are experienced also in non-Aboriginal communities, of course—they are not exclusively “Aboriginal problems” and must not be thought of as such—though the experience of them in Aboriginal communities is often particularly severe. Frequently community development is touted as “the answer” to these problems, and “community-based” programs are established. But for those programs to be successful, such problems need to be understood in terms of the assault on Aboriginal culture and community practices, through colonial invasion and dispossession, often reinforced by dominant racist narratives in non-Aboriginal society. The most successful and sustainable ways to address these issues have been through strengthening Aboriginal people’s connections with cultural and spiritual heritage, validating and supporting Aboriginal ways of knowing, doing and being, and strengthening Aboriginal communities not by making them more like non-Aboriginal communities, but by connection or in some cases, reconnection to kinships, culture and country. In doing so, the importance of Aboriginal identity is critical, as it is through the affirmation, validation and support of Aboriginal identity, at all stages of the lifespan, that Aboriginal people will be able to achieve their full humanity. For Aboriginal people, identity is inevitably collective rather than individual; Aboriginal people can only thrive if Aboriginal communities thrive, and this must reflect Aboriginal understandings of community, not the ways that non-Aboriginal people think ideal communities ought to work.

Notes

- 1 Koordoornitj is a Noongar term from the Aboriginal people of the southwest of Western Australia.
- 2 The Aborigines Act 1905 (Act no. 1905/014 (5 Edw. VII No.14) was reserved for royal assent on December 23, 1905 and commenced in April 1906. It was “An Act to make provision for the better protection and care of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia”. It governed the lives of all Aboriginal people in Western Australia for nearly 60 years. The Act created the position of Chief Protector of Aborigines, who became the legal guardian of every Aboriginal child to the age of 16 years, and permitted authorities to “send and detain” Aboriginal children in institutions and in “service” (work) (Find & Connect Web Resource Project for the Commonwealth of Australia (2011), retrieved from www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/wa/WE00406).

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PART VI

Community Development, Human Rights and Resilience



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23

INDIGENOUS PLANNING

Replanting the Roots of Resistance¹

Ted Jojola and Michaela Shirley

Germination

It was around three o'clock in the morning. I was stooped over a drafting board in my room. With T-square and architects' rule, I was busy rendering a children's playground. I heard soft steps and I paused to turn around and see my mother standing besides me. In a half-tremolo voice she asked me in Isleta Tigua, "Why are you still awake? What's keeping you up so late?"

In my single-minded stupor, I used an index finger to trace out and explain the rudiments of a plan. In my mind it was filled with trees, grass, swings, slides—all things needed to make children happy. I paused looking at her for a nod of affirmation only to be disquieted by a lukewarm glare. "It's just like somebody who's never had any children to do something like this," my mother exclaimed.

It was an ego-busting awakening. Her retort skewered the corpus of my idea that I could design a playground without knowing what it meant to be a parent. For weeks afterward, the magma of that moment continued to smolder. It took another generation, until I was blessed with my own son, to lessen its sting and bridge the profundity of that comment.

I can't precisely say that this was the defining point of my life. But the fact that it has continued to resonate above most other critiques throughout the years probably qualifies it as such. In another way, however, it refocused my life's ambitions and spurred me onward to reexamine what it meant to design and plan in a meaningful way in time and place. This singular event, like the sprout of a long-dormant Anasazi bean, germinated my ambitions in Indigenous design and planning.

Personal statement by Ted Jojola

One does not choose to be Indigenous. You are born into it. Its sense of place has evolved for countless generations. Unique languages, architecture and lifeways are embodied by it. From the first heartbeat to the last, you are the steward of both an Indigenous worldview and a collective responsibility. Life becomes infused with sustainability and culture.

Indigenous Peoples

Based on reporting by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, an estimated 370 million Indigenous people live in some 90 countries (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2009: 7–8). Although they only constitute approximately 5 percent of the world's population, they harbor the greatest cultural diversity amid humankind. Their populations speak more than 4,000 languages and upon their homelands are concentrated much of the world's biodiversity. Many Indigenous peoples harbor an invaluable traditional knowledge about living things that are embodied in special and spiritual ties to the land.

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2009: 4). At the crux of this embodiment is their right to maintain and transmit their communities in accordance to their culture and identity.

Decidedly, prior to outside contact and domination by colonial empires, the whole of the new world was Indigenous. At least for the Americas, their vibrancy was arrested beginning in 1492, when explorers, then colonizers, began their campaigns of domination and subjugation. Indigenous people had to survive the onslaught by resisting subjugation or removing themselves from the paths of Western expansion. They took their cultures underground.

It is estimated that people may have inhabited the Americas for at least the last 40,000 years. Much of the material culture, though, focuses on settlements that occur after the great Ice Age, approximately 26 to 13 thousand years ago. Like many parts of the world, advances in indigenous societies gave rise to great civilizations. There were both great planners and architects. The most famous examples of their work are among the Mayan and Aztec of Mesoamerica as well as the Inca Empire in the Andean realms of South America.

But there were many other great indigenous civilizations in North America that existed at the time of Euro-Western contact. The major ecological zones they inhabited served to distinguish each civilization. Each had its own unique cultural identity and ways of relating to the land. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, coastal villages were interconnected in a “House Society” form of social organization. The Quinault, Tlingit and Kwakiutl tribes evolved a plank house, post-and-beam building system that influenced modern construction. At the time of outside contact, the Southeast Cherokee were organized regionally into “Overhill Townships”. Their council houses were constructed around a central plaza—one octagonal for winter and one rectangular for summer. Each town was linked economically and politically to other council towns. In the Southwest, the Pueblo tribes quickly gained favor under prescriptive building instructions of the Spanish New Town Ordinance of 1573. At the time of contact, they had already populated the entire region with multistoried, terraced villages built from adobe and stone (Jojola 2012).

Unfortunately, rather than learning from and embracing these civilizations, the oppressive colonial regimes suppressed them. The overall toll was enormous. Indigenous civilizations were obliterated or reduced to a state of peonage. Territories were lost and spiritual places were desecrated. Under the rubric of colonization, populations were decimated and many were dispossessed from their culture and identity.

This onslaught, however did not end with colonization. It continued as nation states evolved. Even during its infancy, the USA pursued treaties that were intended to take away the ownership and control of traditional Indigenous homelands and drive tribes away from their homelands. Indian policy was predicated on securing hegemony over “unsettled” lands and, as

a corollary, the so-called “primitive” people that inhabited them. By the 17th century, Jeffersonian idealism promulgated a popular campaign called “manifest destiny”. It was a moral campaign necessary for taming the wilderness through agrarian reform. It gave consent for settlers to trespass onto native lands in the American West.

Under this frontier ethic, American society exhibited its unbridled tenacity to appropriate and harness everything and anything in the pursuit of expansion and growth. This was done without consideration to the impacts of the land and the people. As a result, many were subjugated through the Indian Wars and were removed to places that were considered undesirable. In 1824, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was established to oversee these practices.² The 1830 Indian Removal Act subjected the Five Civilized Tribes to the infamous “Trail of Tears” They were wrenched from their homelands in the Southeast and relocated to the Indian territory of Oklahoma. Similar removal campaigns affected native people throughout the USA and its territories.

Their plight became a case of arrested development. People lost their connections to their homelands and the worldviews that once sustained them. They were not permitted to rebuild their settlements in a manner that suited the landscape. In order to preserve their languages and ceremonies they hid them from the outside by taking them underground.

The 1887 General Allotment Act and the implementation of the Public Land Survey System represented added efforts aimed at dispossessing native people from their reservation lands.³ Their populations were rounded up and counted, and each person living on the reservation was given anywhere from an eighth to a quarter section (5 to 80 acres). By the time this policy was curtailed in the 1930s, some 53,000 individuals received almost 5 million acres. The remainders of Indian trust land was declared as surplus and sold. Almost 60 percent of the total Indian estate was lost.

The assignment of allotments was designed do away with tribal communal lands. The conviction that private entitlement would accelerate their participation in the American system was the rationale behind the policy. Anthropological race-based theories played into the notion of “primitive culture”, particularly among hunter-gather and nomadic tribes. Sociologists focused their research on how native people resisted becoming civilized. Eventually, tribal people were differentiated into two categories—those that were “traditional” and those that were “modern”. Those that ostensibly held onto cultural traditions and resisted attempts to assimilate them were considered backwards and subjected to punitive policies. Those who accepted Westernization were considered progressive and enticed with rewards. Such theories impacted Indian programs.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the Indian Boarding School system. Indian Boarding Schools had their origins as Christian mission schools in the 1860s. After the founding of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879, the USA federal government took over the management of many of these schools. Under the tutelage of a career army officer, Richard Henry Pratt, the system was operated in a manner that was intended to “Kill the Indian and save the man”. Children, as young as six years of age, were removed from their families and taken to schools located in faraway places. Once there, they were housed in dormitories and not allowed to return home for the duration of their studies. They were subjected to a military-style curriculum and prohibited from either speaking their languages or participating in their cultures. Education by forced assimilation continued well into the 1930s.

The two major curriculum areas that were used to reform native housing and communities into modern places were public health and land management (Shirley 2015). These were based on American norms. Various clubs were created at the schools that the children joined, in which the instructors were tasked with informing the club members on how to have a healthy, modern home environment. Some departments worked with families to teach them healthy habits through

the proper home and camp sanitation trainings (Hammond 1925). Students learned how to improve individual and overall family health through sanitation. For example, Navajo students were taught on how to have a healthy and clean *hogan*. Moreover, in some instances, the Navajo carpentry students built new housing prototypes thereby forgoing the *hogan* in favor of a modern house.

Historic records document the federal government's dismay with the traditional lifestyle of the Navajo people moving between sheep camps because it deterred the Navajos from a "modern and progressive" life (Abbott 1910). As a result, Navajo students were taught agriculture. The conservation of water became a central factor in land reform, as was the need to make their lifestyle sedentary.

It was not until the 1928 Meriam Report, however, that the US Congress took notice about reforming Indian wrongs (Brookings Institution 1928). Entitled *The Problem of Indian Administration*, it lambasted the practices of the BIA in education, health and land reform. The report set in motion a major reversal of Indian policy with the passage of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA)⁴. Reforms included the curtailment of the allotment system, the establishment of tribal self-rule through constitutional governments, and educational change.

Along with political reform, the IRA changes brought an infusion of new funding. Local Indian clinics and day schools were constructed throughout Indian country. Under the New Deal, Indian labor was trained and hired to construct public works projects. Together these improvements planted seeds that led to the emergence of modern proto-towns within reservations. Electrification and domestic water systems were constructed. Roadways were built and new housing settlements sprouted alongside the new grid patterns that crisscrossed this new infrastructure.

The federal government relied, in particular, on the operation of economically efficient day schools to transform Indian communities into modern places. Day schools, for example, were becoming commonplace on the Navajo reservation, and elsewhere on other Indian reservations. According to the federal government, schools had to have access to water, roads and a sizable school-aged population (Nadsworth 1917). Water access was of paramount importance for schools located in the arid, desert region of the southwest because it is the source of its survival. Moreover, access to water meant it could foster the development of centralized housing for Navajo families and their school-aged children. The BIA planned "central points where schools could be built and successfully maintained" (Paquette 1910). There was also a huge dependence on access to roads because school buses would use them to pick up the school-aged children who were often living at various, scattered housing sites. Plus, having access to roads for the school meant easy and reliable delivery of goods and services to operate the school.

Unfortunately, such improvements were disrupted with the onset of World War II. Native American males had volunteered in droves, leaving their communities even more impoverished. After the war, they returned and quickly became disillusioned that states ignored their voting rights and treated them like second-class citizens. Many moved off reservation to take advantage of the GI Bill and pushed for constitutional reform to change voter laws and allow them to register in statewide elections.

Demands for state reforms, however, came at a high cost. Along with the equal protection afforded to Indian people, came demands by the states to regulate Indian lands. With the passage of Public Law 280 in 1953, the Indian Termination Act, a series of federal laws and policies were enabled that gave states jurisdiction over Indian tribes.⁵ Among them was the Indian Relocation Act of 1956 that further eroded sovereignty. The intent of this act was to resettle both the male and female prime labor force, 18–35 years of age, to major urban centers throughout the country to learn vocational trades.⁶ It was not until the 1970s when these policies were

rescinded. By this time, the damage was done. By certain estimates, over three quarters of a million native people had been displaced and 109 tribes had been terminated.⁷

Attemptive Planning

My life is consumed with work and schooling. At one point in my graduate studies, I visited my Navajo family in Kin Dah Lichii, Arizona. At my older sister's, I asked each of my nieces and nephews, "How is school going?" All of them said it was good but one. My oldest nephew, Monte, began telling me that his Navajo teacher called him an "M-R". Other students in her class began following suit. I asked him what an "M-R" meant. To my astonishment he said, "Mental Retard".

I imagined other countless children who have to endure such ugly, and undeserved, treatment in their schools on the Navajo Nation, and beyond in Indian Country. Furthermore, how many of those children may become troubled and delinquent at a very early age. This would put them at a higher probability of dropping out of school and being labeled "drop outs" in their families and communities.

Many children fall through the cracks and start unhealthy and detrimental lifestyle habits that ultimately may make them dysfunctional adults. All of this thinking is what propelled me explore the role schools have had in the historic and present-day community development of Kin Dah Lichii. This cause has become the foundation of my scholarship in Indigenous planning.

Personal statement by Michaela Shirley

The 1975 Indian Self Determination and Educational Assistance Act ushered in the contemporary era of tribal community development.⁸ Not only did it put an end to the Indian Termination Act, federally recognized tribes were allowed to govern themselves by contracting their own programs in education, public health, housing and administration. Under these contractual provisions, the Secretary of Interior and the tribes worked together to amend provisions in education, public health, housing, etc.⁹ Within a decade of its passage, the need to design and plan their infrastructure and buildings exploded. It rekindled the hope of meaningful development.

Before the tribes could move forward, however, leadership faced a monumental task. Their lands were fragmented and a mosaic of land entitlements undercut their authorities. Unregulated growth had contributed to poor housing and inadequate infrastructure. In an effort to ameliorate these conditions, tribes subjected themselves to what has been characterized as "attemptive planning". It is a condition that describes the implementation of short-term and stopgap measures. Instead of integrating planning measures that were localized and community-engaged, projects were imposed through a top-down, outsider process. This type of approach disrupted the holistic flow of placemaking.

In 1960, the US Court of Appeals determined that "Indian Tribes . . . have a status higher than that of States".¹⁰ This ruling was followed by a series of War on Poverty pronouncements by President Lyndon Johnson that heralded a fundamental change leading toward tribal self-determination. Program initiatives under the War on Poverty had a resounding effect on tribal community development. Unlike the paternalistic regime of the earlier BIA policies, tribes were given the opportunity to develop the bureaucratic infrastructure to manage local programs. The structure of BIA operations became more decentralized and local tribal operations gained legitimacy as a result.

The War on Poverty program that was most responsible for actualizing self-determination was the Indian Community Action Program (ICAP) under the auspices of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). With the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, many tribes had designated their own Community Action Agency boards. The projects supported by this program were varied and extensive. For example, Project Head Start was the largest component of ICAP. By 1970, when this component was transferred to the US Office of Education, 59 reservations had already established Head Start programs (Levitan & Hetrick, 1971). Similarly, the BIA established the Indian Health Service in 1956 to oversee initiatives in health.

Over time, the US Department of Interior's attempt to regulate and manage such arrangements became an unmitigated failure.¹¹ Furthermore, as tribal governments attempted to exercise land use planning and zoning, their efforts were consistently thwarted by challenges to their legal autonomy to regulate growth and development. In 1968, the statutes were amended to encompass tribal governments and were implemented under a newly formulated 601 Comprehensive Planning mandate.¹² Under this authority, the Secretary of Interior was designated to implement this for its wards and comprehensive planning became mandatory under services provided by the BIA.¹³

The earliest examples of 601 tribal comprehensive planning were largely reminiscent of inventory approaches. These were designed to comply with objectives issued by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) (Jojola & Agoyo 1993). Because the economic base of many tribes was basically limited to their natural resources, the application of the planning approach was mixed and uneven (Clow & Sutton 2001). Most plans were not grounded in the immediacy of meeting community needs, but were driven by unrealistic assumptions of social behavior modeled after non-native approaches to economic development.

On the other hand, OEO had positive impacts. Perhaps the most understated aspect was the development of leadership capacity within tribal communities. Individuals who might have otherwise left the reservation for urban economic opportunities were now being retained and trained in managerial and technical capacities. Particularly when OEO was coordinated with other self-reliance initiatives like the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), many local self-help projects were pursued that had direct bearing on tribal community development.

On July 8, 1970, President Richard M. Nixon in a presidential message officially rescinded the Indian Termination Act. In the pronouncement that followed, President Nixon indicated that of all the Department of Interior programs, only 1.5 percent were under Indian control while only 2.4 percent of the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare health programs were Indian run (Forbes 1981). The call for reform had come at the heels of American Indian Movement militancy, an outgrowth of Indian relocation and the civil rights movement.

External pressure prompted a series of recommendations intended to shift the BIA away as a management body and into a service organization. The American Indian Policy Review Commission (AIPRC) reported to Congress that it had substantiated the claims that "dependency on the federal government increased from 1968 to 1972".¹⁴ Their recommendations were straightforward: provide opportunities for adequate education, full employment and enable a system of tribal taxation.

Such goals, however, proved to be politically and economically difficult to attain. In 1973, the tribes received their first opportunity to pursue Indian control under the auspices of the Indian Action Team and The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Under Indian Manpower Programs, classroom and on-the-job training was provided nationwide to over 50,000 qualifying Native Americans.¹⁵ In addition, private industry was also convened by the Department of Interior to advise the federal government on the merits of reservation business investment. Such ventures had been attempted as early as 1955, most with negative results.

In 1974, the Native American Programs Act provided more funding by “increasing the capabilities of Native American groups to provide services for its members” (Jones 1982: 117). About 33 million dollars were appropriated in 1978 and “average” awards of \$125,000 per tribe were given. The impact of such programs was substantial. For example, the Pueblo of Zuni was the first Indian tribe to completely transform its tribal operations by assuming complete responsibility for the administration and supervision of its BIA programs and personnel. Between 1970 and 1981, the number of tribal employees increased ninefold and its tribal operations expanded from three to seventy-one.

Yet in spite of these experiences, the most impactful program had yet to be fully realized. In 1961, the 1937 Housing Act had been amended to allow the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to establish Tribal Housing Authorities under the provisions of “self-help” and “turnkey” programs.¹⁶ These HUD houses, as they are popularly called, ushered in suburban-style, cluster subdivisions and fundamentally changed the rural and social character of Indian country. HUD requirements for individually apportioned land-deeds, zoning for residential areas and the provision of public infrastructure for electricity, roadways, water and sewer created a housing master planning template of sorts. Despite its shortfall, these developments basically accomplished what the 601 Comprehensive approaches could not.

The Indian HUD program was intended to alleviate substandard housing. In reality, shoddy construction and their culturally mismatched building types tended to introduce as many social problems as they alleviated.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the tribal subdivisions that evolved from the massing of these houses came and continue to dominate the landscape of many reservations.

Another impact of Indian Self Determination was a surge in local tribal operations. Tribal government became both a complex business and a full-time enterprise. Many reservation communities quickly outpaced their capacity to control development. As a result, they bore the imprint of unattended needs as well as successive waves of unregulated development. Modernization inadvertently introduced a new set of capital-intensive variables that in the long term were not sustainable.

Such was the situation where tribal nations had been saddled with ill-begotten enterprises. Under the authority of the US Department of Interior, leases among the extractive natural resource industries for uranium, coal, oil and gas on Indian trust lands had become the norm. Mining companies were largely unregulated and once the mines were spent, previously pristine landscapes were riddled with contaminated and abandoned sites. The boom-and-bust cycles of such developments adversely affected the health of local populations as well as their local economies. Today, it is estimated that there are 532 Superfund Sites in Indian Country. That total comprises one-fourth of all registered sites in the USA (Hansen 2014).

Where some tribes were able to rebound was in Indian gaming. Dating back to the early 1970s, bingo games awakened a sleeping giant. In 1979, the Seminole Tribe of Florida instituted high-stakes bingo game and within a decade, scores of other tribes followed suit, creating a \$100 million plus industry (Eadington 1990; Dunstan 1997; Mullis & Kamper 2000). When the states and local governments objected, Indian tribes successfully argued that they had the right to run the games because of tribal sovereignty. In 1987, the US Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Indian tribes.¹⁸ The 1988 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act expanded these rights by granting tribes to operate three classes of gambling including high-stake casino-style gambling.¹⁹

At the end of the day, however, gaming created inequality among tribes because of differences in the size of the immediate potential market and the number of nearby competitors. Those located in large population centers with little competition tended to be more viable (Cordeiro 1989). Nor did success necessarily mitigate the social impacts on the community. Instead, some of the most successful gaming tribes have seen a decline in their quality of life, deterioration in

their cultural patrimony and are burdened by a general social malaise. A young mother from one such gaming tribe described her community's predicament as a "living hell", because of misguided ambition, social dysfunction and a profound sense of cultural loss (Jojola 2014: 468).

Today, many tribal communities are seeing their populations migrate from their traditional homelands into urban areas. In the process, language and cultural practices are being lost. The youth, in particular, are the most impacted. Many of them struggle in coping with a high incidence of single-parenthood, delinquency and school dropout rates among the youth. This is coupled with high unemployment, substance abuse, high suicide rates as well as heart disease and diabetes among the adult population. Faced with a bleak future, many leave their homelands because of the lack of education, employment, housing and services.

To add to the woes, climate change has begun to adversely affect the water, land and ecologies of these sensitive landscapes. Indigenous peoples have seen changes among the water, land and ecologies with regard to migratory patterns of animals and fish, the timing of the seasons and the quality and quantity of water. This has affected traditional agricultural and harvesting practices. In the most extreme cases, traditional knowledge has had to go unheeded and Indigenous communities have had to relocate because of the rising ocean.

Many Indigenous peoples are doing their best to assert their sovereignty at the grassroots with mass rallies and protests at international meetings and conventions. Much of this work is grassroots-led because there is a lack of acknowledgement by states and governments to see Indigenous peoples as having first claim by being stewards of the land (Westra 2008).

Indigenous Planning

A caravan of trucks and SUVs snaked their way up a desolate road. A fine coat of dust enveloped the vehicles. We could barely discern the roadway signs that became twisted and faded over the decades. You see, the uranium companies had abandoned not only their mines but also the promises to remedy what they had disturbed.

Our Navajo hosts would occasionally pull over to point out another mound of mine tailings. A once pristine landscape dotted with pinions and juniper now resembled an unnatural landscape that had been gentrified through topsoil remediation. The process was simple. Strip off the topsoil to a depth of eight or so inches and replace it with "new soil" and grass. The rugged sandstone was gone, replaced by gently sloping berms that were more suited to a New England landscape.

The remediation has come at a tremendous social cost. The older members of families who lived in these environs recalled the land before it had been mined. One woman held out an old Folgers coffee can. She said it was her grandmother's. Rolled inside the spent can were creased documents and crinkled photographs. One document was an Indian Agent's permit certifying how many horses, cows and sheep they could graze. Another was a certification of Indian blood quantum entitling the family members to tribal membership and land assignments. Yet another was a commodity list. A fading photo was the woman as a young girl of ten, wearing an expansive grin clinging onto the neck of an unruly goat.

But all that was gone now. The young girl was old. Her grandmother had long passed away, but so had others from her parents' generation. Many had died from cancer, the cause of which could be traced to the contaminated land and water. She was tired and angry. So were the others from this community of Red Water Pond. It was yet another meeting, among countless meetings, with officials from the US and Navajo Environmental Protection Agency. They were there to "advise" them of the

next urgent plan to remediate the area. Some of the community members complained that this was the third time they had been displaced. As the discussion got heated, one man rose from his chair and loudly exclaimed, “I have lived in the same place all my life. You all should know where I live by now. I’m sick of all these promises. I’m sick of being told that I should move. Just leave me alone here to die in peace.”

The EPA officials tried to appease him by an assurance that he would have a hotel room for the entirety of the project. But by that time, he was already half way out the door, his back turned in abject anguish. “So who’s gonna take care of my animals?” another resident asked. The official shrugged and said they’d have to drive back to take care of their own animals; forty minutes by truck and a dusting of contaminated soil later.

The Red Water Pond Road Community (RWPRC) is where Navajo families have resided for at least seven generations. It is located approximately 30 miles from the city of Gallup, New Mexico. Today, many families are contemplating whether or not to permanently abandon their homes. They are sandwiched between the shadows of two former uranium mines—Northeast Churchrock, which ceased operations in 1982, and Kerr-McGee’s Quivira Mine, which operated until the mid-1980s.

About 10 miles downstream of RWPRC, in the Rio Puerco wash, is ground zero for the infamous Church Rock uranium mill spill. In 1979, a breach in the tailings disposal pond resulted in the largest release of radioactive material in US history. Over the years, many people from these families have gotten sick. The contamination and exposure to this water has caused premature deaths from lung cancer and respiratory afflictions.

The US and Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agencies have subjected the area to numerous remediation efforts. The US EPA has already removed thousands of yards of radioactive soil from the area. Each time, the Navajo families have been subjected to voluntary flexible housing options while contaminated soils have been stripped from the surface and replaced by new topsoil. Navajo families have been temporarily relocated twice and more removal actions were begun in June 2012, to be followed by other phases that were due to begin in late 2014.

While the residential structures themselves are not contaminated, US EPA has determined that the community, as a whole, qualifies for replacement housing. Options include purchase of mobile homes, recreational vehicles to be used as residences, or financial settlements that can be used toward the construction of a new home on adjoining sites. Each option comes with variations or conditions. According to the Navajo way of thinking, resettlement would break the cycle of the generations and their cultural relationship to the land and sense of place.

The situation at RWPRC remains unsettled. It is one of many communities that are similarly situated. Although solutions to protect Indigenous communities have focused on language preservation, environmental protection, economic development and public health, only recently has the role of design and planning been recognized as an instrument for positive community change.

Indigenous planning is a paradigm that uses a culturally responsive and value-based approach to community development. It is a participatory process predicated on establishing a set of principles that are informed by generations that are ever present in a healthy community. A seven-generation planning model connects the past, present and future through the older generations (great-grandparents, grandparents and parents), the mid generation (self) and the younger generations (children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren).

The seven-generations model assesses how communities sustain patterns of intergenerational interplay through the lifetime of an individual. As the lifecycle of an individual moves from

infancy through elderhood, they learn values and mature into their requisite roles and responsibilities. Community institutions are invested in making sure that this occurs in an orderly and timely fashion. This structure is the foundation of a worldview, and its processes have evolved and been refined over successive generations.

A worldview represents the community's understanding of itself and its relationship to the natural world that sustains it. Newborns are ushered into a nurturing culture that accords them associated rights and restraints to land. It is not a property right. It is negotiated through consent. In practice, land is communal and is beholden to a right of commons. Interests of the moieties, clans and families may dominate. It is a collective right that is predicated on practices attuned to land tenure.

Indigenous planning is a movement that is established on the belief that Indigenous communities should benefit from the best practices that design and planning have to offer, but in a manner that is culturally informed. It is part of an international movement that has representation in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines and in various Latin American countries such as Mexico, Ecuador and Peru. Basically, it is represented in countries where significant concentrations of Indigenous people reside in identifiable territories.

As practiced by the Indigenous Design and Planning Institute,²⁰ Indigenous planning is a process in working with Indigenous communities that entails three interrelated sets of activities:

- **education**—workshops explain key concepts, engaging stakeholders in a shared discussion about the context behind demographic and land-use change. The conversations clarify and build consensus around enduring cultural values that are necessary to guide the growth and evolution of the community. In addition, when opportunity presents itself, youth are mentored in a manner that informs them about culturally responsive design and planning. This activity heightens their ability to imagine and build the future. It prepares them for leadership.
- **community engagement**—Indigenous planners work with local leadership to identify key individuals who can meaningfully contribute to conversations about place. This entails understanding cultural protocols, local history, identifying and using existing social networks, and nurturing a working relationship among program and community liaisons to organize community meetings. Community-engaged methods, such as participatory and asset mapping, are deployed to gather information and expand the conversation across the generational spectrum. Summary reports are developed and findings are disseminated for further discussion and refinement. Oftentimes, this requires staging dozens of events over the course of the project.
- **transcriptive**—this entails using an interdisciplinary team of faculty, students and professionals. They use their skills to assist the community in transforming their ideas through visual designs and conceptual planning documents. These community-driven documents are integrated into a professional portfolio that can be shared and used to leverage resources and funding.

The Indigenous planning process requires that leadership balance the immediacy of action (short term) with a comprehensive vision (long term). Community engagement and meaningful public participation are the key to its success. Indigenous planning practitioners give voice to the community. They are facilitators, not imposers of authoritative solutions. They inspire and work toward improving the quality of life of its constituents. They are obligated to see through a course of action or, at the very least, assist the community to build local capacity. Ultimately, they heal deep cultural wounds by assisting the community to reclaim its culture and heritage.

The People are Beautiful Already²¹

It was at the end of the semester. Students and faculty of iD+Pi had just driven by car another four hours for a presentation to the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo community. Their final presentation was sandwiched in between the end of finals and the transition toward a new tribal government. Everyone was tired and on edge. The cacique, or religious leader, of the community began with a prayer. His words invoked the ancestors, asking their guidance and blessings for the event that was about to unfold. In the room were baskets of newly baked Indian bread and pastelitas, traditional goods from a fire oven hornó.

The walls of the church cafeteria hall were bestrewn with posters that illustrated the concepts that were finely tuned to the voices heard in the community. One of these showed the acequia or ditch network that still pierced the landscape, but which now laid unused, dormant and beset by twisted turnouts and choked with urban litter. In an environment where water is scarce, reviving ancestral irrigated traditions that once yielded a verdant and ecologically diverse landscape.

Another poster detailed the outline of a procession route. The kiva or ceremonial house was at one end, and at the other was the historic Catholic church. Like book-ends, they defined what the students were advocating as the center of a renewed “historic district”. Take away the “No Trespassing, Ysleta del Sur Federal Land”, and replace it with culturally inspired signage redesigned to communicate that their places have traditional meanings that require respect.

The students worried that these recommendations seemed too commonsensical. At the core of these ideas was a promise of a new shift in community attitude. In the middle of the student presentation, a tribal leader interrupted and in a spontaneous gesture he exclaimed, “thank you all for giving us back our vision! It took all of you to see that and show us how it can be done. Now we have no excuse to move forward”.

Henceforth, the Ysleta community members have begun thinking of new Tiwa names to replace those that had been inadvertently Anglicized. Tiwa Heights, a HUD housing development, could be renamed Eeh Shereé (Blue Corn). And the rest of their housing developments could also be named after colors of the corn. Doing so can bless the people who live there and root them in the traditional moieties that symbolize their matrilineal essence. And as a result of this process, they revived a ceremonial foot-race that had last been done 90 years ago.

In the heart of hearts, the community was reborn through their love of tradition and its forgiveness of the unstated past.

Beauty is hope. It is a state of accepting everything that was, is and can be. Beauty is faith. It is a state of believing everything will be okay. Beauty is honor. It is a state of being true to where you come from. Beauty is culture. It is a state of speaking your Indigenous language, cooking your traditional meals, dancing, singing and praying every day and year. As of recently, Indigenous planning has come to mean something that is beautiful, something that has been ordained by the holy ones and the Creator because we hold the responsibility to restore hope.

It is a beautiful process to work with Indigenous communities because they undergo a transformation. At the beginning of the process, they talk about all the negative issues. By the end of it, they are dreaming of a better place for the future. This is hope. Just like a healing ceremonial process, first, the patient speaks of her or his physical, mental, emotional and spiritual ailments to the medicine woman or man (expressing concerns/frustrations). Second, the medicine

woman or man will know what song to sing for the patient (community engagement methodology). Third, the families and friends of the patient will dance, sing and pray for her or him, giving her or him all the positivity to banish the negativity (community engagement meetings). Fourth, after the healing ceremony is complete, the patient is cured and instructed about the dos and don'ts to aid in her or his recovery (the goals and objectives that work towards the vision). Lastly, the people nourish their heart, mind and body with food, drinks and conversation. As for all those who danced, sung and prayed, they too had the benefit of some healing (some social cohesion achieved, and community begins the journey together to strive for the good life, the vision).

The Indigenous planning process has this positive outcome because it is natural, and feels right to participate. Individuals make families, and families make communities. When the individual is strong, the family is stronger. When the families are strong, the community is stronger. We are all connected to each other, we are connected to the land we live on, we are connected to the animals that are domesticated and wild; we are connected by the dances, songs and prayers, we are connected to holy ones and the Creator through Indigenous planning.

Indigenous planning has also come to mean the community's continued acknowledgement of its places and the meanings behind them. A spiritual center continues to persist even when its community members move away from it. In the Nambe Pueblo culture, the kiva is considered a spiritual center. It is a place that binds successive generations by bestowing blessings in song, dance and prayer. The acknowledgement of the spiritual center every day and year rejuvenates the community; it is part of the cycle of renewal that keeps the community vital.

The spirit of place exists in our mind, hearts and soul too. Even when Indigenous peoples leave their homelands to achieve educational, economical and social advancements, we take it with us. Our spirit tells us we will be away only temporarily. We leave knowing we will return one day soon, there is an innate sense that we are leaving not in vain but with a purpose. The purpose of leaving our homelands is to learn as much as we can about new tools and skills so that we can bring this knowledge and beauty back. This is done in an adaptive way. Taking the best of these experiences and new ideas and changing them to suit our purposes is the key to resiliency.

The Indigenous planning journey involves self-discovery as well as community-discovery. For the beauty to manifest itself inside of one's mind, heart it must attune itself to the community's mind, heart and soul as well. Otherwise, how can we see our own beauty when we cannot first see the beauty in others?

The following are the four tenets of Indigenous planning. This is our dance, song and prayer for you to keep; it is our gift to you and your community.

- Indigenous people are not minorities.²² The territories of Indigenous people are characterized by a social and cultural geography where it is the outsider or non-native who is a minority. Indigenous communities and lands exist where the presence of outsiders and non-natives is almost non-existent. As long as Indigenous communities continue to unconsciously ply the notion that their power is insolvent because they are demographic minorities, the collective will continue to be marginalized and made to appear invisible and insignificant.
- The essence of Indigenous scholarship is native self. True Indigenous scholars and activists do not suffer from cultural amnesia! In the spirit of idealism, Indigenous people adapt their ideas from experience. As proven time in and time out, Indigenous people excel in the process of deconstruction as characterized by reflection and introspection. Indigenous planners are not afraid to be a part of their own community research and the role of the expert is tempered by the collective experience.

- Indigenous voices need no translation. Rather, Indigenous people are educated and trained in the best of traditional and Western traditions. Their voice is neither revisionist nor elitist. Instead, it empowers the collective mind by challenging those who attain their expertise solely through individualism and privilege. Native people are posed to take their rightful role as enablers of their own communities. This is accomplished by mutual respect, participatory styles of consensus making and the adherence to traditional protocols.
- The Indigenous planning process is informed by the Indigenous worldview. Central to this worldview are values associated with territory, land-tenure and stewardship. It represents a philosophical construction of humankind's relationship to the natural world and is demarcated by territories that balance human needs with ecologically viable and sustainable development. Worldviews were endowed with ideals that integrate the past and present, and projects itself into the future.

Notes

- 1 This article is adapted from a narrative provided for the By the People: Designing a Better America exhibition, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian. The exhibit was slated to open in 2017.
- 2 The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was first formed under the Secretary of War. It was later transferred in 1849 to the Department of Interior.
- 3 The 1887 General Allotment Act was also known as the Dawes Act (Jojola & Imeokparia 2014).
- 4 Public Law 73–383. 73rd U.S. Congress, June 18, 1934, also known as the Wheeler-Howard Act.
- 5 Public Law 83–280, August 15, 1953, codified as 18 U.S.C. § 1162, 28 U.S.C. § 1360, and 25 U.S.C. §§ 1321–1326.
- 6 Public Law 959, also known as the Adult Vocational Training Program.
- 7 Although the so-called “280 tribes” were eventually reinstated into federal warship status, states continue to retain certain controls that did not exist before the Act was instituted.
- 8 Public Law 109–59.
- 9 Examples include, Indian Sanitation Facilities Act (PL 86–121; the Contracting Transportation Programs under the Indian Self-Determination Act and SAFETEA-LU (Public Law 109–59); and the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA—25 U.S.C. 4101), among others.
- 10 Native American Church v. Navajo Tribal Council, 1960. See pg. 20 in Levitan & Hetrick: 1971.
- 11 In 2010 a judicial ruling of 3.4 billion dollars was reached to compensate Indian allottees for generations of improper accounting and mismanagement of leases. Cobell v. Salazar (Cobell XXII), 573 F.3d 808 (D.C. Cir. 2009).
- 12 Title IV, Urban Planning and Facilities Comprehensive Planning, sec. 601 amended in 1968 from Section 701, Housing Act of 1954 (40 USC 461).
- 13 For a complete discussion, see Physical Infrastructure and Economic Development, White Paper, National Tribal Economic Development Summit, National Congress of American Indians, Phoenix, Arizona, 2007.
- 14 *Report on Indian Education: Final Report of the American Indian Policy Review Commission (AIPRC)*, Task Force Five, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1976: 18.
- 15 Ibid.: 116.
- 16 By 1988, over 65,000 housing units had been built under the aegis of 183 Indian housing authorities. “Housing”, Vernon Harragarra, *Native America in the 20th Century: An Encyclopedia*, Mary B. Davis, Ed., Garland: 245.
- 17 Ironically, it was the contentious provision of a HUD house to a female Pueblo Indian member who was married to a Navajo that set the challenge in the Pueblo of Santa Clara v. Martinez [436 US 49, 69 (1978)]. The ruling is considered a touchstone US Supreme Court decision for the affirmation of tribal sovereign authority in matters pertaining to membership and its privileges. “Memoirs of an American Indian House: US Federal Indian Housing”, Theodore S. Jojola, unpublished master’s thesis in city planning, MIT, 1973.
- 18 U.S. Supreme Court in California v. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians (1987).
- 19 Public Law 100–497; U.S.C. §2701.

- 20 The Indigenous Design and Planning Institute (iD+Pi) was established in 2012 at the School of Architecture, University of New Mexico. Currently it also oversees a graduate concentration in Indigenous planning.
- 21 This was one of five basic principles as represented in “The Story of Indigenous Planning with its Basic Principles”, by Sean Robin. Premier Issue: *The Indigenous Planning Times*. NYC, June, 1995: 3–18.
- 22 “Indigenous Planning and Community Development”, Paper presented at the 7th IASTE Conference, The End of Tradition?, Trani, Italy, 2000.

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NEUROBIOLOGY AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Jane MacPhail, Michael Niconchuk and Noora El-wer

Introduction

“Community development” has a long history. The development of community happened naturally, over millennia of activity by *Homo sapiens*. The cultivation of wheat, the subsequent turn away from hunter-gatherer behavior, urbanization, trade, commerce and countless other activities are milestones on the meta-arc of community development. Communities developed with certain languages, customs and adaptive mechanisms to ensure general well-being. Today community development means something far more complex and deliberate than it has previously, and it has grown into a massive industry. The United Nations defines community development as “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems” (UNTERM 2015). Communities—groups of individuals bound by a certain activity, ideology, identity or geography (see McMillan and Chavis 1986; MacQueen et al. 2001)—interact on multiple levels and, now more than ever, are able to examine themselves vis-à-vis other communities. The rapid rise of print and digital media in the 20th and 21st centuries has accelerated that overlap and layering of communities and has complicated the notion of “collective action” as well as the definition of “common problems” (Bimber et al. 2005).

The interaction of communities does not necessitate conflict. In fact, many have argued that the world is becoming more peaceful and less violent (Pinker 2011; Goldstein 2011). Yet, irrespective of scale or frequency, inter-community conflict happens with frightening regularity and impacts the social, economic, emotional, psychological and physical development of communities. It dramatically impacts the individuals who form a community as well as the community as a whole. Particularly in geographies of violent conflict, working alongside communities implies working with individuals exposed to multiple forms of trauma and stress.

This chapter proposes a framework for a trauma-informed approach to community development practice, particularly through the lens of profound stress and attunement. Focusing on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the authors briefly review the psychology of community along with contemporary notions of trauma and stress, and their neurobiological underpinnings. The authors discuss the broader implications of profound stress for community

development, focusing particularly on participatory strategies for practitioners and communities to regulate the effects of stress and boost resilience.

Why Trauma Matters for Community Development

“Trauma” has become a buzzword among humanitarian and development professionals, and carries with it certain expectations and assumptions on the part of the traumatized, his or her community and the individual/entity working with that individual (see Summerfield 1999; Watters 2010). Put briefly, trauma, originating from the Greek word for “wound”, is the result of a substantially distressing experience or incident and has psychological, social, behavioral and biological ramifications (van der Kolk et al. 2012). The label of “trauma” assumes that the associated experience was non-normative, temporarily overwhelms the individual’s ability to cope with it, and threatens a person’s physical integrity (see Wade et al. 2014).

It would be technically and clinically incorrect to label every person living in or having fled a conflict zone as traumatized (Summerfield 1999; Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) 2008), and to do so does a tremendous disservice to all parties involved. Moreover, mislabeling trauma jeopardizes the way we respond to individuals and communities during and after conflict (van Ommeren et al. 2005; IASC 2007, 2008). While trauma is one specific of many possible impacts of exposure to violent conflict, we can say that *stress*, more broadly, is a clear byproduct of violent conflict for those affected, and it affects our bodies and our brains in ways both obvious and subtle, both short-term and long-term (Friedman and Schnurr 1995; Bremner 1999; Shalev 2012). The stress associated with violent conflict affects individuals differently based on a wide array of factors, including genetic makeup, physical health, age, gender and previous exposure to trauma(s), among others (van der Kolk 1989; van der Kolk et al. 1996; Ozer et al. 2003; Yehuda 2004), but there is a general consensus that traumatic forms of stress can result in “recursive neural, physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and emotional changes that increase vulnerability” (McEwen and Gianaros 2010: 432) to a variety of conditions. Violent conflict affects communities in many tragic ways—the breakdown of families, physical displacement and loss of livelihood among many others—yet each of those losses, in turn, impacts the mental health and psychology of community members who have lived through violence (de Jong 2002). For thousands of aid workers and hundreds of governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in or around conflict zones, community development work is tied to the notion of psychological stress, as stress becomes part of the community’s collective experiences (Alexander 2004: 1–31). It is thus important that community development practitioners operate informed with a basic understanding of the impacts of violent conflict on mental health, as well as some of the underlying processes.

The negative mental health impacts of violent conflict are well documented, but researchers and practitioners in post-conflict communities have also seen that communities often display tremendous resilience in the face of violence (Betancourt 2012; Panter-Brick and Eggerman 2012). Interestingly, the same psychological events that can severely harm can likewise lead to growth, adaptation and learning that promote resilience and good health (Thoits 1995; Betancourt and Khan 2008; McEwen and Gianaros 2010; Ungar 2012). Using Bonanno’s definition, *resilience* is the ability “to maintain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning” in the face of a traumatic or life-threatening event (2004: 102). As such, resilience is an important focus of both humanitarian aid and community development work (see Masten 2001; Zautra et al. 2008; Panter-Brick and Eggerman 2012), particularly for practitioners moving away from *deficit models* of community development and towards a greater focus on available assets, including assets for resilience (Mathie and Cunningham 2003).

Community and Resilience: What it Means and Why it Affects your Brain

In order to understand the role of conflict-related stress in community development, we must first briefly explore the psychology of community and the unique challenges associated with working in complicated community contexts, including tribal contexts. *Homo sapiens*, like other species, evolved to live in community (Dunbar 2009; Brune and Brunecohrs 2006; Greene 2014) and retain a deep need to belong (Baumeister and Leary 1995). Human societies evolved to be more complex and more cooperative than those of other species, and they operate with complex systems of rules, norms and customs (Richerson and Boyd 2008; Boyd and Richerson 2009; Greene 2014). On the most basic level, collective action and collective improvement are part of our biological history. Evolutionary perspectives on community fit neatly with contemporary scholarship on community development, where the notion of “community” is linked to geography. Tonnies’ seminal concept of “*gemeinschaft*” (1877/1957) implies a physical formation of village or tribe, and many early theorists of community development likewise understood community as a geographical notion (see Bhattacharyya 2004 for a review). Indeed, for practitioners, working with communities usually means working with specific villages or settlements, but for community development practitioners in post-conflict regions, the realities of displacement and constructed settlements (e.g. long-term refugee camps) necessitate a more flexible operationalization of community that appreciates the often-blurry lines between geography, identity and settlement. Bhattacharyya’s understanding of community as “any social configuration that possesses shared identity and norms” (2004: 12) is helpful here, as his broader conceptualization of community resonates with the fact that many violent conflicts in this century occur between or among communities comprised of individuals whose loyalties and identities supersede nationality or geography (for example, trans-national terrorist groups; sectarian conflict). Moreover, collective action and the generation of solutions to common, shared problems, often takes place across geographies by those with a shared identity (for example the Muslim Ummah or Christian Church).

Our brains are more highly developed than those of other communal species, especially our “emotional” and “higher thinking” brains (Dunbar 2006; Hauser 2009). Our brains constantly balance the need for social belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995) and the need for autonomy (Ryan and Deci 2000). Moreover; within the same species, we have vastly different cultures with different and often conflicting social norms, economic systems, justice systems and child-rearing practices. In a world with limited resources, high intra-species variation potentiates conflict as much as it potentiates exchange and collaboration (Tajfel 1982), particularly as groups with different norms, practices and identities seek control over both resources and outcomes (Anderson and Berdahl 2002) that affect communities under or near their control. In other words, community inclines us towards intergroup conflict as well as towards empathy, tolerance and pro-social behavior (Beck 2000: 94), which can be the basis of collective action for the resolution of common problems.

Humans can face complex threats, challenges and stressors and these are filtered through notions of community and identity (see Tajfel and Turner 1979; Jonas et al. 2014), making the stressors that foment development as well as the threats that facilitate conflict often non-observable. Stressors can be observably material and resource-based, or they can be spiritual, emotional or psychological (Greene 2014). Communities that face stress generally learn to adapt, even in ways that operate below individuals’ conscious awareness (Gelfand et al. 2011). While, to a certain extent, resilience may be a natural resource resultant from group bonding and support networks (Bonanno 2004; Betancourt 2012; Panter-Brick and Eggerman 2012), stress factors

that do not necessarily meet the eye have a serious impact on the way we and members of our communities behave, engage with others, collaborate, or conflict, potentially with negative long-term consequences. Particularly on the individual level, stress can come from surprising sources. We can turn to an example from the field for clarity. Hani is a 13-year-old Syrian refugee living in the Za'atri Refugee Camp in northern Jordan.¹ Hani's brain, like all our brains, promotes both his individual survival and seeks social relationships. Hani, who recently enrolled in school in the Za'atri Refugee Camp, is unable to focus in class because his mind races with thoughts of his brothers who died in Syria. His sleep is interrupted daily as he dreams night after night about them, what they would be doing, or whether they might still be alive. In Syria, Hani was never considered slow or unintelligent. Yet, he now repeatedly fails tests and skips class. Situations and intrusive thoughts, seemingly outside of his control, daily jeopardize his future, even after the conventional threats of war have faded.

Understanding the threats and stressors of a given community is part of a broader process of understanding local context. Community development work requires an understanding of local context, including the nuances of history, culture, norms and resources (Ife 2013: 138–156). Additionally, many agree that participation of local community members throughout the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating development initiatives is critical to the success of community development (Chambers 1983; Nelson and Wright 1995; Cleaver 1999; Botes and van Rensburg 2000), and that community participation should not reduce the rigor of technical design and monitoring (Mansuri and Rao 2004). For community development practitioners, engaging with communities implies participation with their community structures, and in the Middle East, that often includes tribal structures. Tribal structures, like any facet of local context, require exploration and understanding if practitioners are to design and intervene in a sustainable manner. Tribalism, and its accompanying psychology, has a particular relevance for practitioners interested in psychology and generally factors in to analyses of identities, tension-points and conflict.

A tribe is a group of people united by kinship and was the first major form of social organizing to appear in Neolithic times (Ronfeldt 2006; Dunbar 2009). The concept of tribe is distinct from the concept of community in its clear connotation of kinship, but it is similar in the sense that it is an organizing framework for protection and action. “Tribe” permeates the identities of millions of people in societies around the world (Ronfeldt 2006: 29) and, in the Middle East, bases of identification rooted in blood and lineage remain bedrocks of collective identity and collective action, even if members are geographically separate (Barakat 1993; Layne 1994). In this sense, “community” in the Middle East is frequently imagined along tribal lines, just as it is often imagined along religious or sectarian lines. In his *Muqaddima*, renowned Arab historian Ibn Khaldun (1377) spoke of the importance of tribal cohesion or belonging (*Asabiyyah*) for survival in resource-scarce environments. Belonging, he argues, requires identification with other members of the group, sharing their triumphs and defeats, and expecting allegiance. While Ibn Khaldun was writing with a 14th-century kinship framework, his ideas are echoed in our modern understanding of tribe (Barakat 1993), and highlight the difficulty of working in single geographic communities that contain multiple tribal identities. For development practitioners, tribalism can be a major stumbling block for local and regional development; yet, operating cognizant of its structure, communication lines and resources can actually facilitate development initiatives (Management Systems International 2010).

Tribe is an important reality for millions, and like any meaningful social structure, can be a source of resilience, but also a source of conflict. Social conflict between tribes, or between any groups of different identity, strengthens pre-existing bonds and cognitive identification with

one's in-group (Branscombe et al. 1999; Ellemers et al. 2002), as a way to defend against threat and ensure protection (Fritzsche et al. 2013). This adaptive strategy often has unfortunate consequences for the perpetuation of conflict (González et al. 2008; Noor et al. 2012; Cikara and Fiske 2013). Particularly in times of threat, strong social identification (e.g. with tribe, sect and/or village) can have precarious implications for social cognition and behavior (see Tajfel and Turner 1979; Cikara and Fiske 2013; Leach et al. 2003), and therefore must be taken into account when interacting with communities who may have single, or multiple competing identities. A recent community development project in Jordan provides another example of the link between tribal conflict and community development work. In 2013, an international non-governmental organization (INGO) in Jordan (name deliberately omitted) designed an intervention to promote social cohesion and healthcare in a rural area of the country's north. The INGO built a health clinic in one village that was centrally connected by road to other villages. This cluster of villages was known locally for its long-standing tribal disagreement, and the health center was intended to provide a service-based superordinate source of cohesion for the communities, thus serving as a basis for other forms of reconciliation. Despite the INGO's best efforts and local government approval, the project was met with such resistance that it eventually failed completely, as no one from outside the village where the clinic was built was willing to utilize it.

Communities in the Middle East, particularly rural communities, are tightly knit and regulated by tradition, with members highly interdependent and aware of their respective roles, as well as their respective rules of engagement with others. Understanding community members' roles is an important aspect of participatory approaches to community development (Chambers 1983; Nelson and Wright 1995; Ife 2013). While the centrality of tribe as part of individual identity varies from person to person in the Middle East, there is general recognition of the fact that tight-knit communities can be a source of protection and psychological stability (Bonanno 2004; Betancourt and Khan 2008). To illustrate this point, we turn to a young Syrian refugee in Jordan,² who was part of youth empowerment activities with a local NGO. He complained: "I used to have no privacy in Syria, now [in Jordan] I don't even know my neighbors. I never thought I would say that". He added, "If I don't know my role, I don't know myself". This young man's statement captures the critical notion that personal role and community belonging are important aspects of psychological resilience and recovery (see also Harvey 1996; Bonanno 2004; Panter-Brick and Eggerman 2012; Olff 2012) and participation in collective action more broadly (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Hagerty et al. 1996).

Communities are by nature relational, and disruptions to communities, whether via displacement, migration, eviction, resource competition or violence, deprive those affected individuals of crucial elements of psychological well-being such as attachment, identity (Brown and Perkins 1992) and a sense of security, thus compounding their exposure to stress (de Jong; Pedersen 2002) and disrupting the broader community's social and economic stability (Feldman et al. 2003). In a recent inter-tribal dispute in southern Jordan (Al-Azzeh 2016), for example, members of a convicted murderer's family were evicted from their village and resettled in a nearby city in compliance with agreements made between the tribe of the assailant and the victim. Families were forced to stay in their new locale despite the repeated protests of financial and psychological hardship caused by the displacement. In fact in 2011 alone, 16 such evictions took place in Jordan, the largest of which resulted in the displacement of 1,300 individuals. Similarly, in March 2014, an elderly school teacher in Za'atri Refugee Camp, who was part of a participatory appraisal exercise, commented on this issue of attachment and displacement saying, "how can we build relationships in a place where there are no rules?"³

Whether by tribal arbitration or violent conflict, in these examples, the disruption of familiar structures, and its accompanying lack of structure, deeply affects communities' well-being and trajectory.

Psychosocial Well-Being and Community Development

Our brains evolved to facilitate group behavior and tribalism and use those structures as a way to build resilience against threats and stressors. Our brains can promote either cooperation or conflict, based on context, and are sensitive to loss of community, which, in turn, affects collective action and cohesion. The negative psychological impacts of violent conflict unfortunately extend beyond the disruption of community and social networks (IASC 2007). As said, practitioners must be cautious with labeling “trauma” in conflict or post-conflict communities, but there is no doubt that violent conflict has serious negative impacts on a person's psychosocial well-being (de Jong 2002: 4–7; Pedersen 2002; Betancourt 2012). Looking into the “psychosocial” realm helps us capture this reality. *Psychosocial* refers to the space where a person's psychological and social self meet and interact. It is a large space, a broad-stroke word informed by multiple fields including brain science, biology, mental health and social psychology. *Psychological* aspects can be described as one's mental facilities including thinking, feeling and behaving, and the ways in which these link to *social* elements of a person's life (e.g. family, social interactions, participation in community) demarcates the psychosocial realm. Psychosocial interventions differ from trauma interventions (Miller and Rasmussen 2010; Tol et al. 2011), as the former does not *medicalize* its approach and encompasses multiple levels of non-clinical care (IASC 2007). The contextual flexibility of psychosocial programs increases their utility for non-psychologist community development practitioners (see Panter-Brick and Eggerman 2012).

We already discussed the example of Hani, the adolescent whose threatening memories make learning in school a great challenge for him. Hakim is another example. He is a young man of 23 years old, who served in the military in Syria. In a skirmish with anti-government combatants, Hakim was shot in the leg and abandoned by his platoon. He survived the incident and now lives in a refugee camp. Daily, Hakim is haunted by the memory of the incident. “Did I deserve to die? Did I deserve to be abandoned?”⁴ he thinks. For months, Hakim, who was formerly an outspoken poet and young leader in his village, refused to speak in front of large groups. His self-confidence was so negatively affected by his experience of being abandoned. As a result, Hakim's community in the refugee camp excluded him from most discussions. While their actions were perhaps understandable given the context, Hakim's community had no strategy or tools to assist or integrate him a meaningful and healthy way. In this sense, it is important that community development initiatives attempt to account for psychosocial issues as part of planning and implementation. Insofar as the practice of community development requires collective action for collective problems, it is inevitably linked to the psychosocial well-being of community members, and can be enhanced by the inclusion of non-clinical psychosocial frameworks (Sorensen et al. 2004; Borkmann et al. 2005). Of course, different levels of psychosocial problems require different interventions and skill sets from practitioners, and even within small groups of individuals who experienced the same incident or violence, interventions may differ. While specialized staff may be needed in many situations (see IASC 2007 for guidance), community development practitioners outside the psychosocial and mental health fields can benefit from understanding the basics of psychosocial stress.

Focusing on Profound Stress

While violence produces acute forms of stress in any person while it is happening, communities in conflict-affected areas often suffer continuing stresses as a result of economic hardship, displacement, loss or separation, uncertain accommodation and lingering fear and worry, among other stressors (Somasundaram and Jamunanantha 2002; Miller and Rasmussen 2010). Stress becomes chronic when the stressor lingers (Baum 1990; Lepore 1997), so for this reason, many conflict-affected communities can be considered as suffering from chronic stress. Here we specify profound stress—a distinct phenomenon on the stress spectrum—as “a prolonged and constant overwhelming threat to the physical or psychological wholeness of a person” (MacPhail et al. 2011: xviii). We all experience stress in our lives; however, we must separate profound stress as something prolonged and overwhelming. It affects a person’s brain like constant drips of water—noticeable, unrelenting and seemingly inescapable. Here we can return to the example of Hani for further clarity. As Hani thinks and dreams about his brothers, he becomes stressed, and, in turn, the stress negatively affects his academic life, emotional life and social life. Despite the fact that Hani lives in a camp, away from active conflict, the stress he experiences continues chronically, even if only in his mind.

The effects of profound stress transcend culture, but can have an acute starting point. For example, research by Silver and colleagues (2002) found that some Americans displayed exaggerated stress responses and stress-related problems for months after the attacks of September 11, 2001, even among individuals far outside of New York. Empirical evidence from the health sector further supports the notion that traumatic events, or even daily socio-economic stress, negatively affect physical health (Sapolsky 2005). Profound stress has a serious impact on our perception of and interaction with the world, and can manifest itself in a wide array of destructive or antisocial behaviors. The psychological and behavioral impacts of profound stress depend on a variety of factors, including age, mental and physical development, family and social context, and the presence of mitigating or protective factors (Van der Kolk 1989; Compas et al. 1995; Bonanno 2004; Betancourt 2012). It is critical to understand that profound stress is more than the forgetfulness, flighty or “spaced out” behavior that we casually associate with feeling stressed. Indeed, such behaviors may manifest in stressed individuals, but profound stress must be understood as a deeper chemical process in the brain. Focusing only on stress-induced problem behaviors, without understanding underlying processes and ecological issues of stress (Betancourt 2012; Ungar 2012), may reduce the effectiveness of community interventions. Overall, while the neuroscience and biology of stress are well documented, researchers have yet to fully explore its translational relevance for community development in post-conflict, high-stress contexts (see Panter-Brick and Eggerman 2012).

The Neurobiology of Profound Stress

Stress is a way of adapting to events that occur in the natural and social world. Our bodies’ stress responses are adaptive and fundamentally necessary for our survival and social well-being (Lazarus and Cohen 1977). The experience of profound stress, however, can push an individual towards allostatic load; meaning cumulative stress-induced changes to the physical body and brain, as well as to behavior (McEwen 2004). The neurobiology of profound stress sheds light on critical social behaviors that directly relate to our discussion of community development. Here we will summarize some critical profound stress processes that bear particular relevance for community development.

First, we assess limbic system overload. While the limbic system or limbic brain is not an empirically proven system, it has been colloquially adopted to explain some of the interlinked circuitry in the brain responsible for survival instincts, emotions and aspects of memory (Isaacson 1982; Rajmohan and Mohandas 2007; Kent 2012). In terms of plasticity and functionality (Sapolsky 2003; Box 24.1), the limbic system can be likened to a mobile phone

Box 24.1 Limbic Overload

- Difficulty remembering new information
- Difficulty learning
- Higher rates of depression and anxiety
- Loss of impulse control
- Inability to focus on others
- Loss of ability to recognize social norms

SIM card. Like the SIM card of a phone, the limbic system can function abnormally when it has experienced too much (Stout 2007). The results of overload, or hyperactivity, have many psychological and behavioral consequences (see Herman et al. 2005). Within the context of community development, many of the behavioral and social impacts of limbic overload (listed in Box 24.1) directly resonate with standard types of community development initiatives. For example, the retention of new information and concentration in a learning environment are basic requirements for success in traditional and most non-traditional educational models, and impulse control is a basic adaptive evolutionary function of human beings that enables us to live successfully in community and inhibit aggression.

Recall the examples of Hakim and Hani, whose anecdotes highlight several of the issues discussed here in the context of limbic overload. Another example comes out of Lebanon,⁵ from an INGO program designed to promote inter-community cohesion between Syrian refugees and the native Lebanese population. The local mayor sponsored a mural-painting project for children at a community center. Ali, a Syrian participant, recalled a group of Lebanese boys who entered the event and tried to steal the painting equipment: “It didn’t matter how we tried to convince them. They could not hear us. They shoved their weapons at us and all I could think was ‘I am going to die for a tin of paint.’ But I couldn’t stop myself from yelling back. I couldn’t stop myself from pushing back. It was like being on a fast bike where you cannot stop”. The staff at the center were well trained to defuse such situations, but Ali’s inability to control his impulse, and the loss of control he experienced, were normal stress responses, which could be dangerously heightened given his stress ecosystem, coming from Syria and now dealing with the daily stressors of displaced life.

Second, allostatic load can affect the limbic system gradually, but severe shocks can also send an individual into what we here call survival mode. In simple terms, it connotes a human state of being where the mind and the body take an instinctive response to survive, especially after facing life-threatening danger or continual fear (Chemtob et al. 1988). Often associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), survival mode, like all stress responses, is an adaptive function that includes heightened threat sensitivity and responsivity, and hyper-focused concentration (Chemtob et al. 1988). While adaptive in a specific survival context, survival mode, if experienced longer-term, seriously impairs normal functioning. As we have mentioned, evolution has predisposed our bodies and minds towards survival, yet those general tendencies are distinct from the neurocognitive process of survival mode.

Third, when any human feels threatened, the brain begins several neural responses and produces multiple hormones, notably adrenaline and cortisol (Rodrigues et al. 2009), triggering a flight, fight or freeze response (see Cannon 1932). There are countless triggers that can tell our brains to produce stress-related hormones and to activate adaptive stress processes, but when an individual remains immersed in or surrounded by stress triggers, the brain

continues producing high levels of stress hormones, pushing a person towards what is called *hyperarousal* (see Dickerson and Kemeny 2004 for a review). Hyperarousal, a less severe stress response than survival mode, is a state of exaggerated psychological and physiological response with a wide variety of effects including irritability, hyper-vigilance, agitation and trouble sleeping (Perry et al. 1995). Some relevant behavioral and health effects of hyperarousal are listed in Box 24.2.

Box 24.2 Hyperarousal

- Inability to focus
- Agitation and anxiety
- Metabolic changes
- Risk-taking behavior
- Aggression
- Depressive symptoms

A fourth critical impact of profound stress that we need to explore is detachment or dissociation. Dissociation happens when the mind, in parts, closes down so that the body can survive. Similar in function to survival mode, our ability to detach when confronted by grave threats is an adaptive mechanism when used to ensure short-term survival. Dissociation is a central issue in trauma recovery, as it relates to the brain's "burial" of particularly traumatic memories or failure to integrate cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of an experience (Folkman et al. 1986; van der Kolk et al. 1996; Waller et al. 2001). Each human being experiences dissociation uniquely, as its manifestation is linked to the nature and degree of trigger events as well as individual factors. Prolonged dissociation (see Butler et al. 1996) can complicate an individual's recovery from traumatic stress due to the avoidance of processing particular stressors or traumas (Spiegel 1997). Prolonged dissociation, across its varying degrees, can be linked to depression as a result of neural pathway changes (McEwen 2007). In such a state, people are often unable to develop the process that enables them to decide and commit to a particular course of action. In effect, they lose the motivation to map out the steps to reach their needs and to plan for the future (van der Kolk et al. 1996). Clinicians working with high-stress populations often work in re-establishing basic goals and plans, as even simple tasks can become overwhelming for people who have experienced profound stress. For youth particularly, goal-making and future-oriented thinking are critical markers for their development (Seginer 2008), and thus the successful integration of youth into post-conflict community development depends, in part, on that they be cognitively and emotionally able to form and work towards aspirations, plans and goals.

Finally, while the neurobiology of stress has important implications for a range of social behaviors, it is important to highlight the role of profound stress in empathy. Empathy—which involves recognizing and matching the emotional experiences of others (Cikara et al. 2011)—plays an important role in community cohesion and development (Gilchrist 2009), insofar as empathy increases pro-social behavior (Eisenberg and Miller 1987). While the neural and psychological bases of empathy remain a nebulous area of study (Harris and Fiske 2009; Cikara et al. 2011; Shamay-Tsoory 2011), it is certain that maladaptive stress responses negatively affect one's ability to empathize with others (Shirtcliff et al. 2009; Nietlisbach et al. 2010). Empathy, like other complex psychosocial processes, can be suppressed in order to ensure individual survival (Tull and Roemer 2003), thus, generally, diminished empathy may be a natural response for individuals and communities that have experienced traumatic stress (see Shirtcliff et al. 2009). The potential social consequences of profound stress stand in great contrast to the resilience displayed by many conflict-affected communities. Psychological resilience is thus a remarkable trait, because in communities with high levels of profound or traumatic stress, the cognitive and social resources of empathy, cooperation, critical thinking and strategic planning—all of which are necessary for community development programming (MacDonald and Valdivieso 2001; Norris et al. 2008)—are scarcer.

A Profound Stress Approach for Communities in Conflict

The effects of profound stress, often uncontrollable, particularly at first, have tremendous negative consequences for communities and individuals. Profound stress and the memories associated with traumatic events can facilitate escalation or intractability of interpersonal and inter-group conflict (Jackson and Inglehart 1995; Alexander 2004; Bar-Tal et al. 2009). Moreover, profound stress challenges communities' resilience. As we have discussed, conflict, loss, displacement and suffering are experienced in our brains and bodies alike. The psychological correlates of conflict must be appropriately understood in order to accompany communities as they survive, cope and overcome towards development. The science of trauma and profound stress has yet to be integrated into community development practice (see Panterbrick and Eggerman 2012). The Profound Stress Approach proposed here is a non-clinical, community ecology (Ungar 2012) approach to integrate the science of profound stress and resilience within participatory approaches for the resolution of common problems. This approach has been developed and refined by community mental health and development practitioners in a variety of contexts, including Southeast Asia, West Africa and the Middle East. It has been used in programming for the reintegration of child soldiers, women's empowerment initiatives, inter-community cohesion, community infrastructure improvement, and combatting violent extremism. See Box 24.3 for an early example.

Box 24.3 Applying the Profound Stress Approach in Liberia

In 2012, an INGO introduced an intervention to train child soldiers returning home Liberia to understand the impact of war and violence on their brains and identities. Alongside women in the communities, the former child soldiers carried out assessments of their villages to understand the needs of children in their own age-group (12–17 years of age). Equipped with an understanding of stress responses, as well as data on community needs, the adolescents set up community-based child protection networks and asked for further training on advocacy and child protection. Many of the adolescents eventually oversaw child friendly spaces in the community where they offered programming in music and drama for building resilience.

The Profound Stress Approach focuses on the idea of attachment and strategically uses human attachment to improve critical functions such as goal-setting, cooperation, empathy and resilience, each of which is important for community development. More specifically, the Profound Stress Approach supposes that if individuals understand their own biological, social and emotional responses to stress, and are accompanied towards a paradigm to recognize their responses to profound stress, they can then develop an adaptive approach (i.e. emotional or mental strategies) that promotes pro-social, community-oriented behavior.

Attachment as the Goal

Just as stress has demonstrable effects on the brain, so does human attachment. We have already discussed the notion of attachment, in our discussion on the social brain and community. Human attachment, while the basis for our allegiances and alliances in conflict, is also an important aspect of resilience (Bonanno 2004) and reducing or reversing some of the effects of profound stress on the brain (Kent 2012; Cozolino 2014), and can be a valuable tool for practitioners in

conflict and post-conflict areas. Attachment, like community, is fundamentally about achieving safety and security in situations of threat—whether physical or perceived (Bowlby 1969). In our brains, attachment and protective relationships can attenuate fear and stress responses (Uchino et al. 1996; Kent 2012; Olf 2012), and, similarly, attachment can be deliberately utilized to regulate some of the emotions and behaviors resultant from limbic overload, hyperarousal or dissociation (Stern 2004, Fonagy et al. 2011; Kent 2012; Cozolino 2014). For practitioners working with conflict-affected communities, then, the reestablishment of healthy relationships should be a priority in dealing with the effects of profound stress.

Attunement as the Practice

From its inception through its current implementation in the MENA region, the Profound Stress Approach has centered on the practice of attunement. Attunement can provide a vehicle for the regulation of profound stress in young people and adults. Practitioners of the Profound Stress Approach—who can be development professionals or community members—rely on principles of attunement. Just as an instrument is tuned towards its correct tone and sound, *attunement* with individuals affected by profound stress brings the practitioner into a safe emotional space with the subject and the stressors he/she experiences or has experienced (Erskine 1993). The guidelines for attunement listed in Box 24.4, adapted from the International Child Development Program (ICDP 2013), are introductory. Each step of the attunement process is non-clinical and assists in the regulation of stress hormones and restoration of neural pathways for relational and social well-being to stimulate normal social thinking in the brain. Attunement principles can sharpen practitioners’ understanding of the effects of profound and traumatic stress, without medicalizing the experience and treatment of profound stress. Moreover, attunement focuses on the indicators of stress and positive responses based on the adolescents’ expressed needs.

Box 24.4 Attunement Principles

1. Show love and affection, in ways culturally relevant and appropriate
2. Follow the individual’s initiative, engaging physically and emotionally at his/her level and terms
3. Establish emotional dialogue, focusing on verbal and non-verbal language
4. Praise and show approval, avoiding any stimulation of shame responses
5. Focus together on activities, events, and discussions
6. Name and describe emotions, feelings, and challenges
7. Expand on discussions and activities to stimulate goal formation, logical thinking, memory retention, and creative expression
8. Practice positive regulations (goal planning and behavioral accountability)

The Profound Stress Approach and its accompanying practice of attunement neither question the importance of nor seek to supplant the role of clinical mental health services in a post-conflict community context (see IASC 2007 for guidance). Rather, the approach provides simple tools and knowledge that practitioners can integrate into community development activities and strategies, and moreover, that they can share with community members, integrating affected individuals into the process of building resilience. The Profound Stress Approach espouses the same notions of participation as community development broadly (Chambers 1983; Nelson and Wright 1995; Cleaver 1999; Botes and van Rensburg 2000) and is accessible in a way

that facilitates community participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of psychosocial and resilience-building activities.

Integrating Profound Stress into Community Development

For practitioners in communities experiencing profound stress, the approach outlined here entails the three basic steps: (1) a community needs assessment of some kind to assess resources, social dynamics (including issues of tribe), current challenges, needs, goals and risk and resilience factors related to profound stress (see Cornwall and Jewkes 1995 for a review of participatory practice and methodologies); (2) train a cadre of community members on basic neurobiological aspects of profound stress and its effect on communities; and (3) integrate attunement practice into existing and envisioned development activities while maintaining quality monitoring and evaluation. Box 24.5 provides an example of the process, as replicated in Jordan with Syrian refugee and local Jordanian communities in the rural north of the country.

Box 24.5 Integrating Profound Stress

- A team of expatriate and national practitioners met with groups' religious leaders, tribal leaders, and leaders of community-based organizations, introducing them to the context of working with young people through a profound stress framework;
- The team organized a series of trainings on the causes, basic science, and community implications of profound stress, inviting these leaders along with local government representatives and other regional civil society representatives;
- The training team organized a series of community forums with different target groups (e.g. women, parents, young people), facilitated by the trainees, to understand the triggers, experience, and levels of stress in the community;
- Practitioners, trainers, and trainees designed and conducted a larger profound stress and attunement workshop for individuals working closely with young people in the community
- Community members integrated attunement principles and profound stress principles into their interactions and project activities, including sports programs, art classes, cooking classes, and group recreational activities.

Anecdotal evidence from programs that have integrated the Profound Stress Approach into existing development initiatives has been promising. Particularly when adult members of communities filtered their view of themselves and local youth through the lens of profound stress, they have been able to interpret problem behaviors as actions happening in normal response to a high-stress environment—as normal reactions to abnormal circumstances. While psychological studies have yet to establish a causal link between the Profound Stress Framework and pro-social behavior, practitioners' experience suggests that the participatory nature of this approach leads to a collective agreement away from reactive approaches to youth, particularly, enabling a greater focus on asset-driven design (see Mathie and Cunningham 2003 for asset-based community development). In Lebanon, collective reflection about stressful experiences and collective responses to such experiences have had an important impact on inter-generational cooperation in communities targeted by interventions following the Profound Stress Approach. A Youth Program Manager for an INGO commented on a specific incident from a profound stress training program in an economically depressed area in the Beka'a Valley:⁶

At the end of the workshop [on profound stress] a young father came to me and stated “now I understand why I don’t recognize my son. He had changed so much and I didn’t know why.” The father also stated clearly “now I know what happened to me. I don’t know how to reach my family. I don’t know how to have empathy for others. I just get angry.” His son added “so that is what happened to us . . . and I guess this means me, too. I want to *feel* again, and I want to plan for my future. I am tired of being tired and of thinking I am crazy.”

Attunement promotes a conscious integration of neurobiology and psychology into social interactions; moreover, it enables any practitioner, including community members, to understand the emotional experiences of others and to regulate emotional qualities of intra-community relationships. As said, integrating profound stress and attunement into community development practice is not intended to be a panacea for the impacts of trauma and stress on development; however, the tools associated with profound stress and attunement can contribute to development efforts that seek to build community experience and competence as bases for empowerment and resilience. Indeed, the model put forth here fits neatly with empowerment models of community development that focus simultaneously on removing environmental barriers while enhancing resources towards collective goals (Fawcett et al. 1995).

Conclusions for the Practitioner

Collective action and problem solving in resilient communities require group thinking, planning and action (Norris et al. 2008). Conflict, stress and the subsequent neurobiological processes and impacts jeopardize many of the basic social and cognitive resources that make such activities possible. Here we have outlined a framework that reaches across the aisle into psychology and neuroscience, highlighting the benefits of working with communities in conflict and post-conflict zones through the lens of profound stress, in pursuit of pro-social community development. Psychosocial well-being is fundamental to resilience and to community development, yet the community development industry has historically viewed psychosocial well-being as primarily a job for the health sector. Recalling Bhattacharyya’s definition of community as “any social configuration that possesses shared identity and norms” (2004: 12), we can say that violent conflict often divides communities rigidly along norms and identity. Intense, conflicting allegiances in relatively small geographies is an unfortunate hallmark of many parts of the Middle East and North Africa, and as such, the development and resolution of conflicts go hand in hand with the development and well-being of communities. The examples and theory discussed here illustrate the serious impact of profound stress on the brain and on community interactions. The challenge for practitioners working in complex conflict environments is to accompany communities and their members towards an understanding of stress factors, indicators and effects, towards greater empathy, goal-formation and collective, pro-social action.

Notes

- 1 Author personal communication, April 4, 2013.
- 2 Author personal communication, April 2, 2013.
- 3 Author personal communication, March 6, 2015.
- 4 Author personal communication, March 31, 2014.
- 5 Author personal communication, October 5, 2015.
- 6 Author personal communication, October 6, 2015.

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25

ASYLUM SEEKERS IN INDONESIA

Linda Briskman and Lucy Fiske

Introduction

Community development in Western countries is usually premised on the idea of a profession, occupation or as a component of social work and cognate disciplines. This chapter looks at “insider” community development without organizational links and examines attempts of an asylum seeker and refugee community in the West Java location of Cisarua to deal with their protracted refugee situation. Our exploration is through the lens of *survival* community development. We use the concept of survival as it recognizes inherent capacity in all humans. While sharing much in common with *sustainable* community development, most particularly in centering shared humanity as foundational and its approach to humanity as communitarian and collective in nature, sustainability is limited. Sustainable community development presumes citizenship and aims for life-long or even trans-generational development. The population group discussed here is, by definition, temporary and transitional. Asylum seekers in Indonesia do not have citizenship nor any pathway to settle permanently there. This temporariness is fundamental to their condition and shapes their relationships. Temporary existence can be a limiting factor for community development activities as transferability is not necessarily accommodated in survival activities, and as people move on there may be a loss of skills and achievements.

Global Politics, Asylum Seekers and the Australia–Indonesia Nexus

There are currently over fifty million displaced people in the world, more than twenty million of whom are refugees or asylum seekers, the highest since World War II (UNHCR 2015). Most refugees are hosted in neighboring countries in either camp or urban environments. Annually, around four per cent of refugees seek asylum in countries that have signed the Refugees Convention by taking long and dangerous journeys, for example by boat to Australia or Italy, or by truck across Europe. These journeys continue despite an ever-expanding array of “fortress mentality” policies and practices implemented by affluent Western nations. As Bauman (2004: 37) explains, a characteristic of the modern era is “great migration”. Uncounted and possibly even uncountable numbers of people move around the globe for foreign lands that offer safety and the chance at a dignified life.

Indonesia has benefits as a transit country. It is close to Australia, the cost of living is relatively low and immigration law enforcement is weaker than countries such as Malaysia (Missbach 2015).

Cisarua is a preferred location for many asylum seekers and refugees. It is first necessary to explain the distinction. A refugee is a person who has left their country of origin and cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. An asylum seeker is someone who has arrived in a country, applied for protection and is awaiting an assessment of their application. A refugee has had his or her claim accepted. We use the term asylum seeker generically in this chapter to refer to all who we interviewed as all arrived as asylum seekers even though some have been accepted as refugees. Refugees then await resettlement to another country, which is also a protracted process.

Indonesia

Indonesia is not a signatory to the Refugees Convention and does not offer permanent protection to refugees on its territory. Refugee status determination in Indonesia is conducted by the UNHCR. In December 2014, the UNHCR reported that it had registered 13,829 refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia (UNHCR 2016). There are likely up to a further 5,000 refugees in Indonesia but not yet registered with the UNHCR. Indonesia practices a policy of tolerance towards refugees and asylum seekers. It cooperates with the UNHCR and other organizations working with refugees and it permits asylum seekers and refugees to remain in the country while their cases are resolved. Indonesia has a network of detention centers, but for the most part, detains only those asylum seekers intercepted while attempting to cross a border without authorization. As one international organization official expressed to us, “There’s not the appetite for detention here [like in Australia]” (interview with authors, December 13, 2013). Indonesia does not, however, permit asylum seekers to work or conduct any form of business, nor are they eligible for social security, health services, housing or other forms of assistance. Asylum seeker children are permitted to attend Indonesian schools if they can speak Bahasa, the national language. Indonesia is a rapidly developing country, with half the population living in poverty (using the global US\$2 per-day measure) (Handayani, 2012). The government prioritizes its citizens’ opportunities to develop and maintain their livelihoods—any engagement by refugees in income-generating pursuits is seen as competing with the host community and is prohibited.

Asylum seekers have some freedom of movement, in that if they are not in detention they are free to move about their locale and most people we met said they feel safe when out on the streets, in the market or on public transport. Moving beyond their local area however, is difficult and risks arrest and detention. Asylum seekers in Indonesia live in a “grey zone” of quasi-safety in which they are free from immediate danger, but continue to face significant limitations and uncertainties.

Before examining this in more detail, we provide a brief overview of Cisarua, where our research took place. Cisarua is in a mountainous region of West Java, Indonesia’s main island, and about 70 kilometers from Jakarta, Indonesia’s capital city. Before Australia’s policy of interdiction, boat turn-backs and detention in Nauru and Papua New Guinea, Cisarua was a main gathering spot for asylum seekers immediately prior to taking a boat to Australia.

In this location, asylum seekers experience a somewhat ghettoized existence, a community within a community where citizens are the insiders and asylum seekers outsiders. Although not conforming entirely to historical and sociological understandings of ghetto, this framing provides some productive insight for thinking through both the social bonds formed between asylum seekers and the limitations on their lives. Asylum seeker communities in Indonesia, particularly as the length of their stay there extends, display several key characteristics of other ghettoized communities. They are from ethnically distinct groups and their different nationalities lead them to be politically,

socially and economically marginalized (Williams 2013). While the ghetto offers some sense of “belonging” and a safeguard against complete exclusion, ghetto dwellers cannot create their own substitute economic or political systems to replace what has been denied to them by the wider society (Bauman 2004: 81). As Hannerz (1974: 150) explains, “the ghetto is only part a community, as most overarching social institutions are not its own”. Indeed, this is true for asylum seekers in Cisarua, ethnically distinct newcomers who initially intended only a short stay in Indonesia en route to their final destination. It is only due to external changes (Australia’s changed asylum policies) that they now find themselves needing to create a place for themselves within Indonesia, to build community and their own alternate social institutions. Cisarua became a site of refuge for asylum seekers for mainly practical reasons: The weather is cooler than many other parts of Indonesia, it is cheaper than Jakarta and it had previously served as a geographically convenient gathering point ahead of departure by boat. A few years ago, there had been a range of services available in the nearby town of Bogor but, with the exception of Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), all other services withdrew from the area at the request of the Indonesian government. There are very few organizations working with asylum seekers in Indonesia.

The site of Cisarua provides some insights into the intersection of rights, ethics and the notion of community. As Carens (2013) notes, equality of opportunity and distributive justice are moral claims that people acquire from their participation in a political community. However, asylum seekers in Cisarua, as non-citizens without any legal status and no formal relationship with the Indonesian state, are formally excluded from almost all human rights protections and from formal political systems. Nonetheless, their lives go on and they are engaged in a broad range of survival activities (sourcing accommodation, food and protection) as well as activities which go beyond mere physical survival and focus on the enrichment of their cultural, spiritual, intellectual and interpersonal lives. Asylum seekers, because of their marginalization/exclusion from dominant economic, political and social institutions, are building alternate systems arising from and responsive to their distinct social location. Asylum seekers are turning primarily to each other to build these support networks, as well as drawing, wherever possible, from Indonesian, Australian and country-of-origin communities for further support. These relationships however, are all informal, existing outside state protection. The second part of this chapter explores this in greater detail.

Australia–Indonesia Nexus

Unlike Indonesia, Australia is a signatory to the 1951 Refugees Convention and therefore has legal obligations (as opposed to moral obligations) toward asylum seekers and refugees. These obligations are not limited to people who have been granted refugee status, but also to asylum seekers who arrive on Australian territory. Despite these obligations, Australia has a complex and comprehensive suite of policies (such as Temporary Protection Visas, interception and turnaround of boats, detention on Nauru and Papua New Guinea, resettlement in Cambodia, excision of Australia from the “migration zone” for boat arrivals)¹ which have effectively closed its borders to asylum seekers hoping to arrive by boat. The Australian government justifies these exclusionary policies by claiming that it is preserving visas for refugees waiting overseas, often in camps and without the resources to undertake the journey to Australia.

Both major political parties in Australia are determined to stop arrivals by boat. This is significant for Indonesia as many asylum seekers, primarily from Afghanistan, Myanmar, Iran, Iraq and Sri Lanka (Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, n.d.), travel through Indonesia en route to Australia. Many who intended to stay in Indonesia only for a matter of days or weeks before traveling onwards by boat, are now facing a wait of unknown length, likely several years, while they await processing by the UNHCR and eventual resettlement.

The centrality of immigrant and asylum seeker “problems” to the contemporary political agenda and the rising role played by ill-defined security fears have a lead role in Australia, but less so in Indonesia where rhetorical conflation of asylum seeking and (Muslim) terrorism is less evident, possibly as the majority of Indonesians are Muslim and where “terrorist cells” in that country have not been discursively conjoined with asylum seekers and refugees.

According to Bauman (2004: 77), refugees are human waste, without useful function in the land of their arrival and temporary stay, and without intention or prospect of being incorporated into the new social body. We take liberty with his formulation and concur with his assertion that in commonly held beliefs “there are always too many of *them*” (Bauman 2004: 35). The “them” in this instance is asylum seekers and a pervasive belief that there are “too many” (any are too many) underpins Australia’s policies of protecting borders. This is illustrated by comments made by former Prime Minister John Howard in a 2001 election speech: “But we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come” (cited in Museum of Australian Democracy 2001). It is curious that this notion continues uncritically to have traction in Australia given its vast land mass, population of little more than 20 million people and economic prosperity. Whereas in Indonesia, with much less land, dense population² and a developing nation (although with a rapidly growing economy), there is not the same hyperbole, and asylum seekers are largely tolerated.

For Bauman (2004: 66), asylum seekers are “uniquely suited for the role of the effigy to be burnt”. He points out that the global power elite are similarly untied to any place, but that unlike the elite who are difficult to challenge, refugees are clearly visible and a sitting target for what Bauman (2004: 66) calls the “surplus agenda”.

Refugees are outcasts without knowing whether their situation is temporary or permanent, as Bauman states (2004: 76):

Even if they are stationary for a time, they are on a journey that is never completed since its destination (arrival or return) remains forever unclear, while a place they call “final” remains forever inaccessible. They are never to be free from the growing sense of the transience, indefiniteness and provisional nature of any settlement.

Bauman 2004: 76

Despite the bleakness of Bauman’s assertions, this is precisely the situation spoken of by asylum seekers we met in Indonesia. Although in this case there was a tightly prescribed tolerance from the Indonesian state, it was based entirely on the proposition that their stay is temporary. Notwithstanding hope of release from limbo life, asylum seekers themselves spoke of their temporary status, their lack of participation in host community and their uncertain futures.

It is in this difficult context that asylum seekers in Indonesia are building communities and seeking survival.

The Research

The research project is a collaboration between Linda Briskman (Swinburne Institute for Social Research, Melbourne), Lucy Fiske (UTS, Sydney) and Taka Gani (Jesuit Refugee Services, Indonesia). Our aim is to ascertain how asylum seekers and refugees in Cisarua manage their lives in the absence of formal protection from the state. A subsequent stage will establish the perspectives of Indonesians residing close to refugees in that community. The fieldwork was conducted in late 2013 and comprised:

1. Interviews with 30 asylum seekers and refugees from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
2. Interviews with organizations working with refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia, including UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration and legal services.

Asylum seekers and refugees interviewed comprised single men, women and parents, with children ranging from three months of age through to teenagers. The adult age range was from 18 years to mid-70s. Durations in Indonesia ranged from four months to three years.

Those we interviewed were mostly registered with the UNHCR and indicated that they currently did not intend to take a boat journey due to concern about dangers of boat travel (particularly parents with young children), lack of funds to make the journey and, for Sri Lankan respondents, knowledge of Australia's Sri Lankan-specific policies.³ Some left the option of boat travel open, depending on the length of waiting. Others had previously attempted to reach Australia by boat but had either been intercepted or the boat had sunk and they were rescued from the sea. The ambivalence expressed by asylum seekers about whether to wait for the UNHCR process (which takes several years and for some, notably Rohingya refugees, a persecuted minority from Burma, may never result in resettlement) or a boat journey was reinforced by research conducted by Dodd and Horn (2015). Hazara men, a Shia minority mainly from Afghanistan, told them that the official process takes far too long and drives them to people smugglers. One respondent said:

We don't want to put our lives in danger but sometimes people say that we will have to be here for four or five years.

Given the uncertainty and increasing longevity of stay, how do people manage lives in limbo? We examine below three interconnected themes from our interviews: livelihoods, health and education. We look at this first through normative constructions of human rights.

Human Rights Limitations

There is an historical and artificial split between first generation (civil and political) rights and second generation (economic, social and cultural) rights. This split is a legacy of Cold War ideology, with major world powers unable to reach agreement on a holistic human rights convention; the USA preferred civil and political rights with minimal positive state involvement, while Eastern Bloc countries preferred economic, social and cultural rights and were suspicious of the freedoms entrenched in civil and political rights discourse (for more see Ishay 2004; Ife 2010b; Donnelly 2013). Such a split, however, fails to recognize that both sets of rights are better understood as interdependent; that human beings need all rights; that one's political freedoms are enhanced by education and health, which are in turn enhanced by rights to food and shelter.

Lack of civil and political rights for people who are outside the embrace of the state, creates a danger that economic, social and cultural rights cannot be realized. For example, asylum seekers' legal limbo in Indonesia means they are permitted to stay, but do not have the right to work, forcing them into informal ways of achieving essential survival rights. The absence of lawful status turns asylum seekers' rights into needs, and community-based, informal relations are the only avenues available to asylum seekers for meeting their needs. The implications of this are more than mere semantics, and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, it is important to note at least in passing, the effects that shifting from rights to needs has on human dignity. Human dignity is a foundational concept of human rights, both in law and philosophy. The concept of dignity is complex and fraught philosophical terrain—philosophers

argue about its definition, its universality or specificity, its utility, yet the concept, for all its controversy, remains powerful: few people would fail to recognize an offense against their dignity. Donnelly argues (2013: 29) that human rights can be understood to specify certain forms of social respect—goods, services, opportunities and protections owed to each person. Thus, the exclusions to which asylum seekers are subject, harm not only their economic, cultural and political well-being, but also cause an existential harm, hard to identify and articulate, but nonetheless real for its elusiveness.

In setting up the means of existence for themselves, asylum seekers recognize the need to be under the radar of both authorities and the local Indonesian community or, as Agier (2008: 20) sees it, trying to meld into the population as discreetly as possible. The asylum seekers we met were acutely aware of their precarious situation and spoke of trying to be as unobtrusive as possible. While all reported having good relationships with their immediate neighbors (one family described a particularly warm friendship forged through their children who were a similar age), all were also cautious about ensuring they were polite, helpful and quiet at all times. Few asylum seekers were willing to go outside their homes at night and all limited their movements to very local areas unless an official appointment required travel further afield. All asylum seekers were conscious of not doing anything to upset local people as they were afraid of having any form of engagement with police or other authorities due to their lack of legal status. An anecdote told by Laura O'Neill from the NGO Same Skies, is of “asylum seekers lecturing others in their community to be respectful and not walk on the road side by side to talk to each other. Instead, they thought it more respectful to walk single file so Indonesian motorists and others using the road would not be inconvenienced by their public presence”.

The UNHCR told us there were mixed views in the Cisarua-Bogor communities about hosting asylum seekers. The majority of Indonesians in the area are happy to have asylum seekers living in their communities and see benefits as asylum seekers spend money on food and accommodation, helping the local economy (*Jakarta Post* 2014). A much smaller group is unhappy with having outsiders living there and see asylum seekers as “foreign”, a threat to “their” women and as a nuisance (Bachelard 2013). The anti-asylum seeker group are sometimes active in pressuring the government to expel all asylum seekers from the area. In 2012–2013, they were successful in lobbying the government to request NGOs working with asylum seekers to withdraw from the area. Jesuit Refugee Services is the only NGO that stayed in the area and continues to work with asylum seekers there. This anti-asylum seeker pressure appears to have waned somewhat and the Cisarua Refugee Learning Centre, an asylum seeker-run community school, has celebrated its first anniversary.

In each of the areas of livelihoods, health and education, a somewhat organic approach to community development arose, which nonetheless is akin to community development processes of identifying needs, designing approaches and implementing ideas. Evaluation, apart from informal conversations, was less evident. Although community development processes are frequently complex even for people with citizenship, the lack of legal status and uncertainty facing asylum seekers in Cisarua make community development all the more challenging.

Livelihoods

Although the right to work is accepted as a basic human right in principle, it is almost universally enshrined in legislation in far more restricted ways; that is, only certain people have the right to work—those with permanent residency or citizenship and those with visas that specifically permit work (Carens 2013: 139). Livelihoods are foundational to accessing housing, food, education and healthcare. The vast majority of asylum seekers in Cisarua do not receive financial

assistance from either state or non-state welfare services. Jesuit Refugee Services assists some asylum seekers with financial aid, but its resources do not stretch to meet the needs of all who approach them. Even though asylum seekers do not generally get detained or deported, the lack of financial support is problematic and a primary need identified by the asylum seeker community.

The lack of work rights creates enforced dependency. Unlike the usual expectation where refugees send remittances to relatives at home, there is significant reliance on remittances from friends or relatives in their home countries, in refugee settlements in borderlands (for example Afghan Hazaras living in Quetta, Pakistan) or in Australia. Asylum seekers in Indonesia develop social networks and relationships of mutual aid, usually with people of the same background, to ensure all members of the community have their survival needs met; those with more help those with less (Missbach 2015). Some asylum seekers generate an income in the informal economy but there was recognition that, in order not to alienate Indonesians in Cisarua, they could not undercut them, engage in trade that would compete with locals or allow their business to grow beyond very small sizes. These limitations meant that in practice, asylum seekers were limited to micro-trading in produce specific to their ethnic or cultural groups such as making and selling Afghan bread to fellow Afghans. All asylum seekers that we interviewed told us that it was simply not possible to generate enough income to live.

Most basic goods, whether rent, food or medicine, require money and were the most pressing expenses facing asylum seekers. Asylum seekers from all nationality groups we met help each other and share whatever resources they have, including sharing accommodation, food, and money—particularly when medical attention is needed. Most people that we visited were living with four or more people sharing a room. One group of seven men living together in a two room apartment all squeezed into one room for a period of time when they found a young woman and her teenage brother newly arrived and without a place to stay. The original group gave one room of their apartment to the new arrivals, introduced them to Jesuit Refugee Services and helped them secure a room of their own nearby. All of these men were reliant on remittances from their families in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Another young woman had sold her jewelry and was feeling anxious as she estimated she could survive for one month more on the proceeds. She had been the main income earner in her family before fleeing Pakistan and could not receive any help from home. A group of Sri Lankan asylum seekers were eating one meal each day at the local Hindu temple. Invariably, the parents we met expressed concerns about their children having insufficient nutrition and becoming ill.

The importance of work extends beyond the material, however, with one man explaining that he had worked all his life and that without work he felt useless and had nothing to think about except his refugee claims and the UNHCR process. This was exacerbating his trauma sustained in a series of incidents before he fled Pakistan:

I am jobless, I have many skills and much experience. I become depressed, depressed . . . Just waiting for the UNHCR. We are waiting, waiting for the UNHCR. I have this mobile phone only for the UNHCR. I sleep.

The approaches to developing community for mutual financial benefit were ad hoc, yet powerful and creative as discussed above. Yet the question of sustainability of such approaches is in question for, unlike formal community development programs, they are geared to short-term survival rather than long-term viability; this is understandable given the desire to move to another country. An example of the precariousness of a more “organic” approach is that after our return to Australia, we found out that many asylum seekers could not cope financially

any more and had asked to be taken into immigration detention centers as they were destitute. Even more recently, a newly arrived refugee in Australia told us that the detention centers are full and this option has now closed.

Health: Mental and Physical

Mental health problems arise from stress associated with both boredom and loss of a productive role. Prolonged uncertainty affects mental well-being. Also many were very worried about their families and children left behind. This worry about family was often compounded by asylum seekers' sense of having failed their families; not only had they not achieved the ability to support family left behind, but they continued to be dependent on family for their own needs.

Almost everyone we interviewed expressed great anxiety about a range of issues, all converging and interacting dynamically, making it difficult to identify single issues. While concern about the safety and well-being of families left behind was a clear issue, people also worried about their marginal legal status in Indonesia, about money, about access to health services in Indonesia (particularly those with children), about their refugee claims and about their future. People told us that they deal with these worries in a range of different ways, including discussing their troubles with fellow asylum seeker friends, playing sport, trying to keep busy or sleeping as much as possible—in any case, community connectivity appears to alleviate intense worry.

It is in the realm of physical health that the asylum seekers most needed to adopt innovative strategies to ensure that they received at least minimal care. With access to medical services and pharmaceuticals prohibitively expensive for most, people had to be imaginative. For this community, it meant identifying asylum seekers with some medical knowledge to take on an informal practitioner role. This sometimes meant trained practitioners who were unable to practice their profession in Indonesia, but more commonly people turned to willing-but-untrained community members. We met one man who had worked in an administrative position in a hospital in his own country and who had some familiarity with the names of medicines. Among his community he had the greatest level of medical knowledge and was using this, supplemented with Internet searches, to both diagnose and prescribe treatments for his community. The success of such an intervention could not be gauged except from the words of one participant who said that “sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn’t”.

When people did have the resources or need to access formal health services, language was a barrier. But in the spirit of self-help and community support, we were told of refugees with higher levels of English or Bahasa Indonesian volunteering as translators at local clinics.⁴

This informal approach to health services has limitations. A couple expressed to us extreme concern about their three-year-old daughter who required surgery for respiratory problems. The cost of the surgery was prohibitive.

Education

It is the field of education that most closely mirrors community development approaches where robust and relatively sustainable initiatives have developed from the asylum seeker community. Although it was beyond the scope of our research to explore education provision in detail, the future of children was paramount for all asylum seekers interviewed.

At the time we conducted our interviews, many children faced years without schooling. One Sri Lankan family had been advised by the UNHCR to expect a six-year wait before resettlement. They desperately wanted their children to be educated and didn't know their children could attend school in Indonesia if they spoke Bahasa. There are no free Bahasa language

classes for adults or children. Furthermore, there is some resistance to learning Bahasa as most perceive themselves as in transit and wish to learn English, as they believe it will be useful for their future (Missbach 2015). As asylum seekers in Indonesia are facing increasingly longer times in transit, some community members have opened a school offering classes for children and Jesuit Refugee Services coordinate an adult English language program in the area. One young Hazara asylum seeker, Khadim Dai, established a Facebook page and a film project, “Who are we anyway?” to share the achievements of his community in exile and raise awareness of their situation. Through his creativity, donations from Australia poured in. Australian teachers volunteered their time, textbooks arrived and a small bookshop was established. In the film he talks about how the school was not just a learning center for children but created a sense of community for refugees and was “doing something positive for ourselves”. Khadim now coordinates the Cisarua Refugee Learning Centre (CRLC), which was the initiative of Muzafar Ali who has now been resettled in Australia and continues to advocate for the Centre, raising funds for running costs. The CRLC is consistent with community development philosophy:

So far the refugees have shown themselves to be highly capable. They have established and managed the school with absolute professionalism. Although refugees will come and go and their difficult situation will continue, we expect that the current positive situation will continue at the CLRC.

Hoff 2015

The essential area of education is more amenable to community development analysis than other areas. The asylum seeker community was able to draw on outside expertise to facilitate responding to the need and planning and running a school. Ongoing sustainability is a key component of education provision, particularly by recruiting asylum seeker volunteers who are given a sense of purpose in a protracted waiting situation; raising external funds; incorporating the CRLC; and appointing a board. The challenges and the strengths of such community-driven activity is summarized by Hoff (2015).

The main challenge for this project revolves around the impermanence and difficulties of the refugee situation. They are living in high states of financial stress, with limited citizen rights and an unknown future. Nonetheless the school has given them a sense of identity and community, and they are fiercely committed to the space.

Since we left, we have heard of the burgeoning of further educational initiatives, which we intend to include in future research.

To make sense of the Cisarua notion of community development we now turn to examining the challenges presented to conventional ideas about community development.

Community Development Theory and Practice

It is often lamented that community development in Western societies is ill-recognized and ill-funded. In developing countries it is more central within helping professions, for example in social work programs. Yet in most contexts, community development is viewed as a “profession” and not just a practice, requiring expert and usually external facilitators. In Indonesia external support for the asylum seeker population is minimal and this form of community development relies on internal people resources that are harnessed as a form of resistance to harsh (Australia) or ambivalent (Indonesia) state policies.

Community development among asylum seekers in Cisarua reconstructs the meaning of “capacity building” as it appears in social development literature. Rather than building capacity from a “deficit”, there is a need to recognize capacity as something internal, “innate” waiting to be mobilized for survival when the need arises. Ife (2010a) makes a useful distinction between community development and the language of capacity building. For Ife, community development refers to an approach to communities based specifically on validating wisdom, knowledge and expertise from the community itself, allowing communities real control of processes, and emphasizing process rather than pre-determined objectives or outcomes. It assumes that viable, sustainable development cannot be imposed from above, but must be owned and driven by the people of the community, using a variety of forms of participation (Ife 2010a: 68–69). It is an organic and multidimensional process.

As Clarke posits (2010: 120), there are difficulties of participation in constrained environments. In Cisarua norms of community participation, particularly when institutionalized in organizations, have to be set aside in favor of self-directed, informal relationships. Survival needs sometimes to drive process, and relationship building within refugee communities is critical for survival. Relationship building with host community members is also critical, but difficult. The different legal status of asylum seekers, their temporariness and language barriers all mean that asylum seekers’ lives often run in parallel to host community members’ lives, with only brief moments of intersection such as interactions at markets or economic transactions. Community development requires a sense of belonging at its core and some kind of shared or at least interdependent future. Asylum seekers’ lack of any pathway for permanent residence in Indonesia makes a sense of belonging and a future interdependent with their neighbors difficult, if not impossible, to build. Any relationships with Indonesians are limited by the transient (if increasingly prolonged) nature of asylum seekers’ stay.

A criticism of community-based services is their development within the existing social, economic and political order (Ife 2013: 20). When services are minimal, as in Cisarua, creativity and resourcefulness are required to operate informally within the structures of Indonesian society. As Ife states (2013: 68), there are many people in multiple locations around the world who have little power to determine the course of their lives. This lack of power may be caused by poverty, gender, social status or another form of marginality. To counter structural powerlessness, the CRLC demonstrates creative and resourceful ways of exercising agency. In this it does much more than provide an education for asylum seeker children. It is a way in which asylum seekers can exercise agency, build productive (if not economically rewarded) roles for themselves and resist being rendered fully rights-less.

Living without rights and living without communities of origin are intertwined. Although many rights are formally linked to the state, everyday enjoyment of those rights occurs within communities. It is in community that we most commonly exercise our freedom of speech or association and it is in community that we enjoy our right to education, with a mutually beneficial relationship between communities and rights (many communities form around schools for example). In trying to understand Cisarua through a community development lens, it is important to understand the loss of “natural” community. As Ife (2010a: 10) posits, mobility is one of the causes of loss of community. Agier (2008: 29) similarly argues that displaced people’s existence is based on “the loss of a geographical place to which were attached attributes of identity, relationship and memory”.

The Cisarua construction of community from below becomes a corrective, as Ife would suggest, to the alienation and atomization of large-scale and impersonal structures of modern society (Ife’ 2010b: 11–12). It is also consistent with Ife’s view (2010b: 29) that community development is a way of thinking and a philosophy of practice. In Cisarua this way of thinking

seems instinctive. Although it is not conceptualized as community development, the means by which community is created adheres to some core community development principles outlined by Ife (2010b: 31–39). These include valuing wisdom, knowledge and skills from below; self-reliance, independence and interdependence; diversity and inclusiveness; the importance of process; organic change and, participation. The approach is an extension of Ife’s concept (2010b). Survival-based development is a concept that has been applied by us, but a phenomenon more commonly associated with military invasions or natural disasters, when communities pull together. In this case the crisis is forced migration, shared displacement and exclusion. Furthermore, the protective elements of the community-of-necessity can be seen as similar to ghettos, providing “at least a whiff of the feeling of *chez soi*, of being at home, unavailable to them on the outside” (Bauman 2004: 81).

Conclusion

As outlined throughout the chapter, asylum seekers in Cisarua have no formal rights. The purportedly universal and inalienable human rights enshrined in international treaties (notably the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR] and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [ICESCR]) are of little value to asylum seekers in Cisarua. Their lack of legal recognition in Indonesia effectively puts these rights beyond reach and leaves them as aspirational statements rather than enforceable laws. Asylum seekers in Indonesia are instead attempting to meet their needs (for dignity, survival, belonging and purpose) through developing communities and networks of mutual support. Their actions show us the importance of thinking outside both orthodox institutionally bound approaches to rights and normative assumptions about human relationships within a nation-state when communities of origin are almost totally disrupted and have to be developed anew.

A perhaps not unexpected finding of our research is that community development in contexts of necessity does not require significant outside intervention. In this sense, the notion of being part of and supporting community is an essential part of the human condition. Although the participants in our research did not speak to concepts of community development or human rights, it was apparent from both interviews and our observations that these were interlinked in their activities. There was a profound understanding of rights limitation. For example, exclusion from civil and political rights shaped “under the radar” behavior. Whereas exclusion from survival economic and social rights became the building blocks for activities centering on fulfilling economic, health and educational rights, to the extent that was possible in the context.

To further examine the questions our pilot research raised, there is a need to gauge Indonesian host community attitudes in the next stage of the research. There would also be advantage in examining which communities of asylum seekers manage better than others and to see how they are organized. It is also worth exploring how people who do receive some social provision engage or not in community building. For example, a minority of this population receive housing from the International Organization for Migration and hence has a safety net during its transition. Finally, the community-building activities of asylum seekers in Cisarua are developing rapidly as their time in Indonesia extends and becomes increasingly semi-permanent rather than transient. It will be illuminating to map their actions and views over time to gain further insight into community development and rights protections without formal status.

Notes

- 1 In May 2013 mainland Australia was excised from the migration zone, legitimizing sending unauthorized arrivals to offshore detention sites (Nauru and Papua New Guinea) for processing. This extended an

- earlier excision of specified islands. Before excision, boat arrivals could make an asylum claim in Australia. For further analysis see Phillips at <https://theconversation.com/out-of-sight-out-of-mind-excising-australia-from-the-migration-zone-14387>
- 2 The World Bank reports that in 2014 Australia had a population density of 3 people per square kilometer of land, in comparison to Indonesia's 140 people (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.DNST>).
 - 3 Australia has a Memorandum of Understanding with Sri Lanka, and most Sri Lankans who reach Australian territory (and even those who don't) are returned directly to Sri Lanka after a brief interview with no legal advice and no opportunity to appeal the decision. Several hundred Sri Lankans intercepted at sea, including in international waters, have been interviewed on board Australian Navy vessels and handed over to Sri Lankan military at sea.
 - 4 Communication from Laura O'Neill, October 16, 2015.

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CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

Human Rights Case Study

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Introduction

Achieving human rights is at the core of positive community development outcomes. However, this achievement is often at risk for children in developing countries, and even more so for children with disability. Indeed, the voice of children with disability is generally unheard in the development agenda, which means that their needs and priorities are not adequately addressed in service delivery, policy design or community development activities. A systematic literature review of studies, published between 2001 and 2011, of the needs of children with disability living in poverty in low- and middle-income countries found that only 1 of 11 studies included children's own perspectives (Lygnegard et al. 2013).

According to the *World Report on Disability*, children with disability experience significant disadvantage in all aspects of life compared to children without disability (World Health Organization 2011). Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea (PNG) are two Melanesian island states located within the Pacific. Both countries have development challenges of dispersed populations, difficult geography, heavy reliance on foreign aid, poor terms of trade and little comparative advantage (Feeny 2013; Leach et al. 2013). In both countries, a large proportion of households are vulnerable to poverty both now and in the future (Clarke et al. 2014). Within this context, children with disability in Vanuatu and PNG lack basic services though detailed knowledge of their needs and experiences is limited as few empirical data exist. To better understand the attainment of human rights by children with disability within Vanuatu and PNG, a two-year participatory research and social change project, known as the “Voices of Pacific Children with Disability” project (hereafter referred to as the Voices project), was undertaken between 2013–2015. Eighty-nine children with disability aged 5–18 years living in rural and urban areas (43 in Vanuatu, 46 in PNG) participated, using a suite of innovative data collection tools designed to support children to express their life priorities and human rights needs. An analysis of data found that children reported a desire for greater inclusion across a range of life areas. For example, nearly three-quarters of children with diverse disabilities hoped to work in the future in order

to support their families and communities via a range of occupations and activities (see Jenkin et al. 2015a, b). Using formal reports, local media, accessible films and academic forums, children's views were communicated to their communities, service providers, policy makers, donors and governments in order to inform future work to enhance the attainment of these children's human rights.

Participatory and social change-focused research of this kind has been identified as a community development activity in that it works not just to inform future community development work, but also employs community development practices and principles within the research process itself (Ife 2013). The practice of community development privileges the idea of community as a valuable way of relating, organizing and meeting human need toward achieving a more socially just world (Ife 2013). It is "a set of development principles and practices based on ideas of social justice, human rights, community participation and ownership of projects" (Kenny and Clarke 2010: 5). As Ife (2013) describes it, community development relies on vision, analysis and practice or, as Kelly and Sewell describe it, "head, heart and hand" (Kelly and Sewell 1988: 7). Central to this is community ownership of identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating community development activities (see Chambers 1983 and 2005). While community development is a contestable field of theory and practice, Ife (2013) has identified 30 community development principles and clustered those into four sets: foundational; process; valuing the local; and global and local principles (discussed further below). However, community development theory and practice specific to children with disability is limited. Little empirical work has been undertaken on the complexities of implementing the principles above in relation to children with disability, poverty and human rights. Even in the contexts of developed countries that have a strong discourse of children's rights, commentators have noted the absence of children with disability's voices in research, policy and program design and have argued that "to avoid or to neglect listening to the voice of disabled children is to discriminate and to disempower them" (Carpenter and McConkey 2012: 258).

This chapter seeks to provide some reflection on how the principles of community development can be successfully implemented in developing countries by giving voice to children with disability themselves. It will thus offer some insight into the "how to" of including children with disability in participatory research and community development activities, by focusing on methods to enable them to communicate and be heard. The chapter presents a discussion of the Voices project methods, describing these in relation to their alignment with and enactment of a selection of community development principles articulated by Jim Ife (2013).

Community Development Principles and Voices of Children with Disability

Foundational Principles

Community development "can be defined as helping communities to articulate their needs, then to act so that they can be met" (Ife 2013: 279), giving precedence to the views of community members themselves in this process rather than others (such as service providers or government) who also seek to name and frame community need. Ife (2013: 279) names this principle of "need definition" as one of the set of foundational community development principles. Closely linked are the principles of "empowerment" and of "human rights", both also identified within Ife's foundational set (Ife 2013: 277–278, 279–280). Community development and human rights-based practice, as described by Ife (2012 and 2013), have much in common. In particular, both

are underpinned by need definition being undertaken by those most affected as well as their participation in shared action to address it. As described by Ife (2012: 230), “human rights-based practice . . . implies a strong element of empowerment; ideas of enabling people to define their rights and to act in order to have them realized and protected”. Similarly, Kenny and Clarke (2010: 7) discuss the way human rights agendas have focused attention on people’s rights “to identify their own capacities and needs, do their own envisioning for the future and construct their own ways of achieving needs and visions”.

However, supporting the need definition and human rights of children with disability has been inadequately addressed to date. Children’s voices are not usually included directly in the discussion of their human rights, while the views of children with disability are even more absent from discussion about their rights, needs and responses to address them. This represents a lack of ownership of, and participation in, the process of need definition by children with disability and is related to the way society devalues and marginalizes people with disability. This ties in with another of Ife’s (2013) foundational principles that requires community workers to attend to the underlying causes of disadvantage, both structural and discursive. The principle of “addressing discourses of disadvantage” focuses attention on alternative voices and highlights their silence in key discursive areas such as human rights (Ife 2013: 276–277). Applying the principles of “need definition”, “human rights”, “empowerment” and “addressing discourses of disadvantage” demands that we attend to those who are silenced in these debates, and that we do so in a way that enables them to “speak” and to be part of shared action toward change.

This combination of principles clearly provides a rationale for the focus of the Voices project on two key elements: (1) to develop a method or approach to participatory research that enabled children with diverse disabilities to “speak” for themselves (to be discussed below); and (2) to utilize this method to identify the human rights priorities of children with disability in Vanuatu and PNG. This approach echoed the agenda identified by local disabled people’s organizations (DPOs) in each country (our partners), and extended their focus to directly supporting opportunities for children (in addition to adults) with disability to communicate about their needs and rights. In contrast to other recent research focused on seeking the views of children with disability in development contexts, we sought not to overly limit the focus of children’s discussion. For example, Don et al. (2015: 810) explored the gendered discourse of 10 girls with disability in Iran through a focus largely on education, justifying this focus “because education is essential for employment, reducing poverty and improving the living conditions of people with disabilities”. Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2015) asked 21 girls with physical and intellectual disabilities in Vietnam about their experiences of education exclusion/inclusion. In contrast, we wanted to enable children to identify their own life priorities and needs rather than us making assumptions about the role and importance of these. We asked three broad questions: what is important to you in your life; what are your hopes and dreams; and what would you change to make your life better or happier?

This was a novel, and often a very empowering, experience for most participants. One child, at the end of the project, talked about what it had been like to be listened to:

I am so happy to be part of this big research project because there’s never been a group of people coming around and talking to me and asking me about my problems. I really liked that you wanted to hear straight from me.

Child participant in Voices project

Similarly, parents of children with disability also expressed a sense of empowerment. One father stated that it was the first time he hadn’t been told what to do by outsiders but had been

listened to. This new role as speaker and self-advocate extended into other social change activities of the project, including children and parents representing their views publicly through their involvement in the making of films (to be discussed below) as well as speaking at local village and regional community forums.

Process Principles

Projects in developing country contexts are often measured by how successful the outcomes are. Outcomes are normatively the key for gaining funding allocations in the first instance and the outcomes become the drive, the focus (Ife 2010). However, a community development approach values the process as a central feature of practice, rather than valuing only the outcomes achieved. Good community development seeks to involve people who are at the core of the issue and who have traditionally missed out on participating and, as such, “participation” is a key process principle (Ife 2013). Ife argues that the means and ends are explicitly linked as the “ends can (and do) become means, and means can (and do) become ends” (Ife 2013: 159). In essence, the process will impact on the quality, relevance and impact of the outcomes. Process must be propelled by community values and aligned with other community development process principles such as “inclusiveness” (Ife 2013).

Complementary to Ife’s community development principles and focus on the process, participatory research provides a methodology that acknowledges children’s agency and recognizes children for their abilities to competently report on their own experiences (Sorin 2009). This recognition legitimizes and values the experiences and thoughts held by children (Priest and Davis 2009), giving them greater power in identifying their own priorities and needs. However, listening to children with disability and directly seeking from them an understanding of their experience and knowledge is a challenge to well-established participatory methods. Routinely excluded from research processes, children with disability have been passively subjected to research being conducted on or about them, rather than with them (Gray and Winter 2011). This is particularly true for children with disability residing in developing country contexts (Wickenden and Kembhavi-Tam 2014).

In recognition of the right of children with disability to have their own voice and participate in the research process, it is fundamental to ensure that children with disability are not excluded (nor included in a tokenistic but non-participatory way), and that the research methodology and methods are carefully designed to ensure that children can safely choose to participate to the best of their ability. In the Voices project, this attention to process was bolstered by two important components: the research principles and ethics established for this project; and the tools to assist the communication of children and their participation in data collection. First, research principles for working with children with disability were generated through synthesizing available knowledge about this practice, both from existing research literature as well as via the involvement of local people from each country and particularly members of each country’s DPO. Research principles (see Table 26.1) highlighted elements such as allowing adequate time for the participation of children (linked to Ife’s principle of “pace of development”, Ife 2013: 294–295), and building relationships and trust (linked to Ife’s principle of “relationship and dialogue”, Ife 2013: 291–292).¹

In addition to the Voices research principles, the development of a set of inclusive tools enabled children to report their views. Visual, tactile and auditory methods of engagement have a prior history in child participatory research and have also had some limited use in development contexts with children with disability, including exploration of human rights. For example, Nguyen et al. (2015) used photovoice and drawing to explore the educational rights of

Table 26.1 Principles of our research work

Respect	<p>We will value the inherent dignity and autonomy of the individual.</p> <p>We will be honest, ethical and accountable in our work.</p> <p>We will respect the views and experiences of children and take these seriously.</p>
Trust, relationships and time	<p>We recognize that children might be distrustful of us and will need time to get to know us.</p> <p>We will allow time to build trust and rapport between researchers, children, families and communities.</p> <p>We will ensure ongoing, informative communication with all participants.</p>
Strengths	<p>We recognize that all children have strengths and we focus on these.</p> <p>We value children's capacities, ideas and experiences.</p> <p>We recognize that all children, regardless of how they communicate or their disability, have something valuable to communicate.</p>
Inclusive of diversity	<p>We believe everyone should have an equal opportunity to be involved.</p> <p>We will work in inclusive ways to enable the participation of children with vision, hearing, intellectual/cognitive, physical, communication, mental health and multiple impairments.</p> <p>We will adapt the way we work to cater for differences in age, language, personality, gender and cultures.</p>
Listening	<p>We will listen to children with disability as a priority and value their ideas, views and opinions.</p> <p>We will listen in diverse ways including paying attention to facial expressions, bodily gesture and movement, vocalizations and other signals.</p>
Choice and comfort	<p>We will support children to decide the degree of participation they are comfortable with.</p> <p>We will offer locations and ways to participate that are relevant, comfortable and appropriate to each child.</p>

(Jenkin et al. 2015c: 9)

Vietnamese girls with disability. While Nguyen et al. (2015) used visual methods as a mechanism both “as a way to construct knowledge and foster activism” (778), in our project the tools were designed to foster and expand the communicative capacity of a wider range of children with disability (including physical, sensory, intellectual and communication disability) to convey their views on their life priorities. The tools were used as a method of consultation with child participants; they supported dialogue and enabled the researchers to “listen” to what was important to children. As the tools were developed and adapted for use in developing countries where it is known that only a low percentage of children with disability is able to attend school, the explicit focus was on tools that did not require literacy. In this manner, the tools have universal application and can be used for children with a range of impairments.

The design of tools to enable the participation by children with diverse disabilities meant considering how communication was enabled or “disabled” in different ways by the child's personal context, impairment/s and environment. A variety of tools were developed to suit these differences as well as different personal strengths and interests of each child. Tools included:

- **A photo library:** This comprised a set of local photos representing life areas broadly reflecting the Articles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations 2006). The photo library could be viewed either as a set of printed photographs

that the child could select and organize, or in digital form on an electronic device such as a laptop provided by researchers.

- **A sound library:** This comprised a set of digital audio recordings of short local sounds representing life areas broadly reflecting the Articles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations 2006). The sound library could be listened to on a laptop or other digital device provided by researchers.
- **A camera:** The provision of a camera to children enabled children to take their own photos to demonstrate important life priorities for them. Photos could immediately be viewed on the digital camera and on other digital devices such as tablets or laptops. Children also received printed copies of their photos.
- **Story in a bag:** This comprised a bag filled with objects representing a range of life areas and interests. Children were able to explore the bag and its objects by touch, and use objects to communicate things important to them.
- **A doll:** Dolls were made locally and provided to children to assist them to “tell” a story using the doll about what is important in their lives. The doll was used in different ways by different children. As a tactile object, the doll was selected by children with a range of disabilities.
- **Guided tour or walkabout:** This tool enabled children to guide or lead researchers around their community to show them areas, people and objects important to them. It was useful for children with a range of disabilities, including children with vision impairment.
- **Drawing:** Many children elected to draw objects important to them. To do this, they used a variety of media locally available, and suitable to their disability. For example, one child who could not sit unaided, lay in the sand and used his finger to draw things he identified as life priorities.
- **Story telling:** In most cases, children used a variety of communication modes to explain and tell stories about their priorities and needs. Often this accompanied or was prompted by the use of other tools (Jenkin et al. 2015c).

Local researchers spent time getting to know the child over multiple visits, determining their preferred means of communication, the child’s interest in different tools, the suitability of each, and adaptations needed to the chosen tools. The success of the tools was evidenced by the diversity of children with disability able to participate. Of 89 participants, 54 percent had a cognitive disability, 48 percent had a communication disability, 48 percent had a physical disability, 30 percent had a hearing disability and 27 percent had a vision disability.² Child participants were invited to review the effectiveness of the process and the tools. Children reported very positively about the value of the tools to them. For example, one girl with an intellectual disability reported:

I felt glad to participate in the activity because I really enjoy learning how to use the camera, take my photos and be in the photos as well. I liked telling the researcher what I like around my environment and what’s important to me. I like the researcher walking around the home ground asking me questions.

Child participant in Voices project

The Voices principles and ethics together with the tools, assisted researchers to ensure that children with disability could actively and safely participate in the research process. It was the process that was vital for us to achieve the outcome: in offering appropriate methods to support children to communicate about their needs and aspirations, and in “listening” to what children told us, we were able to achieve the key outcome of understanding more about children’s human rights as identified by the children.

Principles of Valuing the Local

Ife's principles of "valuing the local" place the affirmation and validation of local assets, knowledge, culture, resources, skills and processes at the core of community development activity (Ife 2013). This reinforces, rather than undermines, local knowledge and processes, as well as ensuring that the community development activity is grounded in the reality of the local experience and need and is conducted in ways that are locally relevant.

This approach to valuing local knowledge challenges notions of outside expertise and its focus on building capacity, up-skilling or educating locals, which is often based on deficit assumptions of community expertise (Ife 2013). Instead, it requires the community development worker to "listen and learn from the local people, who clearly have far more relevant local knowledge and expertise" and to let go of assumptions that "external expertise can provide all (or even some) of the answers" (Ife 2013: 140). Where external community workers are required, Ife recommends that the knowledge of the outsider and knowledge of the local community be shared. Ultimately, a community development worker must maintain the attitude and recognition that local people "know much more about the community—its problems, issues, strengths, needs and ways of doing things—and that any community development process must be theirs, not the worker's" (Ife 2013: 148). This may ultimately result in a blend of "universal" knowledge (often held by Western-educated personnel and validated by the positivist paradigm which values "objective, scientific, verifiable and measurable knowledge" [Ife 2013: 14]) and "local" knowledge (that is held in a wide range of modes including oral tradition, ceremony, cultural and spiritual practices). This blend or sharing of knowledge requires that local knowledge remains privileged and is the filter through which "universal" knowledge is translated and remade in ways relevant to local context and culture (Ife 2013; Wilson 2005).

Similarly, "valuing the local" requires that "local cultural traditions and processes be validated and supported as part of a community development process" (Ife 2013: 282). This requires a removing of one's own cultural lens, letting go of cultural assumptions and being open to understanding local cultural attitudes, beliefs and practices (Ife 2013). For community workers, Ife states that this requires a delicate balance of respect for local culture while striving to uphold human rights. When there is a juxtaposition between the two, he suggests that the community development worker needs to maintain a thoughtful approach to working with the community to support cultural shifts in behavior, attitudes and practice, fostering a dynamic "local participatory culture" which engages with ongoing cultural evolution and change (Ife 2013: 282).

On the face of it, the Voices project was subject to various factors that ran counter to "valuing the local" principles. As with many development projects, the funding body from Australia provided funding for the project through an Australian university that had been required to provide a project plan heavily based on "universal" rather than "local" knowledge. However, recognizing the importance of local ownership and knowledge, the Voices project intentionally partnered with three locally based organizations in Vanuatu and PNG. Two of these were DPOs, run by and for people with disability, and the other was a non-government organization committed to child rights. In particular, the knowledge of the local DPOs was sought early in the planning phase of the project (prior to funding being approved), and throughout the project's lifespan. We used a number of mechanisms to both value and foster local knowledge and culture.

We purposefully selected local researchers in recognition that local workers held cultural knowledge that external researchers did not, specifically, that they were sensitive to and worked within cultural norms and expectations. Our researchers (four of six had a disability) were already well known and connected with their local communities, paving the way for the development

of sound relationships. They adhered to cultural protocols and spoke local dialects. Protocols in Vanuatu, as an example, included highly formalized meetings and processes along with informal meetings prior to gaining access into a local community. This local knowledge was critical to the project's success.

Where local researchers held knowledge about local protocols and experiences of disability, the external personnel (from an Australian university) held “universal” knowledge about research methods and practices. Consistent with Ife’s recommendation of “knowledge-sharing” (2013: 142), a sequence of training workshops was held in PNG and Vanuatu, that sought to validate the educator roles of all parties (local and external researchers) as well as to work together to apply or “remake” universal knowledge in appropriate ways. Workshops involved DPO members (i.e. local people with disability) teaching local and external researchers about disability awareness, myths and appropriate local terminology to identify disability aligned to a rights-based approach. Local child rights workers trained all the researchers on child protection relevant to local culture and politics, with processes to follow should a child be identified as at risk. Team members from the Australian university trained the local researchers on research methods and ethics, and supported the local researchers to identify the meaning and practices of these relevant to local contexts. Australian researchers proposed an initial set of data collection tools (discussed above), and local researchers adapted and expanded on these in ways that they felt were culturally appropriate. A formal process was developed to capture the insights and practice knowledge of local researchers about the project methods and tools. This explained and documented modifications to tools that were later incorporated into written guides about the tools, so as to capture local knowledge and expertise.

Throughout the project, local researchers maintained the core links with families and communities in which they worked. In some cases, local researchers identified the need for specific disability awareness-raising in the communities in order to first build knowledge of disability and rights. These processes remained locally organized, with members of the local DPO delivering such training based on sharing personal experiences of disability and stigma, quelling myths about disability, and informing the community that children and adults with disability have the same human rights as their peers without disability. In turn, this fostered increased willingness of children with disability and their families to participate in the project. This process alleviated shame associated with disability, as explained by Nelly Caleb, the DPO leader in Vanuatu:

After our session, families come forward and they are not embarrassed to tell us their child has a disability. If we don’t do awareness, families won’t come out.

Nelly Caleb, DPO partner in the Voices project

This is a pertinent example of drawing on local knowledge and skill to foster a dynamic “local participatory culture” (Ife 2013: 282) where local cultural processes are respected but also extended to incorporate more emancipatory knowledge about disability rights.

The success of the Voices project was mostly due to an inherent respect for the local. Skills were shared, local knowledge, culture and process were privileged and, through this process, human rights awareness about the rights of children with disability was extended. However, this is not to suggest that there was no room for improvement in our implementation of this set of principles. As Kenny and Clarke (2010: 249) suggest, such work “requires critical analysis, mutual learning, and acceptance of paradoxes and dilemmas”, of which there were many. Inevitably, the technical tasks related to the formal production of knowledge from the project

were largely undertaken by the external (Australian university) researchers in the usual formats of reports and articles. However, we attempted to disrupt this expected pattern of knowledge production by also developing three disability-accessible films, largely narrated by local researchers, children with disability and their families, with audio in local languages. These are discussed below.

Global and Local Principles

The increasing impact of globalization has seen an unprecedented interconnectedness between local and global dimensions that mutually influence each other. While community development projects nominally define community by a location and work within a local “lens”, it is important to examine the interplay between global and local development as decision making that affects local communities is increasingly occurring at a global level (Ife 2013). Ife suggests that limiting the focus of community development projects to the local is insufficient and, instead, global links must be incorporated into practice if community development projects are to create lasting change.

The community development principle of “linking the global and the local” (Ife 2013) is also relevant to an analysis of children’s voices in participatory projects. Researchers in this approach argue that it is plausible that children are most likely to identify problems within their immediate or “local” world (Hart 2008). However, this focus on children’s priorities in their local relationships and environment may not take into account the larger forces that marginalize or influence children and families. These larger forces may relate to universal human rights principles (Ife 2013) and/or political and economic decisions primarily promoted by globalization and neoliberal reform (Hart 2008). Understanding these broader contexts is an essential backdrop for understanding the experiences that children report (Hart 2008) and to effecting change.

More than just a focus on analysis regarding the interrelationship between the global and the local, Ife argues that the community development principle of “linking the global and the local” (Ife 2013: 297–298) must also focus on actions that will lead to change. An approach put forward by Ife is “globalization from below” as an alternative to top-down decision making, traditionally associated with global forces, which lacks meaning and usefulness to ordinary citizens. Globalization from below embraces local participatory and democratic processes and places human rights, and other issues, at the heart of the process (Ife 2013). This work also involves global actions via “building alliances for change” at both local and global levels, as well as “networking on an international scale” toward shared visions of social change (Craig et al. 2000: 331). New technology, such as the Internet and social media, offers new ways of sharing experiences, connecting communities, building alliances and campaigning on issues for global action (Craig et al. 2000; Ife 2013), an approach deliberately adopted by us in this project, as explained below.

Having identified the needs and priorities of children with disability in each country (see Jenkin et al. 2015a, b for more detailed descriptions), it was important to foster action to address these through sharing this information with children’s communities and key stakeholders such as governments and service providers. A key mechanism for change was seen to be the extent to which both local and global communities recognized the capacity of children with disability to communicate their life priorities, with appropriate support, and their right to live productive lives as contributing citizens of their communities. To achieve this, we drew on Ife’s advice about emerging technologies as a mechanism for change at the local and global levels. As PNG and Vanuatu cultures are steeped in a long history of storytelling, we made use of accessible films to share the children’s stories (and the participatory research method). The films were found to be far more relevant and accessible to the local community than a written report of

the findings. Films presented the voices of children and of local researchers with disability, and were produced in several versions including in local languages, with English captions to enable access by people with hearing disability, as well as with audio description for people with vision impairments. Local ownership of these films was found to be instantaneous; they fostered national pride, public calls by village chiefs for greater advocacy efforts to enhance human rights opportunities for children with disability, and triggered the development of new partnerships. To enable global connections, the films were also made available on the Internet and have connected to an international viewing audience. Though the films are unique to Vanuatu and PNG, they carry universal relevance that has resonated with those with and without disability across a range of developing and developed countries, thus progressing the global agenda of disability inclusion and human rights. Overall, the films have been effective across a range of levels, being broadcast at the United Nations CRPD 8th Conference of State Parties in New York, then regionally as part of the PNG Human Rights Film Festival, and as an awareness tool in Vanuatu government and non-government training.

Locally and globally, these films have generated awareness about children's dreams and their strong desire to contribute back to their community, shedding new light on the lives of children with disability who are so often invisible in developing countries. While the films reveal the challenges children with disability face with regard to exclusion (and there are plenty), this focus on hearing the children speak for themselves is powerful in itself, portraying an intimate picture of children's capacities and ideas along with the role of the family and the local community worker/researcher in assisting children to be included and achieve their goals.

Conclusion

Good community development should provide for the attainment of human rights by all members of society, including the most vulnerable. Across Melanesia, children with disability are among the most vulnerable members of their communities. Part of this vulnerability can be understood by their social exclusion—including exclusion from service and policy design, as well as exclusion from the identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating of community development activities. The research reported in this chapter demonstrates a method to enact the principles of community development with regard to children with disability. Ife advises that principles of community development serve as a guide and need to be “adapted, considered and reconstructed according to the context” (Ife 2013: 299). Drawing on such a framework in the Voices project, and adapting it to meet the specific contexts of PNG and Vanuatu, prompted the development of both new tools to support children with disability to voice their needs and human rights priorities, as well as strategies for connecting local and global social change.

Such achievement is not without difficulty and requires a significant commitment of time and personnel resources, including investment in partnerships, sharing of knowledge and adaptation of methods to meet the needs of diverse participants. As Ife notes, community development work

is not an easy or straightforward task; many conflicts, dilemmas and problems will confront a community worker, and the nature of the work is such that there are usually no easy answers.

Ife 2013: 365

However, notwithstanding these difficulties, developing innovative ways to support children with disability to communicate their life priorities and linking these to human rights is possible.

While little has been written on this specific cohort, the principles developed by Ife (2013) are relevant to children with disability as they are to all other community groups. The 89 children who took part in this research gave voice to their own lives, in ways they had not previously experienced. The voices of children with disability must be heard for positive community development outcomes to be achieved in the realm of human rights attainment. This research offers a model for this.

Notes

- 1 Additionally, a set of ethics for research with children with disability were developed. These focused on other issues affecting children's participation including their safety, the privacy and confidentiality of children's information, and the processes for supporting their informed consent to participate in the research project and to withdraw from it (Jenkin et al. 2015c).
- 2 All disability types were based on reports by parents and not formal diagnosis, which was frequently absent.

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THE COMPLEXITIES AND CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN POST- CONFLICT SOUTH AFRICA

A Systems Framework of a Project

V.M. John

Introduction

This chapter explores some of the main challenges in a community development project in post-conflict South Africa. It employs a systems framework to convey a diagrammatic and narrative depiction of the Human Rights, Democracy and Development (HRDD) project, a community development project in rural South Africa. It briefly discusses the four project goals: *learning*, *identity development*, *personal transformation* and *social change*. It then introduces four strategies employed in the project for advancing these goals, namely, *reflection*, *dialogue*, *action* and *relationships* and their theoretical underpinnings. The major part of the chapter focuses on the four significant forces in the macro system of the project. Each of these macro-system forces, namely, *poverty*, *patriarchy*, *power struggles* and a *post-conflict status* is illustrated through selected quotations from participants in the project.

This framework allows for a holistic view which reveals the complexity and dynamic relationships between project goals, project strategies and the most significant macro forces shaping the project. The final part of the chapter argues that the socio-political character of the macro environment requires more explicit exploration in frameworks of projects operating in a post-conflict rural context such as KwaZulu-Natal. The chapter is thus premised on the view that while macro-system forces such as poverty and patriarchy are well accounted for in the development literature, less attention is given to how power struggles and the post-conflict status of an area can act as powerful determinants of development action and inaction. Paying attention to such forces allows for a situated understanding of development practices and for the interconnected and structural nature of some development challenges to be made more visible. Community development interventions could benefit from being sensitive to these forces in project planning, implementation and evaluation phases.

An exploration of the HRDD project should be viewed in relation to global development planning and the development needs and agenda of South Africa. These brief discussions of global and national development planning are followed by an introduction to the HRDD project, a discussion of the role of systems frameworks in exploring community development and the research involved in developing a systems framework of the HRDD project. The actual systems framework of the HRDD project is thereafter presented, illustrated and discussed.

Global Development Planning: From MDGs to SDGs

The year 2015 marked a threshold in global development, when the international community took stock of the achievements and failures in global development under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with its development targets for 2015 and ushered in a new framework to govern global development until 2030. This new framework, the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs, heralds a universal approach which seeks to build on the MDGs (United Nations 2015). Sustainability and peace are now central foci in the latest development planning. Sustainability foregrounds the need for systemic and holistic planning for people and the planet. In terms of peace, the preamble to the SDGs emphasizes the importance of peace and justice for development, stating “We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development” (United Nations 2015: 2). The inclusion of a specific goal, Goal 16, to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” highlights the centrality of peace, inclusivity, justice and good governance for all development, including community development (United Nations 2015: 21).

Goal 16 signals a deep acknowledgement of the dynamic and complex relationships between conflict, development and peace. Thus, in both micro and macro systems of development, there is a need to assess how power, directly and indirectly, shapes development priorities and responses. This chapter illustrates this need by examining the power dynamics of the HRDD project in South Africa.

Development Needs and Planning in South Africa

Although democracy has brought political freedom and improved lifestyles for some citizens, more than two decades after freedom from apartheid rule, the lives of many citizens have not improved. South Africa faces multiple challenges in the areas of employment, education, governance, crime, health and energy. It is home to some of the highest levels of inequality, HIV infection and crime in the world (Leoschut 2006; Burton & Leoschut 2013; Human Sciences Research Council 2014).

Of the nine challenges identified in the country’s National Development Plan, the two considered most critical and interrelated were that “too few people work and the quality of education available to the majority is poor” (National Planning Commission 2011: 3). This diagnostic analysis, the basis for the master development plan for South Africa, noted that “millions of people remain unemployed and many working households live close to the poverty line” (National Planning Commission 2011: 1), creating the need for urgent measures to address unemployment, particularly amongst the youth.

The country’s White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (Department of Higher Education and Training 2013: 2) notes that the new education system

must be expanded to cater for the needs of the over three million young people who are not in employment, education, or training, to cater for the needs of an economy that must enhance its skills levels in order to grow.

Development in rural areas of South Africa, a priority concern, is severely constrained by resources and skills. Ten years after democracy, a comprehensive study by the Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005: viii–ix) found “that the great majority of children in rural poor communities are receiving less than is their right in a democratic South Africa . . . Moreover, the communities in which they live will continue to suffer the debilitating effects of poverty and inequality for as long as these problems remain”.

The HRDD project arose in response to such needs in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the most populous province at the time. The project is best understood against the background of KZN’s high unemployment, low literacy levels, vast rural terrain, history of political violence, growing level of AIDS infection and poor socio-economic development. The HRDD sites all showed consistent patterns of severe poverty. Unemployment was high, with a significant proportion of households reporting no income at all. More than half of the households were at the time surviving on a monthly income of R800 or less (approximately \$2.6 per day) derived mainly from government old-age pensions and social grants. A large proportion of people living in these areas had had no schooling, while approximately a quarter of residents did not complete their primary education (John 2009).

Dependency theory (see Youngman 2000) provides some insight into the type of community development envisaged by the HRDD project in post-apartheid South Africa. This theory argued that the underdevelopment of countries was a consequence of conquest and exploitative relationships. From a development perspective, such thinking shifted the responsibility for poverty and low productivity away from the poorer countries and presented such conditions as products of historical inequality and subordination. In similar vein, apartheid had ensured the systematic underdevelopment of areas occupied by Black people. This was most severe in the rural periphery of the country. The HRDD project focused on seven of these areas to address some of the legacy of apartheid-initiated underdevelopment. Evidence of this is seen in the project’s focus on empowerment of women in rural areas, as well as its promotion of self-reliance and citizens’ participation in local development processes towards broader goals of equality and justice.

The Human Rights, Democracy and Development (HRDD) Project

The Human Rights, Democracy and Development (HRDD) project was an adult education and development intervention in seven rural communities of KwaZulu-Natal. Groups from the communities of Dalton, Tugela Ferry, Qanda, Estcourt, Trust Feed, Mudén and Stoffelton participated in the project for a decade from 1999. The project was a partnership between a university department, a non-governmental organization, a foreign donor and the seven communities in KwaZulu-Natal.

The HRDD project engaged adults in a combination of adult basic education and training (ABET) and income-generation activities within their communities. The HRDD learners and educators were predominantly women from communities characterized by high levels of unemployment and poverty, and low levels of education and development. Most of their communities were severely affected by the political violence in KwaZulu-Natal during the 1980s and early 1990s. The main aims of the HRDD project were to create literate, informed and active citizens who could advance development in their communities. In the context of a new

democracy in South Africa, the project had a strong curriculum emphasis on the themes of human rights, democracy and development (hence the project name). The rationale for the project was to establish literacy classes and income-generating projects within marginalized communities as spaces for people to learn and practice democracy and development in a micro context, as preparation for application and civic action in wider macro contexts.

Educators for the literacy classes, who served as development facilitators outside of class, were recruited from within the targeted communities. They were trained and supported over a number of years by the NGO and university partners. A key objective and challenge for educators was to facilitate critical reflection and dialogue amongst learners about their life circumstances and their futures. Such reflection was intended to serve as a catalyst of transformative learning (Mezirow 1991, 1998), which would influence personal and social transformation (Freire 1970).

A comprehensive discussion of the HRRD project in terms of its history, activities, actors and what it achieved is presented in a case study by John (2009). In this chapter, a systems framework developed from the case study of the project is presented. The key objective of such a framework is to highlight the situated nature of development interventions in rural KwaZulu-Natal and to highlight the importance of understanding the macro system when planning such community development projects.

Using Systems Frameworks to Explore Development

The social ecological model proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) has underpinned many systems frameworks in community development (Kgaphola & Boshoff 2002). These show how development projects and actors are influenced by various layers or systems of the environment within which they are located. In addition, opportunities for exploring the dynamic interactions between internal (project) and external (community and country) environments are provided.

Green (2015) has recently explored global trends in international development and poses the following questions: “how is our understanding of development changing and what are the implications of these changes” for development organizations. Having identified several significant shifts in the development landscape in terms of issues, technology and actors, Green argues for the use of systems thinking to cater for the complexity of development challenges. He says, “most social, political and economic systems are not simple—they are complex systems, in which the sheer number of relationships and feedback loops means that the system cannot be reduced to simple chains of cause and effect” (Green 2015: 7). Of particular relevance to this chapter, Green (2015: 8) warns against “a tendency to downplay the importance of political contestation and power imbalances as obstacles to progressive change . . . and its relative gender blindness”. The systems framework of the HRDD project surfaces such contestation and power dynamics.

Research towards a Systems Framework of the HRDD Project

Qualitative research using case study methodology was employed to explore the HRDD project in its entirety. Case study was deemed to be most suitable for a study which sought an in-depth and holistic understanding of the HRRD project and its multifaceted character, activities and actors. A case study allows for “a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context in order to generate knowledge” (Rule & John 2011: 4). This definition recognizes the situatedness of phenomena under study and signals a special relevance of case study methodology for research into community development projects where the genesis and progress of the project is deeply tied to events in and influences of, its context.

Data collection for the case study took place between 2005 and 2006 and included 28 in-depth interviews with learners, educators and project partners. Complementing these interviews, which probed the life histories of key participants as well as their experiences of the HRDD project, observations of HRDD activities and documentary analyses provided additional data. The design of the study deliberately sought to give voice to the participants, and this chapter uses these narratives of several rural women to illustrate the contextual dynamics of their lives and project activities. Pseudonyms are used throughout this chapter.

Given the nature of the data, analysis was largely about making sense of the project through the narratives and perspectives of its main protagonists. The inductive analysis was based on the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss 1967). It was such constant comparison of themes across learners' and educators' narratives that allowed for the identification of poverty, patriarchy, power struggles and a post-conflict status as the most significant features of the HRDD macro system, as reflected in the systems framework below.

The HRDD Project as Viewed via a Systems Framework

The framework in Figure 27.1 presents the four key goals of the HRDD project, as established from participatory research with local stakeholders prior to the project's inception and from ongoing monitoring and evaluation studies (Centre for Adult Education 1999). These goals were *learning*, *identity development*, *personal development*, and *social change*. Interspersed amongst these four goals are four project strategies adopted in the project to advance the project goals, namely, *reflection*, *dialogue*, *action* and *relationships*. A further component of the framework is the four major forces of the macro system namely, *poverty*, *patriarchy*, *power struggles*, and a *post-conflict status*. Together, these goals, project strategies and forces provide a holistic representation of

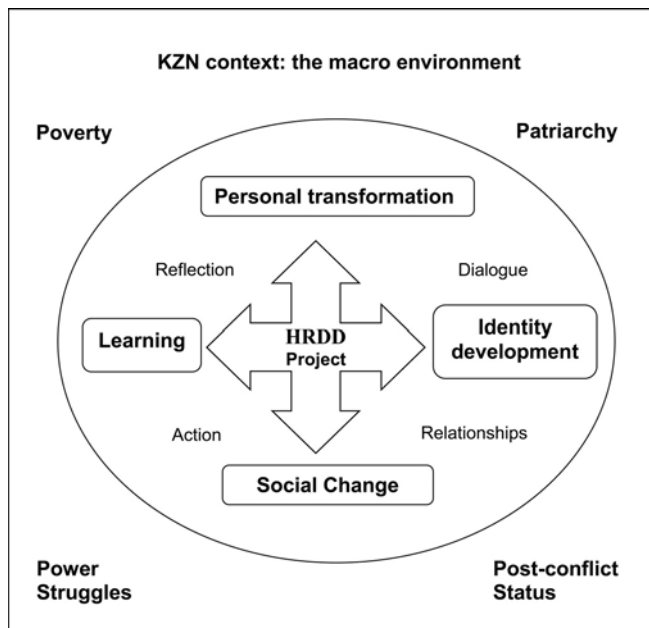


Figure 27.1 Systems Framework of the HRDD Project.

the project based on the multiple perspectives of the project conveyed by project partners, educators, learners and the author as case study researcher. Due to length limitations, this chapter only provides extensive discussion of the macro-system forces of the framework.

The Four Project Goals in the Framework

Project documents such as funding proposals and evaluation reports, and in-depth interviews with project partners, identified four key project goals, namely, learning, identity development, personal transformation and social change. In Figure 27.1 these goals are represented in the inner part of the framework, within the circle. The four project goals together reflect the common agenda, ideology and transformative focal points of radical adult education and community development interventions.

Learning

The HRDD project is foremost an adult education intervention which sought to foster learning within rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal. This goal of the framework includes formal, non-formal and informal learning, among different groupings of HRDD actors. The regular ABET classes leading to basic qualifications constituted the formal learning opportunities. Learning for and in livelihood projects such as poultry-rearing, garment-making and block-making for building homes provided many non-formal and informal learning opportunities. This goal also covers different modes of learning such as rational cognitive learning via reflection and dialogue; social learning via practice, action and relationships; affective learning based on engagement with emotions; and learning through and in relationships. Learning is thus a major goal and outcome of the HRDD project, and its connections to the project strategies are evident in the preceding sentence.

Identity Development

The HRDD project sought to develop new identities, strengthen some existing identities and transform other identities. For example, the recruitment, training and support of a new group of community-based adult educators clearly involved significant identity development work for such educators. Likewise, the attempts to get members of local communities to reflect on their circumstances and to explore social action in the realms of family and community life, also involve strengthening and transforming identities of citizen, woman and leader amongst other identities.

Personal Transformation

Working mainly with women in resource-poor and vulnerable contexts, the HRDD project attempted to lever various types of cognitive, behavioral and attitudinal change amongst learners and educators. Personal transformation was an explicit goal of the project. Its visions of fostering transformative learning, empowerment and active citizenship relate, in part, to the personal level of HRDD actors.

Social Change

The HRDD project was conceived at a particular historic moment in post-apartheid South Africa. It was fashioned to serve as a catalyst for social change within families, communities and

the country. The different parts of the project namely, “human rights, democracy and development”, reveal the aspects of social change envisioned by the project.

The Four-Way Arrow Connecting the Goals

With the HRDD project located at the center of the framework, the four-way arrow at the heart of the framework connects the four goals.

The four-way arrow depicts an interconnectedness of learning, identity development, personal transformation and social change. Each goal of the framework influences the others in dynamic ways. Learning and identity formation are seen as simultaneous processes that influence each other and which, in tandem, create energy for personal and social change. Likewise, personal transformation and social change (or the lack of these) influence learning and identity development. Such dynamic interconnectedness is highlighted by Manicom and Walters (2012: 19) when reflecting on perspectives on feminist popular education which see “self- and social transformation . . . not as temporarily or analytically separate moments but as located within the same frame of praxis, co-implicated and mutually constituting”. The four-way arrow represents the type of co-implication and mutuality described by Manicom and Walters amongst the four project goals.

As a heuristic, it is possible to use this framework to depict arrows of varying lengths to reflect the relative strength of the relationships between the different goals. Future studies may thus also harness such heuristic properties of the framework for purposes of evaluation of development projects and for theorization of such interventions.

The Four Project Strategies in the Framework

Interspersed amongst the four goals and surrounding the four-way arrows are the four project strategies. Interviews with project partners and examination of project documents, such as reports from partners and project proposals, convey insights into the theoretical and educational underpinnings of the project. This allowed for the identification of four key project strategies, namely reflection, dialogue, action and relationships. These strategies were envisaged as fostering and supporting the realization of project goals and thus constitute an enabling pedagogical environment within the micro system of the project.

Reflection

The project placed emphasis on fostering critical reflection on the life circumstances of actors; their roles and potential roles as citizens in a country embracing freedom, democracy and human rights; their positions as women in marginalized contexts; their practices in ABET classes and livelihood projects; and a range of other activities within and outside of the HRDD project. The ongoing research activity in the project was also part of an overall design of reflective practices. In these ways, reflection is a pedagogical strategy that mediates the goals of learning, identity formation and personal and societal change (Mezirow 1991). Reflection becomes a source of new meanings, for becoming learners, educators, active citizens, leaders, assertive women (identity formation), and thus can facilitate change at individual and social levels (Freire 1970). Reflection on such change, or the lack of it and/or the need for further change, all provide new material and experiences for further learning and identity development.

Dialogue

The concept of dialogue operates as a pedagogic strategy in similar fashion to reflection. The HRDD project set out to create spaces for dialogue to occur throughout the project and amongst various actors and community groups (Rule 2004). Some project activities also sought to create dialogue across the boundary of the HRDD project. Dialogue is integral to the four goals in the framework. Dialogue mediates learning and identity formation as actors construct shared and new meanings. Dialogue shapes the becoming of learners, educators and active citizens (Freire 1970). Dialogue allows for action to be tested, planned and evaluated, and thus mediates personal transformation and social change. Change, or the lack of change, also fosters further dialogue amongst actors.

The ABET classes and livelihood project meetings became important spaces for reflection and dialogue. The curriculum focus on human rights, in particular the rights of women, was designed to get women to reflect deeply and critically on their circumstances and how they could secure their rights and strive for greater freedoms.

Action

The HRDD project is an action-oriented project. It sought to develop active learners and educators who would feel confident and able to take action to improve their lives. The project activities of ABET classes and livelihood projects were designed to provide safe spaces for people to consider and take both individual and collective action, and thus develop the capacity to take action in the wider world. Action, together with reflection and dialogue, makes the HRDD a space for learning the art and power of praxis (Freire 1970) in order that personal and social change become lifelong endeavors for HRDD actors. People learn and become through acting within the HRDD project and the wider world. The project's goals of human rights, democracy and development provide a social vision and catalyst for action in the project. Action in the HRDD project was primarily about personal transformation in terms of becoming literate, numerate, gaining a basic qualification and improving livelihoods; social change in terms of taking citizen action and creating community projects; and social justice in terms of advancing and securing human rights.

Relationships

Relationships were an important aspect of learning and identity development in the project. Relationships also shape personal and social change. The learning theories of Freire (1970), Mezirow (1991) and Wenger (1998) all point to the importance of relationships in the learning environment. Learning is directly related to relationships in families, organizations, communities and broader societal structures. Learning activities in the HRDD project create new relationships. Relationships also shape identity formation by being tied to learning. The potential and capacity for personal and social change can also be seen to be tightly connected to notions of trust, reciprocity and the rules which flow from relationships and networks, as discussed in social capital theory (Bourdieu 1986; Putnam 1993; John 2011).

The Four Macro-System Forces

The area immediately outside the HRDD circle represents the macro environment in the province of KZN. The four significant forces operating in the KZN context are poverty, patriarchy,

power struggles and its post-conflict status. The four goals are all tightly framed by the KZN context, where these forces simultaneously propel (by virtue of serving as a rationale) and constrain (by virtue of serving as barriers) the project. This latter property endows the framework with dialectic properties in that the forces can have dual, sometimes opposing effects, of being both constraining and catalyzing.

A discussion of each of the four macro-system forces follows. To illustrate how these forces emerged in the study, selective quotations from learners and educators in the project are offered. While most learners and educators provided several rich and powerful statements about the effects of poverty, patriarchy, power struggles and the post-conflict status of KZN on their lives and participation in the HRDD project, due to length limitations only a few illustrative quotations on the different forces are included.

Poverty

The extent to which poverty features in the narratives of learners and educators highlights it as a major force in the HRDD macro system.

In the case of the learner Zinhle, her promising school career was cut short because of poverty and the way in which her poverty was stigmatized in her school and used as a basis of exclusion. Zinhle's reflections below also show the close links between poverty and education levels of rural women and how disadvantage is reproduced from generation to generation.

During our time each person bought their own book. I was told to leave the class due to not having a book during the lessons. The teacher said I am disturbing other learners because I do not have books. All those things led me to take a decision to leave school so that I can work and fend for myself. Eventually my parents died and I looked after my siblings. I could not support their schooling because I earn little money here in the farm . . . It was not my parents who said I should leave. I took the decision to leave because I realized I was not learning anything . . . I was very disturbed during class time because even the other children were laughing at me when they saw me sitting outside during class. They were laughing at me because I did not have anything. I was like a fool because each and every lesson I was sent outside.

Malindi, an educator in the project, echoes these painful memories of poverty and how it affected her schooling:

I wasn't happy at all. I wish I was accepted for who I was. I had no uniform, no books, no shoes, you see? . . . Teachers had a very bad tendency of looking down upon us just because we were poor. Maybe we were not lucky to have good teachers. If you did not have uniform you would be made to stand in front.

Rural families often become locked in poverty traps that are hard to break out of, and thus they acquire an intergenerational character. Zinhle and Malindi were marginalized and discriminated against because of their family's poverty. Zinhle, a woman farmworker, and Malindi, a part-time educator in the HRDD project, were looking to the HRDD project to assist them in trying to break the cycle of poverty in their lives. They both spoke of these motivations for participating in the HRDD project and of wanting their children to have better futures. This is an example of how the forces in the macro system serve as a propelling force in a project by

motivating people to participate. Poverty is, however, also a barrier to participation as is evident when the need to earn better incomes often took learners and educators away from the project.

Patriarchy

Most learners expressed regret about the termination of their own schooling and the cause of their low level of literacy attainment. Learners reported that they enjoyed school but were often forced to drop out because of a combination of factors such as poverty, gender discrimination and the generally low value placed on education within the family. For the girl child, patriarchal values strongly influenced the amount of schooling which they were allowed. Many of the learners' narratives, like that of Dora's presented below, involve implicit critiques of the patriarchal value systems which led to them being denied an education.

We were staying at my granny's at Mpolweni. My father was drinking one day. When he was drunk he saw little girls of my age playing with the boys. He said his child would do the same and vowed to take us out of school . . . In the olden days, husbands were the only people who could give a final word, the wives could not argue. He came to school, I was with my younger sister, he took me out of class in standard 6 and my sister in standard 5. We went out of class and stayed at home until today. I'm now keen to attend adult classes because I like to have knowledge even though I'm old.

The case study findings showed that such early experiences of patriarchal power were followed by similar discrimination and subjugation in adult life. Learners' participation in the HRDD project was also controlled by patriarchal values and prejudice as revealed in the following statement from an educator, Malindi, who was concerned about how her learner's domestic situation was affecting learning:

it was affecting me because this person was a learner you see and she would arrive in class and was very quiet. I realised . . . this person has a problem. Some days she would learn, other days she would battle to learn. Then I asked, "Exactly what is your problem?" She said, "Miss, I have a problem at home. Things are not going right". Then I told her that I used to notice [that she was troubled] but that I ignored it. I asked her why is she not saying anything. She said she can't, she is a woman and she is married. Ja, then I saw that and I was hurt because it was also affecting me to find that, no, this is my sister; I need to help her so that she can live better.

Power Struggles

Power struggles between different political parties and systems of governance in local communities are a feature of the KZN context. This is a force that is often hidden yet extremely powerful and debilitating. In the contest for leadership positions, influence and material rewards, several power struggles emerge and constrain the development arena. Development gains become a bargaining tool and a way of entrenching one's own leadership position.

A learner, Nothando, invokes a powerful image of the futility and reward-less nature of power struggles in her community through the metaphor of animals competing for a meatless bone:

The politicians . . . Inkatha, ANC, NADECO, they stop whoever brings development in the area because everyone wants to bring development under the umbrella of their organizations. This is what disadvantages us. . . . There should be no fighting over a “meatless bone” through politics, because it takes us back.

Another learner, Phumzile, is also critical of how political differences affect development and forge division. She argues for solidarity in her community and for identities which transcend political affiliation:

The community must unite and leave politics aside because it is not always needed because the community involves everyone, whether you stay in a particular area, where[ever] you work, but you are needed by the community. The community needs individuals not politics.

Khosi, an educator, explained how the political division and suspicion affects her development work:

Since I am under another Inkosi [traditional leader] there are people of this area who do not understand what I am doing here. . . . Some people have a tendency of thinking that I work for political parties.

Development interventions in a post-conflict context, whether initiated by the state or civil society, rarely play out according to the collaborative, participatory, partnership models envisaged in policy and funding documents. Development becomes caught up in local power struggles and development workers have to negotiate this difficult development terrain. Despite the official rhetoric of being pro-development, local leaders often seek to control development and choose who is to be involved and who is to benefit. Development thus becomes part of systems of patronage, hegemony and very often corruption too. The comments from HRDD facilitators presented below reveal how local leaders often questioned and frustrated their development efforts and often would only sanction such efforts if the leaders could take credit for the development gains.

Post-Conflict Status

The province of KwaZulu-Natal, home to the HRDD project, is a province marked by political division and violent power struggles. During the 1980s and early 1990s, this division manifested in some of the worst violence in South Africa. According to Aitchison (2003a: 47), during this war “thousands of people had lost their lives and homes and a deep bitterness had infected the life of the province”. Dubbed the “Natal War”, this period of violence claimed the lives of approximately 7,500 people and left a wake of destruction and trauma (Jeffery 1997; Aitchison 2003a, b). The main protagonists in this conflict were the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), supported by the apartheid state, and the United Democratic Front (UDF), associated with the then-banned African National Congress (ANC) (Aitchison, 2003a, b). Currently, the division only occasionally leads to violence (like during election time), but tends to permeate all aspects of civic life in more enduring and subtle ways. The history of political violence has left a seemingly permanent scar on communities and individuals, which is visible in how people relate to each other, value each other and negotiate daily activities within the HRDD project and the rest of their lives.

The fact that KwaZulu-Natal now carries the status of a post-conflict context is often forgotten and ignored in development planning. This is another of the hidden forces of the KZN development context. Yet this status and its consequences are an ever-present reality for local communities and development practitioners.

A number of learners survived violent experiences as children and adults in both home and community contexts. Political violence has meant that learners have been displaced (sometimes repeatedly). Many lost their meagre possessions through political violence. Such loss, trauma and displacement are features of family history in KwaZulu-Natal as recounted by this learner, Dora:

I didn't stay even a year in my new place when the political violence started. The people from Sobantu used to attack the people in Sweetwaters. [I] felt unsafe because I am from Sobantu. We decided to relocate to Emkhambathini at Ntembeni just underneath Maqongqo Mountain. My husband was busy working on a site when he was approached by four men. They asked him why we relocated. They said to him that he must not build any further because they will kick all the new residents out. They said we would be the first one to be kicked out. We had bought all the building material at the time. We left everything there and relocated to Howick.

These painful narratives of learners were very similar to those of educators in the project, as revealed in the following statement by Nokthula:

We stayed in our shack . . . behind the Stadium . . . violence erupted. Where I was staying. . . . Whenever I went to school there were these boys who were always asking me why I was not coming to them when they were calling me. They accused me of being anti-ANC . . . One day they decided to necklace me with a car tyre . . . fortunately there was a person who was my mother's friend . . . that person saw me. . . . the painful part is that eventually they killed that person. My mother decided that we should leave . . . since she was about to lose me too.

Effects of Macro-System Forces on the HRDD Project

Experiences of political violence and power struggles in KwaZulu-Natal appear to hold a historical and contemporary significance in learners' and educators' lives. Following massive and enduring deprivations and dislocations caused by colonial and apartheid rule, the period of political violence in the 1980s and 1990s compounded and extended the material, social and psychological vulnerabilities of people in KwaZulu-Natal.

The narratives of learners and educators in the HRDD project are strongly marked by political violence. This historical and contemporary presence of violence in the lives of adult learners and educators highlights the post-conflict character of KZN.

As indicated earlier, the history of the violence is not just a background contextual factor in the lives of educators. The violence, embedded in personal remembrance, is a sad and painful experience which is seen as being critical to who the learners are, what they have in material and educational terms (economic and cultural capital), how they relate to those around them, and in what they can do as citizens and community members. The violence continues to influence their present lives. The violence thus has everyday implications and features in the foreground of the HRDD stage. The stories (revealed below) told by learners of their violence-wracked

lives are significant for understanding their roles, learning and identities within the HRDD project, such as “We can’t work together if we hate each other” and “politics should be put aside for a while in order to carry on with development”, speak to the ongoing effects of violence.

The experiences of learners and educators discussed above provide reminders of the layered oppression and marginalization faced by adult learners and educators in the largely rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Such a milieu is a well-spring of barriers to participation in education and development initiatives. Learners’ and educators’ narratives reveal that the economic, social and educational deprivation experienced by them in their early years was followed by similar and often worse conditions in adulthood.

Several learners and educators spoke of the absence of trust and solidarity in the communities in which they conduct their HRDD work and of how these conditions hamper their efforts. Many have to contend with ongoing suspicion and fear about their motives and the purpose of their work. Their political allegiances are often questioned, and this constrains their development efforts. The political tensions make recruitment and ongoing participation of learners a serious challenge. One of the contradictions of this community development effort was that a new cadre of community development workers was trained and supported to facilitate empowering learning and livelihood projects with marginalized and oppressed women. Their experiences raised an important question: can community development workers, who do not themselves feel free, work successfully to facilitate empowerment and freedom within their communities? The HRDD experiences show that without good levels of trust and legitimacy which enable the freedom to implement development, the transformatory and empowerment edges of such work are blunted.

Development planning must be mindful of these highly divided and fearful contexts, as illustrated in the following statement from an educator in the project called Cosmos:

Our committee is not working . . . People focus on the politics . . . because the members of our committees are not of the same party . . . you find that I come from A, another from B, another comes from C. So we hate each other. Right here in the committee, so where is progress if we hate each other? We must love each other first, then we can work together. We can’t work together if we hate each other . . . Here, it is mostly politics that divides people. Only politics I see as a stumbling block to development. It is just it. There is no harmony.

Welcome, another educator, was sceptical of the politicians’ influence in discouraging learner participation in the project, saying:

Because they [councillors] are the ones who want to come up with everything. They don’t want somebody else to come with his own idea. They are the ones who want to come up with everything. If somebody comes up with other things they think he is going to overpower them . . . I wish that maybe politics should be put aside for a while in order to carry on with development.

While poverty and patriarchy are better accounted for in the development literature, less attention is given to how power struggles and the post-conflict status of KwaZulu-Natal act as powerful shapers and inhibitors in the development terrain. Mansuri and Rao (2004) have warned about elite capture in development, where powerful elites in a community garner an unfair share of development gains because of their status associated with their gender and/or education. Political elites, those holding political and community leadership positions, use development in

a similar fashion revealing the complexity and contradictions of development in a post-conflict context. Such elites may not only seek unfair gains from development interventions, but can use development to bolster systems of patronage and control over communities and future development. Such consolidation of their power helps them in future elections, enabling ongoing control over development in their constituencies.

Project planners, funders and scholars should pay more attention to these more hidden and more corrosive aspects of the macro system. Development in resource-constrained and divided contexts becomes deeply politicized and complex. In such contexts official pro-development rhetoric can mask covert agendas to control community actions and positions. Development and its associated rewards are often used to contest for and to secure power. Attention to these forces allows for a better understanding of the socio-political dynamics of the macro systems within which community development is situated.

Conclusion

Amartya Sen (1999) provides a useful conception for theorizing the type of community development in the HRDD project. In constructing *development as freedom*, Sen argues that the removal of substantial unfreedoms from people's lives constitutes development. He states:

Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states.

Sen 1999: 3

Sen views the expansion of people's freedoms as both the ends and the means of development. He shifts thinking about poverty in terms of material standards to lack of choice and of capability. This is a particularly useful perspective for the HRDD project, which sought to address the challenges of unfreedoms of women in patriarchal rural KwaZulu-Natal. The earlier discussion presented conditions of poverty and the notion of *learning in fear* in the HRDD project. These findings are most pertinent in the light of Sen's contention that development as freedom includes freedom from poverty and tyranny.

The SDGs seek "to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet" (United Nations 2015: 2). The emphasis on sustainability and peace in the SDGs has emerged from recognition of the ways in which conflict and power-struggles constrain development at local levels, causing many countries to not achieve their MDG targets. This has occurred within development paradigms such as "conflict-sensitive development and aid" (International Alert 2004). Greater attention to the macro-system forces in all development interventions will be crucial in meeting the next set of goals. This is particularly so in post-conflict contexts. The constraining effects of conflict can extend long into what we typically might call the post-conflict stage. Conflict fragments and disables social networks, relationships and systems of trust, which are known to be important for development. Instead, conflict often energizes systems of mistrust, fear and even sabotage, which impede development and create toxic development arenas. The experiences in the HRDD project show that community development workers encounter serious challenges in navigating this complex, contradictory, hostile and fragile space. These experiences also show that the real constraints faced by development workers on the ground may be masked by official pro-development rhetoric of powerful leaders who may want to use development in acts of power, patronage and control. Monitoring and evaluation systems of SDGs and all development must therefore allow for the

voices of the less powerful to be heard. Beyond this, there is a need for powerful elites to be held accountable for their roles in development.

South Africa requires more attention and resources to be devoted to development initiatives, particularly in rural communities. Such development planning must not only focus on the development goals and strategies. It is critical that attention is also given to understanding the local context and how the socio-political dynamics of such macro systems are likely to shape development plans. In such exploration of the context, underlying forces such as power struggles and the post-conflict character of an area must be identified alongside others like poverty and patriarchy. Development interventions attempting important and much-needed change can benefit from identifying all significant forces in project planning, implementation and evaluation phases. Scholars of such work should likewise include such forces in their systems frameworks.

This chapter presented a systems framework that allows for development goals, project strategies and macro-system forces to be explored in relationship to each other. While the framework was developed from a specific project in the KwaZulu-Natal context, it can serve as a heuristic for other community development interventions. In this way the framework may serve as a conceptual device for exploring development interventions aimed at eliminating poverty and securing greater freedoms in contexts of patriarchal and political tyranny.

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PART VII

Engagement and Knowledge



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF LARGE-SCALE DATA

Integrating Quantitative Data and Community Engagement

John J. Green

Introduction

Demographic, socioeconomic and health data have long been used as part of the development process (Schweber 2006). However, rapid increases in computing power, the spread of the Internet and advances in administrative data management have contributed to governments, businesses and third-sector civil society organizations all producing and having access to more data and subsequent information than ever before in the history of humankind. In this context, development practitioners are being asked to report and use empirical data to inform decision-making. However, the interactive processes for analyzing and interpreting data, especially among non-data specialists, are not keeping up with the exponential increases in the overwhelming volume of data (Kitchin 2014). This will leave those places behind that do not have the human capital and infrastructures in place to effectively utilize data for problem solving.

At the same time, community-based, action-oriented and other participatory approaches to research are getting more attention. While certainly not the norm, these approaches have entered a period of acceptance. Courses, peer-reviewed journals, books and funding requests now call for community-engaged projects connecting researchers, students, community residents and their organizations.

Although these changes—large-scale data and community-engaged research—are taking place in the same era, there is a gap between the currency, range and volume of data available on one side and access to and utilization of these data to inform community development initiatives on the other side. The technology and computational science exist and improve rapidly, but the human capital, social and organizational infrastructure and interactive processes to utilize these resources for more effective community development problem solving are limited and slow to change at best. For these reasons, community development scholars need to focus increased attention toward better understanding of the intersections between large-scale data and community concerns and working with development practitioners, their community

partners and students to build the capacity needed to better harness and utilize data in the information age.

A Framework for Thinking about Data and Community Development

The human/social development framework is concerned with people's capabilities to pursue lives that are fulfilling, healthy and ultimately sustainable (Sen 1999; Nussbaum, 2011; Venkatapuram, 2011). According to the Capabilities Approach, understanding demographic, socioeconomic and health data is essential to livelihood development if we are to address deprivations while also working to enhance capabilities (Sen 1995, 1999). Put succinctly, data matter for development.

With rapid computation and communication technological changes, having data management structures and skills is increasingly important. Education, skills and organization are needed for data to be utilized to inform development strategies so they can be effective and efficient and lead to better use of scarce public resources. Evans (2014) addressed this concerning the role of the state in national development. The same is true for more localized development initiatives.

Big data scholars (Zikopoulos et al. 2012; Kitchin 2014) have noted that, relative to the growing production of data, there is shrinkage in the actual proportion of data that is analyzed and interpreted. Compared to the demand for people with the requisite skills, there is also a shortage of human capital in the form of data analysts who can move between raw data, information and the actual production of knowledge (Kitchin 2014). Analysis and application are of special importance for organizational development, since big data really only have value to decision makers when they can be reduced and analyzed to "become small data" (Huang & Huang 2015: 101).

Unfortunately, existing statistical analysis education and skill development are not equally distributed. As with the issue of literacy as part of the broader empowerment process (Freire 1974/2013), some social movements have focused on teaching numeracy in ways that build capabilities at the grassroots level for critical analysis and problem solving (e.g. Moses & Cobb 2001; Gutstein 2006). Expanding on these efforts, more work is needed concerning numeracy and data utilization for community development and using these insights to construct community-engagement processes for development initiatives.

Data in the Information Age and Beyond

Literature on "big data" includes attempts to differentiate them from so-called "small data" in terms of volume, velocity and variety (Kitchin 2014). Data sources are included across the realms of individual consumer behaviors, general economic transactions, social media and electronic health records. Additionally, crowdsourced data are increasing, and combined with other forms of big data, Hammett et al. (2015) consider that this may symbolize "a movement away from an information age, with lots of data, to the idea of a knowledge age, where information and data are converted into knowledge through a collective crowdsourced voice" (231). Of special interest to big data enthusiasts are the near real-time access that can be provided and the need for major computing power. However, with technological developments such as advanced personal computer capacity and cloud computing, these distinctions are relative and the thresholds change over time (Huang & Huang 2015).

Along with the growth of big data there have been expansions and enhancements with aggregated secondary data at the neighborhood, city, county, state and national levels. Web-

based search engines and analysis tools abound (e.g. AmericanFactfinder), social and health indicator initiatives are popular (Kids Count, County Health Rankings), and even the 2020 US Census will make use of administrative data and collect some data online. The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey is one of the world's largest ongoing household surveys conducted on an annual basis for more than a decade, and it provides standardized data at multiple levels of geography. Funding agencies often require non-profit organizations to use these various sources of data for assessment and evaluation, sometimes even mandating the use of particular data sources as part of grant applications.

Considering these ever-changing and expanding data sources and systems, the term "large-scale data" may be used as an umbrella term. While not perfect, large-scale data encompasses both big data and more traditional data efforts, such as vital records, censuses and major surveys that provide secondary, typically aggregated data at multiple levels of geography.

Although efforts to increase access to large-scale data and processed information are plentiful, the volume of materials and the expertise needed to actually use them can be limiting. Advanced education and training in computer programming and statistical analysis are often required to make sense of and utilize these sources. This has created numerous business opportunities, with new software and consulting firms emerging to meet growing demand. However, coupled with the ongoing challenges of the "digital divide", some people, communities and even nation states are better able than others to use data.

Still, there has been a movement for community-based, action-oriented and participatory approaches to research on development issues, referred to here as "community-engaged research". Under various frameworks, the movement has focused on community residents, development practitioners and researchers collaborating to inform social change and development from grassroots perspectives (Kleiner et al. 2012; Stoecker 2013). The goals of these efforts have been to address persistent challenges such as low educational attainment, poverty, poor health and concerns over food security and sustainability from people's lived experiences. Interestingly, the community-engaged research movement has grown in a fairly independent manner from the realm of large-scale data. Some of the disconnect may stem from the perceived invasiveness of such large data systems, criticisms of quantitative research objectifying people and their experiences, and assumptions that participatory and action research should primarily be qualitative in nature (Chambers 1997/2009; Stringer 2007). The result has been that many community-engaged research programs have not used broader quantitative data, and those tools are often built without community-level input (Green 2012). This results in potentially lower-quality data that are less likely to be considered trustworthy.

There are exceptions to this general pattern. For example, Zimmerman and Meyer (2005) noted the value of integrating Internet access with locally relevant socioeconomic data sources to inform the community development process and actually re-engage people with the places where they live. Additionally, researchers have worked to direct the power of geographic information systems (GIS) to inform participatory development (Brown & Kytta 2014). At the point of data collection, Chambers (2007) reviewed efforts to take participatory strategies in innovative ways that integrate local knowledge through people's lived experience. This analysis was expanded in the book edited by Holland (2013) appropriately titled, *Who Counts? The Power of Participatory Statistics*.

Efforts conducted as part of "collective impact" initiatives (Kania & Kramer 2011, 2013) do involve attention to data as part of their call for shared measurement. Furthermore, the "lean data" approach developed by Acumen focuses on efficiently and strategically collecting and utilizing data to inform decision making to create value (Acumen 2015; Dichter et al. 2016). A special issue of *Community Development* (Walzer et al. 2016), the official peer-reviewed journal

of the Community Development Society, addresses these advancements in both theory and method.

Although not exclusively the case, many of these efforts assume the collection and analysis of primary data with less attention to accessing and utilizing secondary data to inform development initiatives. Transcending the quantitative–qualitative divide in community development processes has been part of my own research and practice (see Green 2012), and I have worked to integrate community-engaged research with the functions of a State Data Center in the University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies for several years. Based on personal experiences working on these projects and review of the relevant literature, and drawing from my experience as editor of *Community Development*, several important questions arise from these changes, tensions and opportunities concerning data.

- In what ways and to what extent are large-scale data being used to inform community development initiatives? What are the challenges to this work?
- In what ways and to what extent are large-scale data initiatives encompassing community-engaged research methods to inform their data collection tools or processes?
- What organizational structures and processes have been initiated to provide education and build analytic skills through community-engagement processes?
- Can connecting large-scale data with community-engagement processes better inform development policies and programs?

These questions need to be addressed by community development scholars. If data are to be used to inform development policies and practices, then it is this field's responsibility to critically analyze and help to improve data, data systems and data analysis capabilities.

Looking to the Future

Recognizing that the quantity, scope and accessibility of data are all rapidly changing in this era of large-scale data, what are the roles for community development scholars and practitioners in helping others to use data to inform their work? A gap exists, and it is getting wider, between what is possible technologically and computationally and the capabilities that non-data specialists have individually and collectively to effectively utilize data for problem solving. This is where a combination of technical assistance and participatory processes could make a difference.

Addressing data needs broadly, Kitchin (2014) maintains that four kinds of expertise are needed: (1) domain expertise, (2) data expertise, (3) analytical expertise and (4) project management expertise. These needs are evident in the field of community development, but there is also a fifth kind of expertise needed: process expertise. Community development scholars, while needing to continuously strengthen and expand their data and analytical areas of expertise to take advantage of new opportunities and meet new challenges, also bring their own important domain expertise that could contribute to better utilization of large-scale data. Having contextualized, often place-based, knowledge of social structures and interactions largely drawn from case studies may help build more nuanced and deeper understandings of the world, and participatory processes are essential to this work. As Kitchin observes, “It is one thing to identify patterns; it is another to explain them, which requires social theory and deep contextual knowledge” (2014: 144).

Therefore, combining these needs, more community development scholars should:

- Work to transcend the traditional qualitative–quantitative divide in research and focus attention on more multi-method, holistic and complementary designs and methods.

- Better integrate and synthesize what is learned from place-based case studies and comparative case studies with larger-scope studies that use vital records, administrative records, surveys and social media.
- Continuously expand and enhance data management and data analysis knowledge and skills to address the challenges and opportunities in the ever-changing data landscape.
- Build on the rich tradition of developing, facilitating and coaching community processes for effective problem solving and asset building, emphasizing and prioritizing the importance of diversity, inclusion and active engagement.

By addressing the quickly developing data landscape and knowledge environment, community development scholars will be able to help community residents, diverse stakeholders and policymakers to better utilize data to make more informed decisions. Enhancing and expanding expertise in the area of what might be called “data utilization facilitation”, community development practitioners will help build more participatory, engaging and empowering approaches to community engagement with data.

We are heeding this advice here in Mississippi, if in small ways. Through ongoing trial and error, we have been working with the Rogosin Institute’s Center for Health Action and Policy to build on the Problem Solving for Better Health® methodology (Green et al. 2014; Smith et al. 2011) now used in 32 countries around the world. Drawing on lessons learned from youth engagement, we are working with youth and adults to develop a Problem Solving for Data Utilization approach. From community workshops to university classrooms, we are attempting to build participatory processes into statistical data outreach, education and application. Efforts such as this, when considered together, may result in a broader movement.

To conclude, the words shared in a recent textbook on development research should be treated as instructive (Hammett et al. 2015): “In sum, the ready availability of massive datasets and the tools and methods to analyze them is beginning to have (and will undoubtedly continue to have) transformative effects on research in the contexts of development” (p. 239). The present essay is intended to help scholars think through these intersections and chart a course for continued improvement and data utilization to shape community development.

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COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Interfacing with Government to Create a Small Business Incubator

Teresa Córdova

Introduction

Community development requires collaborations. In many of those collaborations, government is key. In fact, some projects are possible only with the involvement of government, in which case, the community developer who knows how to interface with those in government has a better chance of getting the community development work accomplished. This chapter describes a community economic development endeavor to promote self-employment as a strategy to build community and household wealth through a small business incubator and commercial kitchen. Through this depiction of reflective practice, insights and lessons are detailed on how to effectively engage with government while doing community development, providing value to both planning practice and planning education. The chapter concludes with lessons from this example that could apply in a different, larger urban context, particularly where there are neighborhoods still suffering the effects of disinvestment and deindustrialization and in much need of community economic development strategies.

This case study is set in an unincorporated area southwest of and adjacent to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Comprised of centuries-old villages, the South Valley is 80 percent Latino (Chicano, Hispano and Mexican). Its semi-rural character reflects cultural evidence of a long history, small-scale agricultural activity and traditional cultural values. Nonetheless, it also has high rates of unemployment and social indicators of poverty (Bernalillo County 2001: 2). Beginning in 1996, a local community development corporation (CDC) embarked on a several-year project to establish a small business incubator and commercial kitchen. In early 2005, the South Valley Economic Development Center (SVEDC) opened its doors and today maintains its mission “to provide facilities, resources, and training to support the development of new and expanding small businesses that will create jobs and foster economic revitalization of the South Valley community, while preserving the heritage and culture of the community” (Rio Grande Community Development Corporation 2016).

The scope of this chapter does not include an evaluation of the SVEDC, but does provide the description of the process to actualize this small business incubator and commercial kitchen. Who were the agents of this process—i.e. who were the actors that made it happen? What key relationships were formed and how? How was the authority of the state (the government) used to move the process and what were the obstacles? What did it take to get the resources? What role did the community development organization have to play? What actions resulted in what results? What were the characteristics of the process and what generalities might we extract? Finally, what might we say about this process that would enable us to apply the lessons to another context?

This story of establishing the South Valley Economic Development Center takes us from vision and goals to a plan, through execution to achievement. So often histories get lost or rewritten because the actors involved do not write the stories. This account of the South Valley Economic Development Center is written by a key participant in the formation of the Center based on numerous documents spanning over twenty years, from personal memory, and from triangulation with other key actors.

The Context

The South Valley is an unincorporated area of Bernalillo County and according to the 2000 census (which is the relevant time period to describe), 34,499 of its 45,190 inhabitants (76 percent) identified as Hispanic. The following provides more details:

In the South Valley, 23 percent of households live below the poverty level, while 11 percent of households with children under the age of five are below the poverty level (U.S. Census 1990). Thirty-five percent of the South Valley population is under the age of 18 years old. Of those aged 25 and up, almost 40 percent did not graduate from high school and 75% have an educational level of high school or less (1990 U.S. Census). In 1999, Rio Grande High School cluster had 9042 children enrolled. Over 80% (7233) of these children were on the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

Bernalillo County, 2001

The economic challenges of the area are evidenced by a low labor force participation rate, made worse by inadequate education and training. Inadequate transportation options also limit the ability for many to seek work outside the valley. Economic leakage also characterizes the area, as dollars of its residents are typically spent in other parts of the metropolitan area. According to several surveys including ones conducted by the University of New Mexico's Resource Center for Raza Planning (RCRP), the agricultural sector—despite its decline or perhaps because of it—was highly valued by South Valley residents and was seen as both a contributing factor for economic decline and an opportunity for enhancing economic opportunity. Similarly, the small business sector was consistently highlighted in planning documents and studies as highly valued.¹

Yet, according to the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation (RGCDC) funding application documents, “inadequate retail space is a major impediment to small business development”. In 1999, 40 percent of Valley business licenses approved were for businesses run out of homes:

When and if these home based entrepreneurs decide to open a commercial site, they must compete for limited unattractive rental space, construct their own site or open up in nearby Albuquerque. When this happens, consumers must also travel outside

the Valley for major shopping, resulting in economic leakage. It means local dollars are spent outside the community making the South Valley more impoverished. Small business creation is critical if economic revitalization will ever be achieved.

Ibid.

Residents of the South Valley were concerned about encroachment from the City of Albuquerque, whose development policies had resulted in the annexation of key commercial areas into their tax base, away from the coffers of Bernalillo County who needed the revenue to provide the direct services and capital improvements to the area. Residents also worried that increased urbanization exacerbated the further conversion of agricultural land into residential or commercial uses.

The Key Community Development Actor

The Rio Grande Community Development Corporation (RGCDC) was formed in 1986 and incorporated as a 501C3 in 1987.

The mission of the RGCDC is to pursue community-wide healthy economic and social development that enriches traditional cultural values, historical uses of the land, and supports “the people’s voice in development” while reducing poverty through entrepreneurial enterprise.²

For much of its history, RGCDC has focused on addressing issues of community health and well-being and economic and social development through its highly committed volunteer board, key strategic partnerships and dedicated individuals who were in it for the long haul. Among those individuals is Julia Stephens (Board member and later Executive Director), an urban planner by training and who, while working for the University of New Mexico Hospital, strategically expressed her activism through community development projects and campaigns.

From its inception, RGCDC focused on promoting economic development through its small business sector. Some of RGCDC’s earliest activities in 1986 included a survey of 600 businesses in the South Valley, done in conjunction with the Hispano Chamber of Commerce. As a result of what they learned from the survey, RGCDC, with the South Valley Chamber of Commerce and the State Economic Development and Tourism Division, obtained a small grant and funds from local businesses to purchase advertising on 12 billboards as part of a “Buy Local” campaign.

In addition, by 1990, RGCDC started to sponsor a cultural event in the fall, the Festival de Otoño, which included an art and literature contest for K-12 children, an array of food and activities and, in the evening, the burning of the mystical Kookooee. Many old-timers remember the 1991 Festival, when RGCDC raffled a red pick-up truck, refurbished by a locally well-known lover of old cars. The event became an annual one and over twenty-five years later, the Kookooee, which is built every year by local artisans and craftsmen, is burned at sundown, along with the fears of valley residents who have put those fears on paper and placed them inside the wood-framed work of art. RGCDC continues to co-sponsor the event, but as it did with many projects, RGCDC incubated the Kookooee Community Education Association, which now organizes the event.

The Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, intent on supporting and enhancing the small business sector in the South Valley, “initiated and advocated for the funding and placement of the [South Valley Small Business Development Center] SVSBDC in 1994–95

as a building block for future economic development” (Stephens 2011). As plans for the small business incubator developed, so did the projection that the SVSBDC, funded by the US Small Business Administration (SBA) would be an anchor tenant and help provide the technical assistance to burgeoning and expanding businesses. In the meantime, RGCDC, with the help of student interns from the University of New Mexico’s Community and Regional Planning Program (CRP) and with nearly \$20,000 in contracts from the New Mexico Small Business Network, conducted another business survey and provided training and marketing for small businesses in the valley.

Planning with an Area in Mind

With its diligent focus on small business development as a strategy for enhancing community revitalization and well-being, the RGCDC began its work to revitalize a strategic intersection of two corridors in the northern end of the South Valley. Key to their vision was the design and construction of a gateway project and the establishment of a small business incubator as an anchor and a stimulus for the area. Their intention was to create a mechanism for government buy-in and strategies for funding. As a means to accomplish these goals, RGCDC sought a Metropolitan Redevelopment planning contract of almost \$50,000 from the City of Albuquerque’s Office of Development Services (ADS). Declaring the area an Enterprise Community opened doors for further funding. The relationship that RGCDC had built with the Director of ADS, Ken Balizer, was an important pathway for City of Albuquerque support of the RGCDC’s effort.

The planning process, with design and analysis by Dekker/Parich & Associates, included a wide spectrum of participants with overview from Rio Grande Community Development Corporation’s Board of Directors, a Citizens’ Advisory Council and a Technical Review Team.

The primary goals of the Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan were as follows (City of Albuquerque and County of Bernalillo 1997:14).

- Demonstrate and provide opportunities to enhance small business activity and increase employment opportunities within the community.
- Identify approaches and projects that could empower residents through further economic self-sufficiency and sustainability.
- Restore the economic and aesthetic values of existing retail and commercial nodes through linkages with architectural design and land use.
- Provide a framework for restoring the integrity and distinctive character of the neighborhood.

In its statement of goals, the Plan further declares,

From the beginning of these efforts it was recognized that achievement of any or all of these goals would require private, public, non-profit and community participation and cooperation. Furthermore, real success could be measured only by the number of employment, business, agricultural and self-employment opportunities for residents and owners which resulted from this process. Additional measures of success would also include improvement in the quality of life, the aesthetics of the neighborhood, and enhancements in perceived as well as actual public safety.

The planning effort initiated a community-driven planning process that identified and evaluated opportunities for the revitalization of the Bridge/Isleta corridors. This

bottom-up process was important in generating appropriate solutions for the issues and goals of the community.

Ibid.

About the process, the plan further states,

A citizen-driven participation process was designed for revitalization planning. The process provided for the realization of self-determination, community empowerment and control, while accomplishing the concrete tasks associated with the revitalization of the two boulevards.

Ibid.

The planning process involved multiple layers of community participation and technical input. Large community meetings, small committee work, surveys and newsletters to 500 households were primary vehicles of a community-driven process for a local government plan. RGCDC's role was in harnessing and building the capacity of residents to drive a municipal planning process, in combination with the relationships it built with individuals within key departments of city, county and even state government departments or positions.

Besides Julie Stephens, central to the process was RGCDC's executive director, Arturo Vasquez, who had moved to the South Valley from Chicago, where he had worked in the City of Chicago Office of Economic Development with its director, Rob Mier, during the Harold Washington Administration. Both had been professors at the University of Illinois at Chicago: Mier in Urban Planning and Policy and Vasquez in Latin American Studies. Arturo moved to Albuquerque after a stint when the two of them were doing consulting for the City of Albuquerque on economic development strategies.

Incubators had been a hallmark of Mier's approach to economic development in Chicago at a time when it was being hard hit by the shocks of manufacturing leaving Chicago abruptly and rapidly. From that context, the concept of a small business incubator as an economic development strategy appealed to Vasquez and he converged with the RGCDC's agenda to pursue this strategy.

On September 15, 1997, Albuquerque's nine-member City Council adopted the Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan. The mayor signed it exactly one month later. On November 18, 1997, the five-member Bernalillo County Board of County Commissioners adopted the Plan and the stage was set for creating the small business incubator. The Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan was dedicated to Arturo Vasquez, who died in late September.

In its implementation section, The Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan specifically states, "For a community to realize its community economic development goals it must have a strong, locally controlled community development corporation" (*ibid.* 52). The planning document goes on to state,

The role of the corporation is to shape private and public investment in the community to maximize the benefits to the existing community residents through careful planning and collaborative relations with local residents, business owners, private investors and public agencies invested with the power to assist development. This can only occur when there is a strong commitment on the part of local government to cooperate with local planning efforts and to support the local community development corporation in its efforts. This will increase equity in the distribution of resources, efficiency in the use of those resources, as well as effectiveness in achieving the goals

of a balanced development for the Albuquerque area, as well as development, which satisfies communities.

Ibid.

Noting its ten-year history of working in the community, the plan acknowledges that RGCDC “has developed positive working relationships with elected and appointed officials in the resolution of problems facing the South Valley. The implementation plan would build on those successes and relationships” (*ibid.*). Other RGCDC relationships are acknowledged including that with the Small Business Development Center. It is thus worth noting that relationships are key to building the process of realizing this community economic development enterprise.

The plan also explicitly states what should be the role of the government including providing “the full array” of incentives to the various local businesses. This could include assistance with façade improvement, fee waivers, land cost write-downs, job training funds and tax abatements. However, in the provision of these incentives, the implementation plan explicitly states that the role of the CDC will be the marketer of these incentives to “achieve the objectives” of the plan. “The incentives will provide the leverage necessary to negotiate compliance with the Plan objectives. With this assurance, the RGCDC can be effective in the implementation of the Revitalization Plan” (*ibid.*).

The plan is noteworthy in its detail on how the objective of the plan can be attained. For example, on the incubator itself, it provides a business pro-forma, calculating current revenue and anticipating both the costs and additional revenues. The plan also identifies possible government funding sources including the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act, Federal and State Enterprise Zone/Community funds, The US Economic Development Administration and Intermodal Surface Transformation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and State/Historic Highway Designation funds for infrastructure and streetscape improvements. In addition, the plan notes that the City of Albuquerque Capital Improvement Program (CIP) channels an array of funds including general obligation bonds and other funds using quarter of a cent gross receipts tax. This list includes Quality of Life Fund, Water/Wastewater and Solid Waste Funds. The Urban Enhancement Trust Fund was also identified. Funds through the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) are recommended, as are funds through a Business Improvement District.

This list of possible funding sources for the commercial revitalization of the area was available in 1997, at the time of the plan’s adoption. While many of these programs are no longer available, due primarily to the decline of federal and state funding for urban development, many still are and others have emerged. What is interesting is that the list reveals the significance of government funding to aid private sector small business development and commercial corridor revitalization.

It is almost certain that this partnership with local government was essential in realizing these goals of community and economic development. As a direct outcome of CDC efforts, government infusion included funding for infrastructure improvement, recreational and cultural investment, e.g. a gateway park, public art, historic markers and cultural and economic programming. This, in turn, created an environment that spurred economic activity and the ability to leverage additional funding for infrastructure projects, National Endowment for the Arts funding and the creation of a state funded Main Street project. Ample government support is critical in aiding the revitalization of a corridor that is deemed “blighted” and in need of revitalization.

Government support in these instances is not without its risks. The state’s Metropolitan Redevelopment legislation, for example, provides the means to identify and declare an area blighted and in doing so also grants rights to the local municipality, through powers of eminent

domain, to acquire the land within the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act (MRA) for redevelopment. This, of course, is reminiscent of the urban renewal programs, not so fondly referred to as “urban removal”, because so many vibrant working class communities, especially Black and Latino were declared “blighted” and then destroyed through means of the urban renewal programs. It is this power that promoted one commercial developer several years later to suggest to local government officials that they could use the power of the MRA to acquire the land, make it available to him and that he would tear down a multi-lot area for a large commercial development. When it was pointed out to him that there were currently small local businesses in the area that would be destroyed, his response was, “These are not business that my son would ever frequent”—a reminder of both the vulnerability of the MRA status and the importance of community vigilance.

It was the existence of the Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan, as well as the strategic involvement of individuals associated with the plan, that provided the protection against the unintended use of this Metropolitan Redevelopment Area. In this particular case, at the time of the passing of the Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan, the City of Albuquerque had an easier path to annexing land under the jurisdiction of Bernalillo County. In 2004, as a result of County lobbying, the state legislature passed a law affecting Class A counties (based on population size) that required Board of County Commission approval for city annexation. Between 1997 and 2004, however, these key commercial corridors could have been annexed and placed under city jurisdiction, leading perhaps to a scale of urbanized development that might have been out of sync with stated goals of residents to preserve its semi-rural and historical character. Additionally, city annexation of commercial property meant a loss to County coffers that could potentially be used to reinvest back in the area. Such are the risks associated with partnering with government. Yet the plan itself, even though not binding as a land use policy document, provided the framework for further development of the corridors and for years to come was referenced as the guiding document for the area. The extent to which this is true, however, is also very much a function of organizational and individual awareness and vigilance to protect and apply the goals and strategies of the plan.

This is not the only risk, however, that RGCDC took in its partnership with local government, as we shall see as the story unfolds. Nonetheless, it is important to note, as we examine a community development effort involving interfacing with government, that the diligence and discipline of the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation was essential in putting this strategy in place as a key step in achieving both the revitalization of the commercial corridor and the establishing of the small business incubator. A community-driven government planning document established the framework for defining the future of the strategic intersection of these two significant corridors. Moreover, the plan defined implementation steps and funding possibilities for RGCDC.

Moving Forward and Taking the Initial Steps

In the Revitalization Plan, the location of the incubator was designated to be at the intersection of the two corridors and at the site of an historically meaningful grocery store, La Familia Market. The vision was that the incubator would serve as a gateway to the South Valley. Concurrent with—and perhaps even because of—the plan, Bernalillo County pursued the redevelopment of Isleta Boulevard to be done in two phases. Phase I begins at the point of the intersection and at the northern point of Isleta Boulevard, a historic route that had once been the Camino Real and before that a route connecting indigenous groups as far south as Mexico City. As part of the Isleta Boulevard Improvement Project, the flow of traffic would be addressed and curb

and gutter would be added to a road that had none. As part of this drainage element, the County partnered with the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA) to create a detention pond and series of surge ponds throughout the strip. The gateway site was purchased by AMAFCA for the major detention project for the project. RGCDC worked with both the County and AMAFCA on whether the plans could still include the incubator. As an alternative, RGCDC continued to push for the concept of this location as a gateway to the Valley asserting that the detention pond could be designed in a way that served multi-purpose functions besides the detention pond.

Later, because of this author's involvement with RGCDC and in a position of County Commissioner herself, her first act was to secure the property adjoining the AMAFCA property to create a large parcel of land that after a community design process led by UNM's Resource Center for Raza Planning and the Landscape Architecture Program, set into motion the creation of a gateway park at the start of Isleta Boulevard and the point where it met Bridge Boulevard. While the groundbreaking commenced under her leadership, the park/pond dedication occurred shortly after the next commissioner took office (2009).

The particulars of this piece of the story point to the importance of connecting the various redevelopment efforts. It is often the case that, even across government agencies, one does not know what the other is doing. Yet the CDC can be involved enough to know and has the potential to fluidly build knowledge and relations with various actors. The gateway park that now sits at the Bridge/Isleta Boulevard intersection is a direct outcome of the Revitalization Planning process and the active engagement of the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, which continued to stay focused on its goal of a small business incubator.

Indeed, RGCDC, working in partnership with local and state governments, obtained Community Enterprise and State Legislative money that enabled it to continue the planning process and very importantly, acquire the land to locate the incubator. With this site no longer available, RGCDC stayed firm in its commitment to locate the project along the corridor. To that end, the CDC connected establishing the incubator to the revitalization of the corridor. After its concerted search and at least one failed attempt, the RGCDC was able to purchase 2.2 acres at a site—with an odd configuration—just south of the strategic intersection.

With a site chosen, and money in hand from Community Enterprise and State Legislative funds, RGCDC was able to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an architect to work with community members to develop an initial design. After receiving a set of strong proposals, including award-winning firms, RGCDC selected Lee Gamelsky. A major reason for this selection was because RGCDC believed that he would have the inclination and the patience to work alongside a community advisory group to make sure the design reflected another community-driven process.

Meanwhile, RGCDC had to concurrently work on obtaining the money that it would take to construct the incubator. As recommended in the Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the US Department of Commerce was a likely source for funding, particularly given the focus on the targeted location and population that the incubator would serve. In an incidental but what RGCDC determined a necessary step to demonstrate government support for the small business incubator, RGCDC worked with the then County Commissioner to pass a resolution declaring County support for a small business incubator and "related economic development projects to increase business and job opportunities in the Southwest Valley". The Resolution, 18–2001, was passed in early 2001 and later was used to demonstrate local government support in subsequent funding requests from the federal government.

As already stated, one strength of the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation was its ability to form strategic partnerships. One such partnership that proved to be critical in realizing the dream of the small business incubator, was that with the Resource Center for Raza Planning (RCRP), based in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of New Mexico. Students from the Community and Regional Planning Program (CRP) over a several-year period had volunteered or had been employed with the RGCDC or had interfaced with them while they wrote their professional projects for their Master's degree. Angela Acosta, for example, in May 1996, produced a project for RGCDC entitled *Planning in the South Valley: previous Efforts, Obstacles and Plan Implementation Strategies*.³ Professor Paul Lusk, a resident of the South Valley, was active in planning issues in the Valley and had served on the Technical Review Team of the Revitalization Plan. This author, a CRP professor and Director of RCRP, was invited to join the RGCDC Board of Directors in early 1998 and in late 1999, became its President. The formal partnership with the Resource Center for Raza Planning was a major boost to RGCDC's efforts.

The extent and depth of RCRP's interface with RGCDC was made possible because of a grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of University Partnerships (OUP). During that time, HUD's OUP awarded multi-year Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) grants and also awarded Hispanic-Serving Institution Assisting Communities (HSIAC) grants. Working closely with RGCDC to do so, the students of RCRP, along with its director, applied and received a \$400,000 multi-year grant to assist the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation in completing the incubator project.

The groups did not anticipate how critical RCRP would be to facilitating community participation strategies, obtaining the construction funds and assisting with the brokering of a deeper relationship with Bernalillo County.

Getting the Incubator Built

As the process unfolded, the plans became more detailed. There are so many details, in fact, that conveying them all is well beyond the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, some examples demonstrate the continued importance of relationship building and strategic partnerships. Key also was the conscientious focus on quality work, community- and neighborhood-wide participation and the significance of the larger purpose of these pursuits. The Resource Center for Raza Planning, through its previous work, had already built a track record of technical assistance to South Valley planning efforts. Some of that work includes an impact analysis of planning policies on agriculture in the South Valley with recommendations for alternative policies related to zoning and land use, land preservation strategies such as land trusts, and policies related to design, infrastructure and the environment.

RCRP, through its own strategies of building partnerships, including with the County, produced the economic development language for a Rank II land use plan in which they connected economic activities and location, affirming the importance of protecting Isleta Boulevard as a small business corridor. RCRP, through its participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping process, both ensured the review of alternative designs and assisted in the assessment of a five-lane, three-lane and a third hybrid option that the engineers produced in response to community engagement. At a key moment in the impact analysis, RCRP conducted a door-to-door survey to determine community perspective on the proposed alternatives. Because of a particular vocal proponent of the five-lane option, the RCRP survey was said by County officials to have made a critical difference in the selection of the hybrid

option which both provided for the needed improvement of traffic flow while still protecting the cultural landscape of the Isleta Boulevard (Córdova 2002).

While the list of RCRP accomplishments related to the South Valley is longer than the scope of this chapter allows, it is worth noting that RGCDC's strategic partner from the University was also steeped in the culture and struggle to helping both economically revitalize and preserve the historic and cultural character of the area (Miera 2002). It was this experience and understanding that enabled RCRP, which was largely comprised of students working with the director, to assist the RGCDC with its next steps, including creating the detailed material necessary to obtain funding.

By the time RCRP obtained the HSIAC grant from HUD's Office of University Partnerships, RGCDC had obtained state legislative funding for the incubator and had received notice that the EDA would provide funding, pending the acquisition of a percentage of matching funds. However, as the deadline for finding those matching funds approached, RGCDC had not secured the match. Somewhat deflated, RGCDC never faltered in its drive, but the infusion of RCRP's support led to a renewed effort, which now required both the rewriting of the application to EDA and the search for the matching funds. With its own social capital, RCRP provided the relationships and the labor to complete the search to fund the construction of the incubator. Some of the documents that RCRP prepared included the application narrative outlining the case for the project and the details of the project, a marketing plan, hiring and training plan, a business plan and a time-line for project completion.

RCRP, through the HSIAC grant, was able to rent space in the South Valley where it worked closely with RGCDC. The multi-year commitment to rent an office in the Valley enabled RGCDC to obtain a loan from the New Mexico Community Loan Fund for a down payment for a building at another strategic location—at the crossway of Phases I and II of Isleta Boulevard Reconstruction. Sharing the office space enabled both organizations to work closely as they pooled their skills to move the dream of the small business incubator closer to reality.

The Resource Center for Raza Planning assisted RGCDC in planning, promoting and hosting community meetings to inform, solicit input and to garner support. Focus groups, random sample surveys, newsletters and advisory groups were the primary means for community involvement. It was at one of these meetings in 2001 that residents came up with the name for the incubator, the South Valley Economic Development Center (SVEDC). In a February 21, 2001 one-page executive summary describing the incubator, RGCDC states, "There is overwhelming community support for the incubator because it creates self-employment opportunities for local residents rather than just creating low paying jobs" (Rio Grande Community Development Corporation 2001a).

A fall 2001 newsletter of SVEDC, written in both English and Spanish, described "Your Community Survey Results" reporting the outcome of RCRP's spring 2001 survey of neighbors surrounding the proposed incubator site:

95% of the residence and businesses indicated overall support for the programs proposed. About 76% of respondents said they would use the facility. 92% viewed the current design characteristics as positive.

Rio Grande Community Development Corporation 2001b

Materials for the various applications first made the case that small business development was an effective strategy for improving employment opportunities in an area where un/under-employment was high, the per capita income low and levels of poverty high. The case was made that creating self-employment opportunities was an effective means to assist "distressed

communities”. Second, requests for funding documents provided an argument and evidence that small business incubators were an important means to support small business development and ensure their success. Third, the documents detailed plans of the incubator describing both its desirability and feasibility.

The timing of funding was as important as the funding itself. With many government contracts, spending must occur within a certain timeframe, which also means that if matching funds are required, then the time of obtaining these funds is also an exercise in precision. It was these kinds of bureaucratic constraints that were part of the delicate maneuvering required to turn this project into a reality. It is one of the important lessons that community developers need to learn and thus realize the importance of paying attention to regulations, procedures and other required details. The balancing act of timing, the working in conjunction with others and the disciplined persistence are necessary requirements for community developers who wish to interface effectively with government. In the course of shepherding a project through a process, there may come a moment when a really difficult decision must be made. Such was the case, when attempting to find the matching \$600,000 needed for the \$900,000 EDA Grant.

While the County was not eligible for most CDBG funds, it was eligible to receive CDGB Economic Development funds and \$600,000 was obtainable. However, although EDA funds for the incubator could come directly to the CDC, RGCDC was not eligible for the CDBG funds. Only the County could receive those funds. RGCDC had two choices: continue to seek another source for the matching funds or run the money through the County. However, in order to do that, RGCDC would have to turn over the project to the County and along with it the assets it had obtained thus far, e.g. the land it had purchased and the other dollars it had raised. In return, Bernalillo County would administer the funds, oversee the construction and then assist with operations, though it was still expected that RGCDC would have the responsibility to operate the South Valley Economic Development Center. This was a painstaking decision for the Board of the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation. What were the implications of such a move? What did it risk, and how did that risk compare with what it might gain?

After extensive deliberation, the Board agreed with the plan to partner with the County to build the small business incubator. The basis for the partnership had already been laid over several years, but it was nonetheless a risk to essentially give up direct control of the facility. To complicate matters further, as the CDBG application was being prepared by RGCDC/RCRP in cooperation with staff from the County Manager’s office, language was initially included that stated that RGCDC would develop and operate the SVEDC. While there was plenty of basis, as argued by County Bond attorneys, for a sole source procurement on the project, the State Attorney General’s office determined, that if RGCDC wanted to run this facility, it would have to compete in an open bidding process to do so. RGCDC, in agreeing to this deepened partnership was also agreeing to risk losing the project altogether as it competed for its own project with other potential bidders. The County however, was only able to use the CDBG funds if it also had the land, the EDA funds, and the state funds that were already part of RGCDC assets. The RFB stipulated that whoever bid for the project would have to come to the project with at least this level of assets. RCRP worked closely with RGCDC to prepare the necessary materials for its bid. RGCDC won the bid and a formal partnership was established between the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation and Bernalillo County.

In the CDBG application, it was stated that the funds would ensure the success of the South Valley Economic Development Center and result in:

- The construction of a Phase I 16,500 sq. ft. business incubator that will serve the self-employment needs of South Valley residents.

- Provide a commercial kitchen for value-added processing to agricultural goods.
- Provide a space for community based efforts towards economic development.
- Create micro-enterprises, generate jobs and assist existing and potential small businesses (Bernalillo County 2001: 4).

Meanwhile, an array of other tasks required the attention of RGCDC, many of which involved the continued engagement with residents, the support of RCRP and the ongoing interface with local, state and federal levels of government. The many tasks included: the parallel process of developing the details of programming while working with the architect to develop the appropriately designed space; anticipating subsequent phases of construction, including a light manufacturing component and therefore seeking the special use permit that would allow this land use; further articulating the details of the Self Employment Learning for Life (SELL) program that was envisioned as the programmatic aspect of providing the technical assistance while incubating new and expanding businesses; and working with the County's construction manager and the architect on construction documents and design details. Though RGCDC lost the argument with the County to install a green roof, an idea that its construction engineers couldn't quite imagine, the majority of decisions emerged through discussion and cooperation.

Finally, in late fall of 2003, Bernalillo County broke ground for the South Valley Economic Development Center. In early 2005, in her new role as County Commissioner, the author, along with Julia Stephens and the RGCDC board and staff, helped celebrate the ribbon cutting of the small business incubator and commercial kitchen. With a supporter of the incubator in a key government position, the RGCDC and the SVEDC continued to have the support of Bernalillo County in the successful operations of this community amenity for economic development. Its precarious control of the facility was made evident four years later, when a new County Commissioner made a move to change the name of the SVEDC. Without much prodding from RGCDC, residents of the South Valley moved quickly and loudly to object to the name change and to remind the County that the South Valley Economic Development Center was an outcome of a sustained and concerted community-driven process. To this day, the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation continues to operate the SVEDC and works in cooperation with Bernalillo County to ensure the success of both the facility and strategy to support self-employment as a strategy for community and household wealth generation.

The mission of the South Valley Economic Development Center is to provide facilities, resources and training to support the development of new and expanding small businesses that will create jobs and foster economic revitalization of the South Valley community, while preserving the heritage and culture of the community.

From the Executive Summary of a 2010 South Valley Economic Development Center Business Plan, the community economic goals of the RGCDC remain evident.

The RGCDC continues to make economic development an organizational priority. Since 2007, the economic development arm of the RGCDC has more than tripled, and is now creating jobs not only through the SVEDC incubator program, but also in agriculture and local food, local origination TV programming, through providing business services to community groups, rural economic development, and to the immigrant and refugee community.

South Valley Economic Development 2010

Thirty years after RGCDC was created to serve South Valley community economic development needs, it remains engaged in being the "people's voice in development". In 2016, the SVEDC website stated that

The South Valley Economic Development Center is a collaborative effort between Bernalillo County and the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation (RGCDC). The SVEDC serves as both a business incubator for clients utilizing the facility, and as an economic development catalyst for the unincorporated area of the South Valley.

Built in 2004, the 17,000 square foot center also offers flexible leases on office space, a commercial kitchen, and other support for small businesses. The SVEDC empowers local growers and businesses by providing a site for manufacturing value-added products and establishing networks among businesses, growers, distributors, and retailers.

Serving the Albuquerque area over the past seven years, the SVEDC has:

- Incubated over 100 businesses;
- Created over 350 jobs;
- Returned \$8.2 million in payroll back to the local economy;
- Success rate over four times the national average, and;
- Assists over 250 potential entrepreneurs a year.

It was indeed the collaboration between a community development corporation and government that made the small business incubator and commercial kitchen a reality. Critical also were technical support of a state university research center and the full participation of community residents.

Insights Gained from this Case of Reflective Practice

Immersed in ideals, community developers do not always demonstrate the patience required to turn plans into realities. It is rarely as easy as one would like it to be. A lesson learned from this chapter is that community development is not a linear process. The ability to tolerate ambiguity while maintaining a vision of an outcome is essential. The decisions are not always easy and the outcomes are not always certain. There are, in fact, complexities, constraints and contexts that shape how a community development project will unfold. The community developer, therefore, should prepare to be flexible, diligent and most of all, persistent. Nonetheless, a conscious, value-based long-term trajectory provides direction and focus. Vigilance and long-term commitment were essential characteristics of the community developers who were subjects of this case study.

Given that community development work requires collaborations, knowing how to form and build relationships is irreplaceable in the community development process. This includes knowing—or at least learning—how to engage with partners in a way that demonstrates reliability, durability and nobility. Given that many of these collaborations involve government, the community developer who can interface with government has added tools for his/her community development practice.

This chapter described a multi-year community economic development endeavor to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship as a strategy to build community and household wealth by developing a small business incubator and commercial kitchen. The details of this story provide insight into the particulars of working with government, suggesting that a willingness to seek the resources of government authority and funding does not have to mean giving up on one's ideals, although it may involve making difficult decisions to determine whether the tradeoffs are worthwhile. This is by no means intended to suggest that community development must

include government resources or partners, but that it is possible to insert a community-driven process into the interface with government.

Implications for Another Context

The vision for this small incubator and commercial kitchen began with the awareness that jobs were needed in this community with high rates of poverty and associated ills. It is by no means the only community that faces similar conditions. In Chicago, for example, where high rates of joblessness persist in neighborhoods still plagued with the impacts of deindustrialization, violence and difficult social conditions also exist (Córdova and Wilson 2016). Addressing such an entrenched situation requires more than one solution. However, it is possible that lessons learned from developing a small business incubator might be transferred to another context at a different point in time.

Probably the biggest difference is that much of the funding that was available then is not available now, including grants from the HUD's Office of University Partnerships. A first step, however, is to find out what funding programs are available within a given context. Political dynamics vary and political structures shape the contours of interfacing with government, so knowing organizational charts and political positions is key. Fostering relationships with government representatives and elected officials on an array of community issues and opportunities sets the stage for future opportunities, that is, more complex projects such as an incubator.

University centers, as in this case study, have the potential to assist in a community-based endeavor that requires multiple partners, leveraged resources, compiled data and enhanced community capacity. By all accounts, this small business incubator would not have been built—at least at that time—without the support of this particular university center. While it is by no means necessary that a university center be involved in such a project, it is nonetheless the case that some entity needs to bring to the table what this center did. Therefore, identifying the right partners and resources is an important aspect of the process.

A large urban area has its own characteristics and thus the particulars will also differ. So while context matters, theories of community development practice can still invoke inspired action that can be transferred. If Arturo Vasquez can take some of his ideas from Chicago to the South Valley of New Mexico, then the lessons of building the small business incubator that he dreamed of can possibly be transferred back to inspire neighborhood-scale community economic development.

Notes

- 1 Support for agriculture and small business activity is evidenced in planning documents produced by Bernalillo County and surveys conducted by RGCDC and RCRP over a fifteen-year period.
- 2 From author's files and RGCDC website.
- 3 Teresa Córdova served as Angela Acosta's Committee Chair with members Professor Paul Lusk and RGCDC Executive Director, Arturo Vasquez.

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THE SOUTH MEMPHIS REVITALIZATION ACTION PROJECT (SOMERAP)

A Town/Gown Partnership for Community Transformation

Kenneth M. Reardon

Origins of the Project

Shortly after joining the University of Memphis faculty in the fall of 2007, I was invited to a meeting in the President's Office where I, along with Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington, an Assistant Professor of Anthropology, was introduced to Dr. Kenneth S. Robinson, a highly regarded public health physician and former State Health Commissioner who also served as the Co-Pastor of one of the city's most important African American churches.

Following a quick round of introductions, Dr. Robinson described how he and his congregation had spent the past decade rebuilding the membership base, leadership structure and social ministries of St. Andrew AME Church through service to the community. He explained how his congregation had succeeded in increasing its membership from 150 to 1,700 parishioners, expanding its child development and elementary school programs, establishing a community development corporation that had completed a series of successful affordable housing projects, and initiating a popular community-based health and wellness program.

Reflecting upon his church's ten-year campaign to stabilize South Memphis through these and other outreach programs, Reverend Robinson acknowledged that his neighborhood had continued to "lose ground" in spite of the more than \$15,000,000 his church had invested in its physical plant and numerous local economic and community development projects. When one of his major funders encouraged him to further enhance his congregation's social ministry capacity by developing a comprehensive organization development plan as well as a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, he contacted the University on whose Board of Overseers he served for assistance.

Impressed by Dr. Robinson's commitment to addressing the structural causes of South Memphis' serious urban problems, his congregation's willingness to invest their human and financial capital on major redevelopment projects, and UM President Shirley Raines' strong

support of engaged scholarship in support of resident-led change, I agreed to collaborate with Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington to: (1) collect and analyze the data needed to prepare an organization development plan for St. Andrew AME Church and The Works Inc.—the congregation’s community development arm; and (2) collect and analyze the data required to prepare a comprehensive neighborhood transformation plan for South Memphis.

Getting Started

Several days after this initial meeting, Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington and I met with Dr. Robinson and his staff to discuss their expectations regarding our newly established partnership. At that time, Dr. Robinson highlighted the importance of the organizational development plan given his plans to leave his positions as Co-Pastor of St. Andrew AME Church and President/Chief Executive Officer of The Works Inc. CDC within the next seven years. He also informed us that our role within the organizational development project would be limited to data collection and analysis; organizational goal setting; and program development. He told us that he had, following the advice of one of his funders, hired the Consiliency Group, a local non-profit consulting firm, to write the St. Andrew/The Works Inc. strategic development plan based on our data. He expressed confidence that this project would go smoothly given the congregation’s recent decision to follow the social ministries model pioneered by Reverend Floyd Flake, Former US Congressman, Congressional Black Caucus Chairman, and long-term Pastor of Allen Cathedral AME Church in Queens, New York.

Following his remarks on the strategic development plan, Dr. Robinson outlined his objectives for the proposed neighborhood revitalization plan. From his perspective, the plan needed to present clearly articulated immediate, short-term and long-term policies, programs and projects to:

- improve the facilities for St. Andrew’s child development, charter school, and health and wellness programs;
- expand The Works’ ongoing housing services, including its successful credit/mortgage counseling, senior citizen home repair, single-family housing rehabilitation and single-family construction programs;
- offer a strategy to re-establish neighborhood-oriented retail services within the community, especially, groceries, pharmacies and banks;
- rehabilitate the neighborhood’s historic parkway designed by legendary landscape architect and urban planner, George Kessler, in order to improve neighborhood aesthetics while simultaneously offering a safe space for pedestrians and bikers to exercise and travel;
- develop options to improve access to primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and health educators to eliminate the effects of “health desert” conditions within the community; and
- expand employment, entrepreneurship and business development opportunities for current and future residents of South Memphis.

Dr. Robinson’s vision of an environmentally, economically and socially transformed South Memphis raised an important question for both Dr. Lambert-Pennington and myself. Could any single church, regardless of how inspired its leadership and membership might be, successfully create and implement a district-scale revitalization plan as ambitious as the one he described? After raising this question, Dr. Lambert-Pennington and I encouraged Dr. Robinson to consider inviting the neighborhood’s other anchor institutions to participate as “co-sponsors” of the

proposed South Memphis Revitalization Action Plan. We based our suggestion for broadening the sponsorship on the South Memphis Revitalization Action Plan on the following arguments.

Involving other institutions in the planning process would reduce the likelihood that others would see the plan as just another way to build the physical plant, membership base and political influence of St. Andrew AME Church. Expanding participation in the project's steering committee would encourage a broader spectrum of local stakeholders to participate in the planning process increasing the likelihood that the plan would address the most critical issues facing the neighborhood. Greater diversity in terms of sponsorship and participation in the planning process would limit what Janis called "groupthink", resulting in a wider range of innovative policy and planning solutions for local officials to consider. The active involvement of local neighborhood associations, tenant groups, faith-based organizations, human service organizations, businesses and corporations, labor unions, fraternal organizations and professional associations would give members of these groups a greater sense of ownership over the planning process and the plan, creating a broader base of non-partisan political support for the effort. Finally, the majority of these organizations belong to local, regional, statewide and national networks that possess significant human and financial capital that could be used to complement local government resources to advance local development projects.

While Reverend Robinson listened carefully to our arguments in support of the broadest possible institutional sponsorship for the South Memphis planning process, he was not immediately prepared to embrace our proposal. Instead, he encouraged Dr. Lambert-Pennington and I to focus our efforts during the coming academic year on the collection and analysis of the data needed to craft an organizational development plan that would allow St. Andrew AME Church to expand its rapidly growing social ministries programs during the coming decade, during which time it would most likely witness the departure of its highly regarded Co-Pastors—Reverend Robinson and his wife. While congregational leaders and University students and faculty collected and analyzed the data needed to prepare an effective organizational development plan to strengthen St. Andrew's organizing, planning and development capacity, Dr. Robinson agreed to consider inviting other local institutions to work with St. Andrew's to "co-sponsor" and "co-produce" the South Memphis Revitalization Action Plan—an idea which Dr. Robinson admitted he had not previously considered.

Studying Saint Andrew AME aka "The Saint"

During the 2007/2008 Academic Year, Professor Katherine Lambert-Pennington mobilized students in her American Communities and Urban Anthropology classes to work on our newly launched South Memphis initiative. Meanwhile, Antonio Raciti, a Visiting Scholar from the University of Catania, and I organized students in our Introduction to City and Regional Planning and Comprehensive Planning Studio classes to participate in the project. During these two semesters, the anthropology students completed a systematic description of the origins, evolution and current state of Saint Andrew's major social ministry programs, including the: Ernestine Rivers Child Development Center, Circles of Success Learning Academy, The Works' Community Development Corporation and Family Life Center. In assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each of these programs, the anthropology students focused special attention on the impact St. Andrew's theology, development goals and objectives, organizational structure, staffing pattern, administrative policies and funding priorities had on these programs.

During this time, Dr. Lambert-Pennington supervised the fieldwork activities of more than fifty undergraduate and graduate anthropology students who carried out the following research activities:

- an inventory and analysis of Saint Andrew AME church records related to the establishment and management of its social ministry programs;
- a review of archival materials related to Saint Andrew AME's social ministry programs housed in the local history collections of the Memphis Public and The University of Memphis Libraries;
- formal interviews with former and current Saint Andrew AME elders who participated in the decisions to establish these programs and were responsible for overseeing their operations;
- formal interviews with the current directors and key staff persons charged with planning, managing and evaluating these programs;
- participant observation carried out during regular programming hours within each of their social ministry programs;
- focus groups with program participants, in the case of children, with their parents, to elicit their feedback on the current state of these programs and suggestions for improving them;
- interviews with long-time (external) observers of these programs, including: local pastors, social workers, elected officials, and funders regarding their perceptions of these programs and how they could be improved.

These activities enabled the students to produce a detailed historical timeline chronicling the origins and evolution of Saint Andrew's ever-expanding community-based, social ministry programs. The students also generated the first comprehensive report of the congregation's existing social ministry programs that featured: program names/acronyms, dates of origin, mission statements, program goals and objectives, program/service descriptions, target populations, numbers of clients serviced, demographic profile of clients, staffing patterns, costs, source of funding, program accomplishments, program limitations, future program plans and current and future development needs. In addition, the students developed a preliminary draft of a human services directory to assist Saint Andrew's personnel in referring local families for needed services. Finally, the students formulated a critical issues report identifying key challenges/opportunities confronting Saint Andrew's existing social ministry programs. Among the most important topics highlighted in this report was the need to:

- expand and upgrade facilities for the Ernestine Rivers Child Development Center and Circle of Success Learning Academy, whose success had produced significant enrollment pressures;
- encourage greater involvement of St. Andrew AME Church members in the planning, delivery and evaluation of these steadily expanding social ministries;
- devise a comprehensive case management program to insure that individuals and/or families participating in any one of St. Andrew's programs are informed about and enrolled in other appropriate service programs; and
- hire a full-time Chief Executive Officer to devote 100 percent of his/her time to working with the directors of Saint Andrew's existing and future social ministries on a wide range of planning, management, evaluation, communication and fundraising activities.

Preliminary drafts of the historic timeline, program compendium, service directory and critical issues reports produced by Dr. Lambert-Pennington's students were reviewed and amended based upon feedback received from Dr. Robinson and his senior staff. Final versions of these documents were subsequently provided to Tracy Sampson, Principal Consultant, with the Consiliency Group who incorporated the major findings and recommendations from these reports into Saint Andrew AME Church's Strategic Plan for Social Ministries that was submitted to

the Hyde Family Foundations. This long-time supporter of Saint Andrew AME Church's social ministry programs subsequently made a significant lead gift enabling the church to raise the funds needed to build a new facility for the Ernestine Rivers Child Development Center. The movement of the Center from an existing church building, where it was co-housed with the Circles of Success Learning Academy, subsequently allowed this award-winning charter school to add 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

The report also encouraged St. Andrew AME's elders to commit to a national search aimed at hiring a full-time CEO to oversee this building program, identify the best approach to implementing the comprehensive case management system, and provide leadership for the development of the South Memphis Revitalization Action Plan (SoMeRAP). While several candidates were interviewed for this position, the candidate whom the church elders were most interested in hiring accepted a senior leadership position with an AME congregation in Atlanta.

Studying America's First Planned Industrial Suburb

While Professor Lambert-Pennington's anthropology students were busy examining the origins, evolution and current state of St. Andrew A.M.E.'s social ministry programs, Antonio Raciti and I supervised a small team of graduate planning students in preparing a detailed social history and socio-economic profile of South Memphis. Professors Lambert-Pennington and Raciti, along with myself, viewed the production of this neighborhood history and demographic profile as essential steps in acquiring a basic understanding of the physical and social transformation of this historic African American community.

During the fall and spring semesters of the 2007/2008 academic year, University of Memphis graduate planning students worked with Professor Raciti and I to carry out the following research activities:

- review of historic maps illustrating the growth of the Bluff City from its establishment in 1812 to 2000;
- analysis of South Memphis population, employment, income and housing trends using US Census data;
- study of historic documents related to the planning, design and maintenance of the Memphis Parkway System designed by George Kessler in the first decade of the 20th century;
- examination of archival materials, mostly newspaper clippings, located in the local history section of the Memphis Public Library, related to the evolution of South Memphis from a truck farming area focused on meeting the fresh food needs of nearby Memphis into America's first planned industrial suburb; and
- interviews with long-time neighborhood residents, institutional leaders and elected officials regarding the community's origins, evolution, current state and future stabilization and revitalization possibilities.

These research activities generated a considerable amount of new information regarding the historical events responsible for South Memphis' rapid development, long period of stability and precipitous decline. Among the important historic findings generated by the graduate planning students was South Memphis's historic role as a rich agricultural community, providing high-quality, farm-fresh foods to the rapidly growing city of Memphis. Also described was the role

played by the son of a local farm family, who was introduced to Ebenezer Howard's Garden City ideal while studying engineering at MIT and subsequently returned to South Memphis convincing his family, neighbors and city officials of the potential of transforming this truck farming area into the South's first planned industrial suburb.

This research explained how the construction of a new industrial freight line and parkway, designed by George Kessler, led to the transformation of this agricultural community into a new kind of urban place—one offering a significant number of high-wage manufacturing jobs within walking distance or a short street car ride; conveniently located neighborhood-oriented retail centers; beautifully designed craftsman homes affordable to industrial and municipal workers; surrounded by productive fields, orchards, farms and dairies. The construction of the first Ford Motor Company production facility, outside of Detroit, along the new freight line generated considerable investment by the early 1920s, resulting in the emergence of South Memphis as one of the city's most desirable working-class and middle-income communities.

The graduate planning students' research showed that South Memphis, which was annexed by the city shortly after its development, maintained its desirability and stability well into the 1970s when the collapse of the region's manufacturing, transportation and logistics sectors, along with the social unrest caused by Dr. King's assassination, prompted a significant number of working-class and middle-income white and African American families to flee the area. The students' research explained how the loss of well-paying manufacturing and transportation-related jobs made it more difficult for African American families moving into the community to secure credit needed to purchase available homes and businesses.

By the end of the 2007/2008 academic year, the graduate planning students had produced a South Memphis Data Book featuring: a detailed neighborhood history; an inventory of public, private and non-profit institutions providing services to residents; a summary of local transportation facilities and routes; and an analysis of recent population, employment, income, poverty and housing statistics comparing South Memphis trends to those of the City of Memphis and Shelby County.

Launching the South Memphis Revitalization Action Planning Process

Pleased with the results of The University of Memphis' first year of community-based research, and eager to proceed with the development of a comprehensive redevelopment plan for South Memphis, Reverend Robinson invited Professors Lambert-Pennington and Raciti and myself to a meeting in the spring of 2008 to discuss the formal launch of a comprehensive community revitalization planning effort. By the time we met, Reverend Robinson had come to accept the importance of establishing a broad-based steering committee, representative of the many stakeholders living, working and worshipping in the Greater South Memphis community. After working together to generate a significant list of local schools, churches, social service agencies, neighborhood associations and area businesses, Dr. Robinson agreed to send letters inviting these institutions to join what he called the South Memphis Renaissance Collaborative—a broad-based sponsoring committee for a “bottom-up, bottom-sideways” community planning effort. He also agreed to visit those local institutional leaders who appeared most interested in this resident-driven planning effort to: highlight the importance of preparing a plan, outline the steps in the planning process and describe their role as “institutional sponsors” of the plan. During the spring and summer of 2008, Dr. Robinson, Professors Lambert-Pennington and Raciti and I organized one-on-one meetings with the leaders of more than two dozen community-based

organizations serving South Memphis, eighteen of whom had agreed to join the South Memphis Renaissance Collaborative's Steering Committee. Among these organizations were:

- Monumental Baptist Church;
- Second Avenue Baptist Church;
- Ruth Tate Senior Citizen Center;
- Marcus Garvey Charter School;
- Victor-Kerr Neighborhood Association;
- South Memphis Neighborhood Association;
- Four-Way Grill;
- St. Augustine Catholic Church;
- Mt. Zion Baptist Church;
- Lincoln School; and
- Cummings School.

Building Local Government Support for Resident-Led Planning

While building local support for the planning process, we also reached out to the municipal agencies responsible for general planning, economic and community development investment and affordable housing programming. The directors of the city's Office of Planning and Development, Housing and Community Development, and Housing Authority, each of whom appeared to have great respect for Dr. Robinson, voiced their strong support for our efforts pledging to assist us in any way they could. In fact, the Office of Planning and Development asked their Senior Planner to attend our meetings and provide whatever data, maps and/or technical assistance we might need to complete the plan. We also wrote to and met with most of the city, county and state elected officials representing South Memphis to inform them about this grassroots planning and development initiative and to encourage them to participate in the effort. While the majority of these officials voiced enthusiastic support for our efforts, only City Council Members Janis Fullilove and Edmund Ford actively encouraged their constituents to participate in the process and made consistent efforts to attend our meetings.

At the suggestion of Reverend Robinson, we also met with Jimmie Tucker, one of the principals in the city's most successful minority architecture firm, Self-Tucker Architects, and Charles Pickard, then-Executive Director of the Memphis Regional Design Center to ask for their assistance in reviewing our proposed research design, survey instruments, planning recommendations and design proposals. Both of these widely respected architects agreed to serve as unpaid technical assistance providers for the South Memphis Renaissance Collaborative.

Preparing a Scope of Services

As resident and official support for the South Memphis Renaissance Collaborative's planning process grew, Dr. Robinson, Professors Lambert-Pennington and Raciti and I prepared a detailed "scope of services" designed to achieve two primary objectives. First, to generate and analyze the data needed to prepare a compelling "asset-based" revitalization plan. Second, to use a highly participatory planning process to significantly increase the number of stakeholders actively involved in local community-building, problem-solving and neighborhood revitalization action projects through organizations such as The Works CDC. During the summer of 2008, Dr. Robinson, my colleagues and I met with members of the newly expanded South Memphis Renaissance Collaborative's Steering Committee to craft the following scope of services:

- archival research aimed at further enhancing SMRC's social history of South Memphis;
- completion of a detailed demographic profile of South Memphis comparing its population, employment, income, housing and commutation trends for the period between 1980 and 2000 with those of the city, suburban ring and state;
- participatory mapping of the study area's most important community assets, problem areas and untapped resources;
- photographic documentation of the community's most important natural and built environment features;
- physical surveys of current land use, building conditions, site maintenance and public infrastructure repair;
- collection and analysis of local crime data using the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports and Memphis Police Department COMSAT data;
- interviews with local institutional leaders providing services to South Memphis residents regarding their perceptions of existing conditions and preferred future development strategies;
- interviews with heads of households regarding their perceptions of existing conditions and preferred future development strategies;
- focus groups with traditionally hard-to-reach constituent groups: youth, small business owners and senior citizens regarding their perceptions and preferences;
- preparation of an expanded South Memphis Data Book featuring key data summaries and preliminary SWOT analysis;
- organization of monthly plan review meetings to engage local stakeholders in ongoing data analysis, community visioning and action planning;
- hosting of a Neighborhood Summit, a highly interactive day-long planning conference, designed to finalize data analysis, an overall development goal and specific action (improvement) elements for the plan;
- staffing of action teams consisting of local stakeholders responsible for developing the immediate, short- and long-term elements of the redevelopment plan;
- preparation of a draft plan based upon local data and best practices research to be reviewed and approved by those participating in the SMRC planning process;
- revision of the draft plan based upon local stakeholder input and presentation of the final plan to local governmental bodies responsible for the adoption of such policy documents (i.e. Shelby County Land Use Control Board and City of Memphis Common Council).

Appreciative of the labor-intensive nature of the highly participatory planning process we had worked with local leaders to develop, Dr. Robinson agreed to ask the Hyde Family Foundations for \$25,000 to underwrite the expenses of the anthropology and city and regional planning students who would be undertaking the bulk of the data collection, analysis, planning and design activities featured within our proposed scope of work.

The SoMeRAP Planning Process

As the end of the 2008 summer approached, the participating faculty worked with the UM's Communication Department and St. Andrew AME Church's public relations consultants to devise and implement an aggressive media campaign to inform South Memphis residents, as well as area civic leaders and elected officials of the launch of the South Memphis Renaissance Collaborative's comprehensive neighborhood revitalization planning process. The press advisory, release and follow-up calls these organizations made to generate maximum newspaper, television

and radio coverage of our efforts was supplemented by pulpit announcements and bulletin inserts prepared by local churches, flyers sent home with area public school children and a door-to-door canvassing effort carried out by SMRC Steering Committee volunteers and UM graduate anthropology and city planning students.

As a result of these efforts, more than eighty local residents, pastors, educators, human services professionals and elected officials attended the “kick-off” meeting for the SMRC’s neighborhood planning process. Following a spirited welcome to the meeting, Reverend Robinson explained why he felt this was a critical time for the South Memphis community to create and implement an ambitious revitalization plan designed to significantly improve the quality of life in this historic community. After several SMRC Steering Committee Members spoke in favor of undertaking the proposed comprehensive revitalization plan, UM faculty briefly outlined the “unique selling points” of our proposed planning process. First, this was an effort initiated and controlled by local residents and leaders who possessed a deep understanding of local conditions as well as residents’ future hopes and aspirations. Second, the issues to be addressed in the plan would be those identified by local stakeholders, not City Hall or some unidentified external funder. Third, residents would be actively involved, on an equal basis with university-trained planners, at each and every step of the planning process. Fourth, every effort would be made to encourage those living in the neighborhood to become actively involved in one or more of the community-based organizations responsible for carrying out the plan’s major improvement projects. Fifth, project implementation would be given top priority—every effort would be made to complete one of the plan’s major initiatives within 90 days of its ratification by the Memphis City Council.

Participatory Mapping

Following these remarks, we asked those present to signal their willingness to participate in the process by raising their hands. Seeing a “sea” of hands in front of us, we invited local stakeholders to move to one of the ten round tables set up at the back of the room. As residents approached these tables, they were greeted by a UM graduate student, who invited them to take a minute to introduce themselves before explaining the “Community Mapping Exercise” they were about to engage in. Following these introductions and comments, the graduate students explained that local residents possessed the most important knowledge needed to produce an inspired community transformation plan. They then described how they would be working in small groups (6–8 residents) for the next thirty minutes to share their understanding of: neighborhood boundaries as understood by local residents, important sub-areas and/or districts of importance to local residents, critical community resources/assets, well-known problem areas and the locations of untapped (unrecognized/underutilized) resources. The graduate students explained how they would be using the large base map on the table before them and colored markers to locate and document each of these important elements of their neighborhood. As local stakeholders pointed to important neighborhood assets, problem areas and untapped resources, a second graduate student assigned to each group noted their locations and typed summaries of the comments stakeholders made about each site.

Neighborhood Documentation (aka Shooting the Neighborhood) Exercise

For the next forty minutes, more than eighty South Memphis residents worked in groups of ten, with the assistance of assigned graduate student facilitators and recorders, to: establish official boundaries for the SMRC study area, identify socially significant sub-areas, neighborhood

strengths, community weaknesses and sites that might be adaptively reused. As this part of the meeting wrapped up, each team reported on the number of important neighborhood characteristics they had identified and one “adaptive reuse” possibility which they felt could have a transformative impact on South Memphis. Those present, including the UM faculty, were very impressed by the large number of detailed and thoughtful observations highlighted on the maps that were hanging around the room. After giving an enthusiastic round of applause to the groups, Reverend Robinson invited those present to help the SMRC Steering Committee further develop this initial assessment of neighborhood conditions by participating in the SMRC Camera Exercise. At this point, each person was invited to take a simple disposable camera and caption book from the table where they were sitting. We then asked each community volunteer to spend between one and two hours during the coming two weeks to identify and photograph nine things “they most loved about South Memphis”, nine things “they most hated about South Memphis” and nine things “they would most like to see changed” about South Memphis. As they took each image, we asked the volunteers to record in the caption book we gave them: the date of the photo, the location of the image, a caption and their recommendation as to whether the image reflected a neighborhood: strength, weakness or untapped resources.

Encouraged by the 65 individuals who agreed to participate in the “Camera Exercise”, we explained how their “field-based” documentation efforts would most likely generate questions/concerns among their neighbors as they took photographs of newly planted flowers, illegal dump sites and/or local children playing in the park. We strongly encouraged the volunteers to approach those who appeared concerned about their activities to explain their efforts to document “the good, the bad and it’s gotta change” aspects of the neighborhood as part of a newly initiated, resident-led planning process. Furthermore, we challenged them to invite those who were interested in the results of this effort to come to our next meeting scheduled to take place at St. Andrew AME Church in four weeks. The following month more than eighty-five local residents attended our second planning meeting where residents were again asked to sit at round tables with facilitators and recorders. After welcoming those in attendance, Reverend Robinson explained how those seated at each table would be working together during the next forty-five minutes to view, discuss and categorize a portion of the approximately two thousand photographs taken by them and their neighbors.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

For the next hour, residents worked in small groups to place each photo in one of four categories:

- current strengths—a positive quality that residents can build upon;
- current weaknesses—a negative quality undermining neighborhood health and well-being;
- future opportunities—an emerging strength that could be an important future asset and/or building block for the neighborhood;
- future threat—a problem that, if ignored, could undermine the neighborhood’s future stability.

After placing each photo into one of these categories, initially featured in the Stanford Research International’s SWOT Analysis, the residents were asked to organize the photos within each category according to themes. For example, a set of photos displaying attractive residential, commercial and industrial buildings might be organized under the theme: excellent Building Stock. While photos illustrating vacant commercial buildings, strip developments and abandoned malls might be organized under the theme: collapse of neighborhood-oriented retail. At the

end of this session, residents had generated nearly a dozen (non-duplicative) themes in each category. When asked to evaluate how well these descriptive statements captured the neighborhood, residents said they provided an excellent initial inventory of existing neighborhood conditions and ongoing trends. After completing their analysis of the neighborhood photos, we explained how our students would be completing an even more detailed field survey of land uses, building conditions, site maintenance levels and public infrastructure during the coming two weeks that would be ready for their review and analysis at the third neighborhood planning meeting scheduled to take place in mid-November.

Movers and Shakers Interviews

We then proceeded to explain how neighborhood residents would be teamed with UM graduate students during the coming month to complete formal interviews with the leaders of the most important public, non-profit and private organizations serving the South Memphis community. The purpose of these, so-called Movers and Shakers Interviews, was to elicit local leaders' perceptions of the community's existing strengths and weaknesses, preferred redevelopment strategies and specific revitalization projects their institutions might be willing to either spearhead and/or support. After explaining the primary objectives of these interviews, we distributed copies of the preliminary set of questions each institutional leader would be asked. We then asked those present to spend the next fifteen minutes identifying the institutional leaders they felt we should interview as part of this process. Within a very short period of time, the residents identified the leaders of more than thirty local organizations, including: schools, churches, businesses, civic associations, fraternal organizations, social services and political clubs they believed we should contact. During the next several weeks, UM faculty made appointments for two-person teams to interview these individuals using an interview schedule that included a mix of open- and closed-ended questions.

Among the strengths frequently mentioned during these interviews were the neighborhood's: central location; excellent access to regional educational, employment, cultural and recreational centers; well-designed parkway system and outstanding building stock; network of local public and private schools; civically engaged churches; and long-standing political ties (i.e. the Ford family). Among the problems most often identified during these interview's were the neighborhood's: low educational attainment levels; high unemployment rate especially among African American youth; violent street crime; missing and/or poor-quality neighborhood services; deteriorating housing stock; and financial disinvestment by the city and local lenders. Among the redevelopment proposals most frequently recommended by local institutional leaders were: a neighborhood clean-up to make the community more attractive to would-be investors and residents; redesigning of South Parkway that serves as the neighborhood's major east-west artery; a small business incubator to improve local retail services while generating needed jobs; expansion of The Works CDC's senior citizen home repair program; and a public-private partnership to attract a full service grocery to the neighborhood.

Resident Interviews

Those attending SMRC's November Planning Meeting had the opportunity to review and analyze the results of the students' Land Use, Building Conditions, Site Maintenance Survey and Public Infrastructure Survey. While they were dismayed to see the number of vacant lots and abandoned buildings, especially former commercial buildings, identified by the survey, they were pleased by the high percentage of residential properties that were determined to be in

good to excellent condition—a surprising result given the extent of bank redlining that had taken place within the neighborhood. They were also encouraged by the significant number of homes and business that had recently completed site and building improvements, most often without the benefit of home/small business loans from local lenders.

In addition, the residents also had the opportunity to review the results of the recently completed Movers and Shakers Interviews—an effort that many of them had participated in. They were struck by the extent to which the perceptions of existing neighborhood conditions and future development priorities of local leaders mirrored the opinions of local residents who had been attending the SMRC Planning Meetings. Many residents felt they could significantly increase public and private investment in South Memphis by these institutions by incorporating their redevelopment priorities within the soon-to-be-completed plan.

Following their discussion of the physical conditions survey and Movers and Shakers Interviews results, local residents reviewed a preliminary draft of the Resident Opinion Survey we planned to complete before the Christmas holidays! While residents appreciated the comprehensive nature of the survey, many felt it was too long, contained unnecessary “plannerese” jargon and asked questions that were too personal. For example, the survey asked, “What was your household’s combined income, from all sources, last year?” After identifying questions that could be eliminated or reworded, residents were asked to volunteer during the coming month to assist UM graduate students in interviewing as many South Memphis residents as possible. In seeking to recruit local volunteers, two rationales were offered for contacting as many residents as possible. First, the SMRC Steering Committee wanted to insure that the neighborhood plan’s goals, objectives and recommendations accurately reflected the hopes and aspirations of the majority of neighborhood residents. Second, the SMRC Steering Committee believed these door-to-door interviews offered the best opportunity for volunteers to encourage local residents who were currently not involved in community-building activities to become so. In other words, they viewed this neighbor-to-neighbor interviewing process as a powerful mechanism for rebuilding South Memphis’ supply of social capital reduced in recent years by the significant outmigration that had taken place. This problem affecting many older residential areas has been elegantly documented in Robert Putnam’s classic *Bowling Alone*.

During the next two weekends nearly two dozen South Memphis residents worked with UM graduate students to interview 170 heads of households. While these surveys generated findings that were consistent with those produced by the Community Mapping, Neighborhood Documentation, Physical Conditions and Movers and Shakers data collection efforts, they also produced several unexpected results. Among these were: the pervasive lack of confidence residents had in local law enforcement; the need to complement proposed park improvements with active programming to encourage families to return to these spaces; a growing fear among local residents regarding additional school closings; and the serious challenges residents faced when seeking access to primary health care. We discovered that South Memphis was not only a “food desert”—it was also “primary care desert” where one could not find a single physician, nurse practitioner, dentist, pharmacist or social worker regularly practicing within the neighborhood.

Targeting Hard-to-Reach Stakeholders Groups through Focus Groups

In January of 2009, local residents reconvened to discuss the results of the recently completed Resident Survey and to identify those segments of the community that we had been unable to reach via traditional outreach methods. After an extended discussion of so-called missing stakeholders, residents decided to organize a series of focus groups aimed at eliciting further

input from youth, small business owners and senior citizens. During the later part of January and early February, three focus groups were organized to elicit their views regarding existing conditions and future revitalization possibilities within South Memphis. These meetings, which were facilitated by UM faculty, elicited a number of important additional findings. Among these were the severe credit barriers minority businesspersons faced when seeking to finance their South Memphis operations; the dearth of educational, recreational and cultural programs for young adults aged 16 to 30; and the number of seniors who had returned to primary childrearing activities as a result of addiction, incarceration, infirmity and/or death of their children.

These and other focus group results were discussed during SMRC's March Planning Meeting. Residents attending this meeting also reviewed the proposal agenda and recruitment plan for the upcoming South Memphis Neighborhood Summit scheduled to take place on the first Saturday in April. The purpose of this meeting was to provide residents with a final opportunity to comment on the existing conditions data and preferred development scenarios generated to date, as well as a first chance to help local stakeholders determine the overall development goal, specific neighborhood improvement objectives and economic and community development recommendations to be included in the soon-to-be drafted South Memphis neighborhood revitalization plan.

The South Memphis Neighborhood Summit

More than one hundred local stakeholders attended SMRC's First Neighborhood Summit held at St. Andrew AME Church. Following a hearty Southern breakfast, residents spent an hour reviewing the key findings and planning implications of SMRC's recently completed demographic, physical conditions, institutional interview, resident interview and focus group research. Following a short break, they then reviewed the meta-analysis of these finding that the UM anthropology and city and regional planning students had, with the assistance of SMRC's Steering Committee, summarized in the form of a preliminary Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis. After reorganizing several of the major themes presented in this data summary, the residents were asked to critically review and revise a 100-word "overall development goal statement" and six neighborhood improvement objectives prepared by the UM graduate students and the SMRC Steering Committee. By the time lunch was served, the Summit attendees had significantly improved the overall development goal highlighting their desire to transform South Memphis into the region's most desirable/premier "choice neighborhood". They had also added two neighborhood improvement objectives focused on adult education and arts/culture to the initial list presented at the meeting.

After lunch, the Summit's facilitators reviewed the eight issue-focused neighborhood improvement objectives that had emerged from the planning process. They then invited the Summit participants to join a "roundtable working group" focused on the neighborhood improvement objective they were most interested in discussing for the remainder of the afternoon. Among the topics available were: health and wellness, educational excellence, affordable housing, public safety, neighborhood-oriented retail, parks and recreation, job generation and arts and culture. Within a few minutes, residents had joined one of these roundtable groups that were being facilitated and recorded by UM graduate students. Joining each table were three local funders familiar with both "best practices" programming and funding availability in each policy area that UM faculty had invited to participate in the Summit. After a quick round of introductions, the facilitators informed the group that they were responsible for generating as many specific policy, program and project proposals that could help South Memphis make progress towards achieving their assigned neighborhood improvement objective. Each facilitator

stressed the importance of making this a “blue sky” exercise in which they should avoid discounting and/or disregarding any proposal that might initially sound impractical. During the early part of the afternoon, residents working in these small groups generated more than 100 economic and community development recommendations designed to transform South Memphis into the region’s “premier neighborhood of choice”.

Once each breakout group completed their wish list, the outside funders participating in each group were given five minutes to review and evaluate the feasibility of each recommendation in light of their knowledge of the local funding environment. After each funder had awarded individual proposals a “thumbs up”, “some met” or “thumbs down” mark, those participating in the breakout sessions were asked to use one of five green stickers and one “skull and crossbones” black sticker they had been given to identify the projects they felt had the greatest “transformative” potential and the one they felt could significantly “destabilize” the neighborhood. After the small-group participants finished identifying their six most popular proposals, they were asked to organize them into one of the following categories: immediate priorities (Years 1–3), short-term priorities (Years 4–6) and long-term priorities (Years 7–10). Following a quick report from each table, meeting participants were invited to attend two Action Planning Meetings scheduled to take place in May and June during which the titles, descriptions, rationales, sponsoring organizations, supporting organizations, implementation steps, project costs and potential funding sources for the identified projects would be developed.

Action Planning Meetings

More than 80 local stakeholders attended the Action Planning Meetings that took place in May and June of 2009. The result of these meetings was a Preliminary Draft of the South Memphis Revitalization Action Plan that UM students and faculty spent the summer of 2009 writing and revising. In the fall of 2009, more than 100 local stakeholders gathered at St. Andrew AME Church to hear a UM student team present a verbal summary of the fully developed plan. Following several questions focused on the plan’s economic development, public education and community safety elements, a motion was made and seconded to accept the SOMERAP Plan. Following a near unanimous vote in support of the plan, Reverend Robinson asked those present to help the SMRC Steering Committee secure the plan’s formal adoption by the City of Memphis/Shelby County Land Use Control Commission and the City of Memphis Common Council. He specifically asked residents to help the SMRC Steering Committee secure the plan’s approval by undertaking the following activities to demonstrate the broad base of popular support the plan enjoyed:

- secure signatures on petitions developed to show local stakeholder support for the plan.
- seek formal endorsement of the plan by local institutions, such as: faith-based organizations, fraternal organizations, business associations and tenant groups to demonstrate the broad base of support the plan enjoyed.
- organize small group meetings with members of the Land Use Control Board and City Council to introduce them to the plan and advocate for its adoption by the city.
- mobilize local residents to demonstrate their enthusiastic support for the plan by attending and offering supportive testimony at the upcoming meetings of the Land Use Control Board and the City Council; and
- write letters to the Mayor of Memphis urging him to encourage members of the City Council to vote in favor of the plan’s adoption.

While these plan-making and advocacy activities were being carried out by the SMRC Steering Committee with the assistance of a small army of local stakeholders, an SMRC Sub-Committee was working on the implementation of an immediate-term neighborhood improvement project that had been identified as a top community priority at SoMeRAP's first community meeting—namely, the establishment of a seasonal farmers' market to make high-quality, low-cost, farm-fresh and culturally appropriate fruits and vegetables available to neighborhood residents, most of whom lived more than three miles from the nearest full service grocery store.

Securing the Adoption of the SoMeRAP Plan

During the fall and winter of 2009, while the majority of SMRC Steering Committee members were focused on the petition, organizational endorsement, small group meetings with elected officials, and mayoral letter-writing campaign, approximately two dozen local residents worked with UM faculty to design and implement a detailed work plan to open a farmers' market in South Memphis before the start of the summer of 2010. Among the major tasks completed during this period were:

- identification of a highly visible and centrally located site, accessible to mass transit, with sufficient on-site parking, zoned for retail sales that SMRC could rent and/or purchase;
- recruitment of area farmers offering a wide range of high-quality fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices;
- physical transformation of the site to accommodate selling spaces, merchant and customer parking, educational and cultural events, portable restrooms and trash and re-cycling areas;
- development of an aggressive marketing campaign to encourage local residents, business owners and area employees to patronize the market's vendors; and
- mobilization of local volunteers to help set up, staff and take down the market each week.

By May of 2010, the City of Memphis/Shelby County Land Use Control Commission as well as the Planning Committee of the City of Memphis City Council had unanimously endorsed the SoMeRAP Plan. With the enthusiastic support of these organizations, the City of Memphis City Council voted to adopt the SoMeRAP Plan. Nine weeks later, SMRC opened the South Memphis Farmers' Market that has evolved into one of the region's most popular open-air food markets.

Implementation of the SoMeRAP Plan

In the eight years since the SoMeRAP planning process was initiated by Reverend Robinson, with the assistance of his UM anthropology and planning allies, a number of major economic and community development programs and projects have been implemented that have helped stabilize this once vibrant working-class community. These projects have also served to significantly improve the perception of the community among Memphians living and working outside of the area. Among the most important elements of the SoMeRAP Plan that have been implemented to date are:

1. construction of a new facility for the Ernestine Rivers Child Development Center, allowing it to better serve more children and families;
2. expansion of the Circle of Success Learning Academy to accommodate 6th, 7th and 8th graders in the space formerly occupied by the Ernestine Rivers Child Development Center;

3. establishment of the South Memphis Farmers' Market as a critical new source for high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables;
4. redesign and reconstruction of that segment of the South Parkway Extension serving South Memphis making it more attractive and accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists;
5. transformation of an abandoned seafood restaurant on Mississippi Boulevard into the area's first full-service grocery store operated by The Works CDC;
6. reclamation, redesign and ongoing management of South Park through a partnership involving SMRC, the Grizzlies NBA franchise and Tru-Green Lawn Care Corporation;
7. organization of MEMFIX, a cooperative effort of SMRC, Lemoine Owen College, STAX Museum of American Soul Music, Four Way Grill and other local institutions, as a tactical urbanism initiative designed to enhance the appearance of the community's existing retail and public spaces to encourage Memphians and visitors to "discover" the neighbourhood;
8. rerouting of the Mississippi River Corridor Trail to pass through the area and the creation of a "Music Heritage Loop" to encourage users of this regional/national heritage trail to visit South Memphis' many music and cultural venues;
9. purchase of the abandoned South Memphis railroad freight line as a health and wellness-oriented "rails to trail" project funded as part of the HUD-supported Greater Memphis Greenprint Project; and
10. successful pursuit of a public art grant from the Memphis Arts Council designed to communicate South Memphis' rich economic, social and cultural history to residents and visitors through a series of outdoor sculptures to be installed along South Parkway East Extension.

The "Hallow Effect" of the SoMeRAP Plan

The SoMeRAP planning process has also had a number of other positive community outcomes that may, in the long run, may prove to be more important the abovementioned neighborhood improvement projects. Among these are:

- an ongoing community planning and development partnership involving South Memphis institutions and anthropology, public health, architecture and urban and regional planning students and faculty.
- a growing desire on the part of other poor and working-class neighborhoods to add participatory planning and design to their repertoire of urban problem-solving strategies.
- the embrace of SoMeRAP's bottom-up, bottom-sideways approach to planning by the city's recently established economic and community development intermediary—Community LIFT; and
- the training of a new generation of community planners and designers committed to supporting resident-led neighborhood transformation that have assumed important positions of leadership within the metropolitan region.

Future Challenges

As leaders of more and more of the city's poor and working-class communities come to expect and demand meaningful decision-making roles in publicly funded and assisted economic and community development projects, the city is going to be challenged to critically examine and reconsider its long history of top-down planning that has tended to privilege downtown development interests over those of its older residential neighborhoods such as South Memphis.

In this context, the SoMeRAP planning process offers a compelling local example of the transformative potential of a more inclusionary, multi-party stakeholder approach to planning, design and development.

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SOCIAL WORK AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Philip Mendes and Fronica Binns

Introduction

The relationship between community development and social work practice has long been a source of contention. As noted by Dominelli (1990), some authors argue that community development is a discrete discipline with its own history, strategies and philosophy, while others describe community development as one of the core methods of social work practice. This debate around the boundaries of what should reasonably be called community development practice, and whether social work and community development constitute complementary or contradictory responses to human need, remains unresolved. Consequently, there exists a distance and often overt tension between social workers and community development workers in many Western countries (Healy 2012; Das et al. 2015).

Social work is defined here as professional intervention to address both social inequities and situations of personal distress and crisis by shaping and changing the social environment in which people live. Social work includes a range of approaches including counseling and casework, group work and community interventions (O'Connor et al. 1998). The settlement house movement founded by Jane Addams in late 19th-century New York, which used community education and advocacy to assist disadvantaged populations, was one of the key precursors of modern social work (Figueira-McDonough 2001; Healy 2012). Community development is defined here as the employment of community structures by paid and unpaid persons to address social needs and collectively empower groups of people to determine their own destiny (Kenny 2011; Ife 2013).

A social worker in Australia is formally a person who has successfully completed either a Bachelor of Social Work program involving four years of study or a Master of Social Work program involving five years of study at university level, which gives them eligibility for membership of the professional association, the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW). However, social work in Australia is not a registered profession with legal professional boundaries, in contrast to both the mandatory registration of social work in most English-speaking

countries, and the registration of most other allied health professions in Australia (Mendes 2013). This means that in practice it is possible for some persons with other professional qualifications (or even no qualifications) to call themselves a social worker. This fluidity around the “social work” title may have ramifications for community development views of social work in that some practitioners and managers in statutory areas such as child protection and youth justice may wrongly be assumed to have a social work degree. But in practice, many if not most workers in these areas do not have a social work background.

Defining a community development worker in Australia is less straightforward. The Australian Community Workers Association (2015a) identifies community workers as those who have completed accredited professional training courses at higher or further education level. But there are many community development workers in paid or unpaid volunteer positions who don't have professional qualifications (Kenny 2011).

Social Work and Community Development Internationally

Community development is recognized by the International Federation of Social Workers (2014) as one of the three key methods of social work intervention. Historically, social work and community development enjoyed significant cooperation in the USA and Third World countries, but less so in Britain where the two disciplines have tended to operate under separate and often conflictual frameworks. In the USA, community development is viewed as a recognized component of social work, most community development educators are employed by schools of social work, and a minority of social workers have long been prominent in community organizing and direct action campaigns (Weil and Gamble 1995; Garvin and Cox 2001; Weil 2005). Nevertheless it appears that the majority of US social workers have increasingly focused on individualistic, rather than community-based, interventions (Rubin and Rubin 2001).

In Britain, community work originally developed from the late 19th-century Settlement Houses such as Oxford House and Toynbee Hall, which were linked to social work (Teater and Baldwin 2012). But in more recent times, the two disciplines have tended to operate under separate and often conflictual frameworks. These divisions reflected different ideological approaches to professionalism and the welfare state. The British Association of Social Workers was formed in the early 1970s, and specifically excluded the Association of Community Workers from affiliation. Some attempts have been made by social workers to influence and assist community development training and practice, but these activities have been regarded with mistrust by many community development workers (Baldock 1974; Clarke 2000; Popple 2012).

The relationship between social work and community development tends to be far more integrated and cooperative in the developing countries of Asia and Africa. Most social work practice takes the form of social development whereby partnerships are formed with communities to facilitate social change that addresses large-scale social problems including poverty, poor health, ethnic intolerance and the impact of climate change (Midgley 1995; Picton 1997; Vasoo 2002; Monani 2005).

Community Development Marginalized in Australian Social Work

The situation in Australia is more complicated. The AASW Practice Standards identifies “work with communities” as one of the eight key areas of social work practice (AASW 2013: 8). Similarly, the AASW Code of Ethics refers to community work as a key method of social work practice, and urges social workers to “promote community participation in societal processes

and decisions” (AASW 2010: 13). Community practice is a required subject in all 31 Australian Schools of Social Work (AASW 2015), and two out of the four leading community development textbooks in Australia are authored by social workers (Weeks et al. 2003; Ife 2013). Traditionally, many Australian community development workers were social work graduates, and much community development education has occurred within social work or social welfare courses (Mowbray 1985; Thorpe and Petruchenia 1992). On the surface, at least, it would appear that there has been a close and complementary relationship between Australian social work and community development practice.

Yet in practice, community development seems to be somewhat marginalized within Australian social work practice and education, which prioritizes casework or case management (i.e. one-to-one interventions involving counseling, practical assistance, supervision of statutory service clients or linkage to other social services) with individuals, families and groups (Dixon and Hoatson 1999; Allen-Kelly et al. 2001; Mendes 2009). Pawar and Anscombe (2015) state simply that community development is not popular with most practitioners, and seems to have been neglected as a form of practice. At the same time, a significant new social and community services industry including community development emerged which exists independently of the organized social work profession (Kenny 2011). That industry is represented by a professional association called the Australian Community Workers Association (ACWA), which has its own practice standards and Code of Ethics. There currently appears to be only limited formal contact or cooperation between the two disciplines of community development and social work.

Divisions between Community Development and Social Work

The divide between community development and social work seems to reflect a number of factors including differences in values and practice approaches, a mutual lack of understanding of the nature of the respective professions, a difference in the importance placed on professional qualifications and identity, and some conflicts around whether to prioritize individualistic-based interventions or structural and collective solutions (Mendes 2008).

There is a significant gulf between the dominant intervention processes of social work and community development. The primary focus of social work is using professional expertise via paternalistic methods to change or fix the micro-lives of individuals, whereas in contrast community development workers emphasize forming partnerships with community members to address the macro-concerns of the collective.

Equally, there seems to be a tension over how social workers and community development practitioners construct each other. Social workers may stereotype community development workers as naïve, untrained, subjective and emotive advocates lacking in professional detachment or judgement (Gray 1996; Ife 2013). But at the same time, many social workers—albeit probably a minority—value community development as a key practice skill that should be utilized in most social work interventions (Healy 2012). The integration of community development into social work practice seems to hold particular resonance for workers based in rural areas who rely heavily on using local networks, skills and resources given the limited availability of formal support services (Alston 2009a; Mason 2009).

However, other social workers—probably the majority—view community development as a specialist skill only to be utilized by those working specifically as community development workers. For example, a two-year longitudinal study of 194 Australian rural social workers found only 5.2 percent identified community work as their primary function. While this finding refers only to those who identified a practice method as their principal function rather than as one aspect of their practice, it could be argued that this reflects a general leaning towards

individualistic social work practice models and roles. A total of 43.3 percent of study participants identified generic casework as their primary function (Lonne and Cheers 2004).

According to a South African study, this reluctance to utilize community development interventions may reflect a number of factors including personal attitudes such as a preference for individualistic clinical work, and also a lack of adequate training in utilizing community development skills (Maritz and Coughlan 2004). Another barrier may be high caseloads focused on addressing individual crisis, rather than developing community strengths and engagement. To be sure, most social workers do possess key community development skills such as networking and advocacy. But even then managerial approaches that focus narrowly on individual clients and outputs may limit their opportunities to apply a preventive-based community perspective in their practice (Teater and Baldwin 2012).

Similarly, community development workers may hold stereotyped views of social workers. Kenny (1999) suggests that community development workers view social work as a profession that is at odds with community development values. According to this view, social workers are concerned with changing individuals to fit difficult and inequitable circumstances, while in contrast community development workers seek to empower disadvantaged communities to achieve structural change. Some support for Kenny's view is provided by essays completed by social work students enrolled in the Community Work subject at Monash University, Melbourne. Over the past ten years, students have interviewed community development workers about their practice, and asked them about the differences between what they do and what social workers do. The answers provided have varied greatly, but it is evident that at least some community development workers view social workers as status-driven professionals who use symbols of professional power such as academic jargon, large offices and expensive clothes to demonstrate their supposed importance.

But this imprecise survey raises the question as to what types of social workers most community development workers interact with in their daily practice. Some appear to have regular contact with social workers who work for formal bureaucratic institutions such as child protection, youth justice and the Commonwealth Department of Human Services Centrelink agency, which delivers income security payments (and as noted above some of these so-called "social workers" may not actually be social work trained), but others may mostly collaborate with social workers employed in community-based programs. Further research is needed to ascertain how a range of community development workers typically define and identify social work practice.

Additionally, community development workers seem to hold a variety of positions on issues of professionalism and volunteerism, which in turn influence their approach to social work. Many reject social work's reliance on professional discourse incorporating specialist qualifications, knowledge and skills and arguably self-interest in favor of a more democratic relationship with communities whereby community members are regarded as the experts and community development is constructed as participation in a social movement more than a profession (Clarke 2000; Kenny 2011).

Ife (1999, 2013) argues that an inherent incompatibility exists between professional social work and the values of community development. He views professional models as constructing unequal power relations between workers who have exclusive access to specialized knowledge, and communities including volunteer leaders who are denied access to that knowledge. The professional model does not fit with key community development ideas such as empowerment, the sharing of skills and knowledge, and the "community knows best". In contrast, Ife constructs community development workers as idealists who are passionately committed to social activist approaches and values.

Kenny (2011) offers a not dissimilar argument. She constructs professional social welfare as a paternalistic and elitist activity whereby dispassionate assistance is provided by an expert who views themselves as superior to service recipients. In contrast, community development is described as democratic and participatory work by those who identify with their community rather than a closed professional group, and are driven by firm values and beliefs.

But in the real world it is debatable whether all or even most community development workers hold to these ideals, and some are openly embracing a form of professionalism that upholds their standards and interests. As Healy (2012) notes, many draw their income from the same government funding sources as social workers, and they are entitled—particularly given the high number of women who work in the community services industry—to demand a fair income rather than being employed on a casual or unpaid basis.

Noticeably, the ACWA Code of Ethics documents the specific obligations of community workers as professionals. The document refers to professional training, behavior, practice and education. It also requires community workers to respect the skills of their professional colleagues, and avoid any behavior which “may damage the profession” (ACWA 2015b). An associated document emphasizes the role of ACWA in supporting the “professionalism of those involved in community work”, and establishing a Register similar to that utilized by “other professions including social workers” (ACWA 2015c). Given these statements, it would appear that there may be as many commonalities as differences in the respective attitudes of community development and social work to professionalism.

To be sure, some community development workers and educators have an ideological objection to social work, and are concerned to distance community development from what they see as an allegedly conservative profession (Mowbray and Meekosha 1990; Waddington 1994). For example, Kenny (2011) draws on the old Marxist notion of social welfare as a form of social control used to support and strengthen the capitalist system to imply that social work is a profession which exists to regulate the poor and reduce antagonism to the existing social order. Such criticisms are reminiscent of the hostility of the famous US community organizer Saul Alinsky towards the social work profession. According to Alinsky: “They come to the people of the slums not to help them rebel and fight their way out of the muck . . . most social work does not even reach the submerged masses. Social work is largely a middle-class activity and guided by a middle-class psychology. In the rare instances where it reaches the slum dwellers it seeks to get them adjusted to their environment so they will live in hell and like it. A higher form of social treason would be difficult to conceive” (Alinsky 1989: 59), quoted in Homan 1994: 7–8).

But much of this criticism arguably reflects a false construction of community development as inherently radical and social work as inherently conservative, and perhaps a narrow (and arguably distorted) association of social workers with statutory or therapeutic practice. In reality, both have conservative and radical components. To be sure, professional social work has been dominated historically by individualistic and psychoanalytic perspectives. However, in recent decades, mainstream social work has incorporated structural and systemic perspectives. Most Australian social workers now practice within what may be called a “persons in their social environment” framework, which holistically examines the relationship between individuals and broader social and community structures and networks (O’Connor et al. 1998; Goldsworthy 2002). Many social workers are active in undermining oppressive and controlling systems and structures which do not meet the needs of welfare consumers (Ifé 1999; Lundy 2004). Social workers are not limited by their professional identity to engaging in individualistic or paternalistic interventions. Rather, they can employ collaborative techniques that empower communities to define their own needs, and facilitate collective solutions.

Similarly, the critique ignores the presence of considerable mainstream or conservative practice within community development itself. Many community development programs in Australia are funded by local governments, and their objectives tend to reflect the mostly conservative political agenda of elected councillors rather than emanating from consultation with community members. Additionally, programs funded by state governments such as neighborhood renewal in the State of Victoria have noticeably been based on working top-down within our existing socio-political system, rather than developing bottom-up strategies to explicitly challenge social structures (Mowbray 2004).

Philosophical and Practical Arguments in Favor of Closer Integration

While there are some significant value-based differences between community development and social work, they also appear to have much in common. Both professions share a commitment to values of social justice, equality and human rights, and to facilitating advocacy and social change to promote human well-being (Coulton 2005; Gamble and Weil 2010; Aimers and Walker 2011; Das et al. 2015; Forde and Lynch 2014, 2015).

Consequently, a number of authors argue for closer integration of the two disciplines based on the assumption that social workers are committed to linking personal pain with broader social and political structures and interventions. They argue that many problems experienced by individual service users have social or structural causes, that casework and community development responses complement each other, that community development approaches allow social workers to assist larger numbers of people than via individual casework alone, which then leads to more sustainable and long-term outcomes, and that all social workers should integrate both personal micro-helping and political macro-approaches in their work (Earle and Fopp 1999; Figueira-McDonough, 2001; Goldsworthy 2002; Hardcastle et al. 2004; Tajnsek 2005; Jordan 2007; Stepney and Popple 2008; Alston 2009b; Healy 2012; Morley et al. 2014).

For example, specific community social work (CSW) positions have been developed in Britain which target the social network of the client. The emphasis of this decentralized intervention is on the community rather than the individual, on mutual aid rather than self-help, and on modifying or changing the system by advocating for improved local services in partnership with service users. Community social workers utilize a strengths-based framework that focuses on community resilience and empowerment, and view themselves as part of a broader community support system instead of providing support in isolation to individual residents (Henderson and Thomas 1992; Twelvetrees 2002; Popple 2012). Some typical practice examples of CSW include supporting a women's refuge, running a housing estate forum, developing a support group for single parents with children that have challenging behaviors, and establishing a support group for young solvent users (Rogowski 2010).

According to this perspective, both professions could benefit from sharing their knowledge and skills in order to facilitate personal and community empowerment. This could be particularly useful in rural areas where individual services are often difficult to access due to cost and distance. Community development workers may find that the application of the micro-skills valued in social work will assist them to recognize and respect individual differences and needs within collective processes. Similarly, social workers may decide that community-based interventions based on exploring the strengths of communities are often more effective than individual casework interventions in addressing social needs (Mendes 2006; Lynn 2008; Forde and Lynch 2014; Das et al. 2015).

For example, Carroll (2005) argues that community development gives social workers the tools to overcome the limitations of practice methods that target individuals in isolation, and fails to address the underlying causes of community need. She notes that social work clients sometimes receive assistance only either because they are lucky and submit applications just when housing or other forms of assistance become available, or alternatively because they are particularly assertive in demanding support. In contrast, a community development approach would potentially allow individual clients to join with others in similar situations to collectively demand fair treatment.

There are many examples of effective community development interventions by Australian social workers. Mendes (2006) presented six case scenarios whereby community development interventions were more effective than traditional casework approaches in assisting with social problems such as gambling, discrimination against gay people, poverty, racism and upholding the rights of the elderly and young people transitioning from out-of-home care. These case studies arguably demonstrated the value of social workers more actively incorporating community development strategies in their practice given that such strategies have the potential to assist groups of people rather than individuals, and to address the underlying causes of social problems rather than the symptoms.

Similarly, Filliponi (2011) identified a number of practice scenarios in which community development interventions would arguably be more effective than traditional casework approaches. These included addressing health and social problems in rural Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory, assisting members of a community ravaged by bushfire, and reducing male violence towards women and children in the community. Morley et al. (2014) argued that community development approaches can be particularly useful for educating communities about common myths concerning the causes of sexual assault, and Alston (2009b) discusses the utility of community development in empowering groups of marginalized young people and providing outreach health services to drought-affected rural communities.

Two Research-Based Studies of Australian Social Workers and Community Development

To date, only two small-scale studies have explored the views of Australian social workers concerning the role of community development in their practice.

Integrating Social Work and Community Development Practice in Victoria, Australia

The first study, by Mendes (2008), examined the means by which social workers effectively integrate the values, principles and frameworks of the two disciplines. The study interviewed six urban-based non-government social workers in the Australian state of Victoria known to work in specific community development settings, or to regularly employ community development skills in their practice.

The interviews addressed five issues including their views on the key similarities and differences between social work and community development skills, values and principles; the history and context of their professional employment of community development interventions with references to values, principles and strategies; a case study whereby such an intervention has arguably facilitated a more effective social work practice outcome compared to traditional casework; their views on the relationship between community development and social work including perceptions of the attitudes of most community development workers towards social

work, and conversely social workers towards community development; and their views on how their social work qualification influenced their community development practice compared to community development workers who lack this training.

The findings suggested that community development can add significantly to the skills base and effectiveness of social work practice. The participants also reported that there are greater commonalities rather than differences between social work and community development skills, values and principles, and that these commonalities provide the basis for cooperation. To be sure, they didn't argue that the two professions are the same, or that community development is little more than one form of social work practice. Social work does place a greater emphasis on individualistic-based interventions, whereas community development is more concerned with structural and collective solutions. These different approaches to practice and professional identity do create some tensions. But as a number of interviewees argued, effective practice should include both forms of intervention on a continuum.

The study concluded that one significant barrier to greater integration of social work and community development practice is the relatively small number of Australian social workers who work in community development settings. There appears to be a strong argument for raising the profile of community development in social work education by placing greater emphasis on the development of community development practice skills within small group teaching workshops and fieldwork practicums. Graduates would then be more likely to have the capacity to seek employment in specifically community-based positions. Although limited to a small and select sample of workers, the study findings suggested that given adequate training and opportunities, social workers can effectively use community development skills to enhance their practice efficacy and wisdom.

The Integration of Community Development within Australian Rural Social Work Practice

The second study, by Mendes and Binns (2013), examined how eight rural social workers in the state of Victoria construct, define and integrate community development practice values, skills and strategies within their core practice. The participants worked in case management, counseling, generalist social work, mental health social work and management, with only one holding a designated community development position. The interview topics included practitioner definitions of key terms such as community development, social work and rural practice, their background and experience as a rural social worker, the community development methods and strategies used, and the factors that influence how community development is incorporated into their practice. Also covered were the issues and barriers they face to using and integrating community development strategies, and the means by which they overcome these barriers in order to meet the needs of their clients and community.

The findings of this study suggest that community development is consistently viewed by practitioners to be fundamental to effective rural social work practice. Community development skills enhance rural social workers' capacity to effectively navigate the complex contextual factors present in rural communities. Engaging community networks and relationships was more effective than just supporting individuals in isolation. For rural practitioners, engaging with issues at both an individual and a community-wide level tends to occur naturally in response to community need. With workers often finding themselves embedded to varying degrees as both professionals and community members, they carry an added sense of responsibility to work toward sustainable goals that address the needs of their own community. Participants in this study have pointed out that without community development in their practice they would be restricted in their

capacity to practice holistically and stay relevant to their community's changing needs. This is especially the case when there are few specialist agencies to refer clients on to, or limited capacity to deal with issues solely on an individual basis.

But practitioners' capacity to incorporate community development into their practice is constrained on a number of levels. At an organization-wide level they are restricted by funding that rarely explicitly supports community development approaches within core practice. Only case management is formally mandated and funded. At a team level they may be restricted by the lack of consistency with which management supports the integration of community development into team practice. Some managers support the inclusion of community development in core practice, but some don't.

The findings provide various examples of how community development is being conceived and integrated into contemporary rural social workers' practice. These included operating as an underlying value that drives overall practice, as a particular strategy used in practice, or as a discrete project separate to core social work roles. And practitioners also use community development strategies outside their professional practice within volunteering roles as a private citizen.

Community education programs and skills were shown by participants to be a way to work around the constraints of limited resources and the geographic spread of their peers and clients, as well as part of broader strategies to remain relevant in their community. In particular, they allow practitioners to reach larger groups of the community using the existing resources. This accords with earlier findings on the challenges faced by rural practitioners with limited resources and large catchment areas attempting to address the needs of their community within individualistic practice (Lynn 2008).

The most significant factor highlighted in the study was arguably the lack of consistent funding for community development approaches within core rural social work practice. Nevertheless, the study shows that, despite community development strategies not being supported by agency funding, management tends to support practitioners' use of community development. This is in part because these organizations generally recognize their responsibilities within their communities. However, as noted earlier, the degree of management support varies according to individual managers, and is not consistent across organizations. Individual practitioners' own practice values also seem to affect how, and if, they seek out and identify support for the incorporation of community development approaches and strategies in their practice.

Conclusion

The relationship between social work and community development in Australia is complex given that community development exists as both a discrete method of social work practice, and as a separate discipline or movement with its own unique philosophy focused on empowerment and structural change.

Social workers and community development workers are potentially divided by a number of factors including: differences in values and practice approaches; a lack of understanding of the respective professions; a difference in the importance placed on professional qualifications and identity; and a reluctance in at least some cases to collaborate with each other. Additionally, social workers involved in casework may lack community development skills, or simply feel too overwhelmed by individual crisis situations (e.g. young isolated mothers who require emergency accommodation) to build group/community capacity (i.e. address the causes of homelessness).

But equally, it is evident from our two case studies that a closer integration of the two disciplines would potentially have a number of positives: social workers and community development

workers share many skills, strategies and principles; integration is likely to assist service users because it would benefit more people than casework alone; it could assist caseworkers to adopt a more long-term, strengths-based and empowering approach focusing on prevention rather than crisis intervention; and is likely to be particularly crucial in addressing new forms of social disadvantage such as forced migration and associated trauma caused by ethnic and religious conflict and/or climate change (Forde and Lynch 2015).

A number of actions could be taken to advance integration including: the AASW and ACWA educating their members about the respective skills and approaches of the two professions in order to dispel common stereotypes, and promote the potential benefits of closer collaboration between the two disciplines; revising the AASW practice standards and educational documents to give greater recognition to the use of community development approaches; and lifting the profile and significance of community development within social work degrees. There is also an urgent need for greater research to examine the attitudes of social workers towards community development, and the attitudes of community development workers towards social work.

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DIRECT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Case of Turkey

Belgin Ucar Kocaoglu and Rhonda Phillips

Introduction

Community development has as a foundational concept the notion of participation by residents and citizens of its communities. There are fundamental assumptions in the practice of community development that those most impacted by development will have a say in it, have potential to contribute with resources, and to share responsibility for their community actions, impacts and outcomes (Vincent 2015). For example, the Community Development Society (CDS) adopted core “Principles of Good Practice” in 1970 to guide researchers, practitioners and students of community development:

- Promote active and representative participation toward enabling all community members to meaningfully influence the decisions that affect their lives.
- Engage community members in learning about and understanding community issues, and the economic, social, environmental, political, psychological and other impacts associated with alternative courses of action.
- Incorporate the diverse interests and cultures of the community in the community development process; and disengage from support of any effort that is likely to adversely affect the disadvantaged members of a community.
- Work actively to enhance the leadership capacity of community members, leaders and groups within the community.
- Be open to using the full range of action strategies to work toward the long-term sustainability and well-being of the community (Community Development Society 2016).

These principles still hold true nearly fifty years later, and although CDS is predominately a North American group, similar foundational ideas are found throughout the globe. Others describe values and beliefs inherent in community development that essentially return to the basic notion that “people have the right to participate in decisions that affect them”, along with the right to make informed decisions (Vincent 2015).

Participation then, is both the pathway to effective community development and the basis on which it is built. It is rarely an easy task to integrate citizens, community knowledge and institutions into participatory community development processes, and can even be quite elusive (Eversole 2012). The World Bank, in a 2013 report exploring participation in a multitude of development projects around the globe, found that participatory development can be effective. Instead of viewing participatory development as a means to bypass failures—both in the marketplace and by government—they suggest that it be seen as a way to harness civic and social capacity (Mansuri and Vijayendra 2013).

From the perspective of community development theory, ideas around participation including in the form of agency or voice are threaded throughout several approaches. The context for community development is often assumed to be one that is both participatory and conducted with intent to deliberate, with the space for hearing from citizens and residents (Phillips and Pittman 2015). Hustedde (2015) describes the notion of voice in this process as follows:

Public talk is not simply talk; it is essential for democratic participation. It is about thinking through public policy choices. Deliberation occurs when the public examines the impacts of potential choices and tries them on. . . . In such settings, public talk involves rich discussions among a variety of networks. From the community development perspective participation occurs in a setting where a diversity of voices are heard in order to explore problems, test solutions, and make changes to policies when the community finds flaws.

Others describe a type of integration around communicative activities, bringing together interests from across the community. This is what Friedland (2001) refers to as being communicatively integrated. In this context, there is one theory that holds particular relevance for this discussion, that of Habermas’ communicative action theory. In his view, engaging in discussions is critical for building linkages within and between systems, and that communication can even be emancipatory (Hustedde 2015).

Participation then has many implications for community development. Our attention now turns towards an overview of direct participation. This is followed by an exploration of the case of Turkey, in which we consider different levels of participation in the context of changes in national laws since 2000.

From Representative Democracy to Direct Participation

The most frequently studied issues in direct participation can be grouped under four categories. The first is studies regarding whether direct democracy or representative democracy is more effective. The second covers studies of citizens regarding the concept and definition of public participation (conceptual confusion, community, etc.). The third includes studies of the best participation typologies. The fourth category is that of exploring the effectiveness of participation tools.

The debate as to whether direct participation or representative participation is more effective continues to be actively discussed. For years, it has been thought that representative democracy is the only solution and work has been carried out for development of structures and mechanisms in this regard. However, representative democracy has been losing its popularity for the last

25 years, and many administrations have begun to establish direct participation mechanisms. While direct participation allows active participation of citizens in the decision-making process, they can take part in the decision-making process through their chosen representatives in representative participation (Roberts 2008). Direct public participation has significant benefits, such as providing training and education for citizens; increasing the quality of decisions made by government in cooperation with those affected from the decisions; increasing accountability of elected officials, government transparency and increasing its legitimacy; providing room for emergence of new leaders; ensuring increased effectiveness of implementation of policies; developing justice and fairness; and increasing trust and understanding between citizens and public institutions (Lukensmeyer and Jacobson 2013). Roberts (2008) indicated some dilemmas of direct public participation, such as “size, excluded and oppressed groups, common good, time and crisis”. These issues can threaten both developed and developing countries. In addition, developing countries, as stated by Denhardt et al. (2009) have to deal with some inherent problems related with public participation at the same time, such as “poverty, lack of democratic culture and civil society, lack of institutional infrastructure”.

Increase in direct public participation practice does not mean that such practice replaces representative democracy (OECD 2001). Fung (2006) has stated that the direct public participation mechanism is a supplement to political representation rather than a substitute for it, and better results can be achieved when used together.

Another frequently debated issue is the definitions of and concepts for direct public participation. Today, many concepts are used for direct public participation such as citizen engagement, public participation, civic engagement, community engagement, community participation and citizen involvement. These concepts have few differences between them. While “public” is a concept covering all people, “citizen” refers to people who have the right to vote and “community” refers to members of a particular area or neighborhood (Nabatchi and Amsler 2014). In this chapter, we use the terms citizen and resident interchangeably as inhabitants of a community, whether or not they have the right to vote. Using many concepts for direct public participation causes significant confusion. It could be suggested to identify who and what processes are covered under the concept of public participation as a partial solution to this problem. Some of the definitions given are as follows:

- Participation is everything that enables people to influence the decisions and get involved in the actions that affect their lives (Involve 2005).
- Any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decision (International Association for Public Participation (2016).
- A process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them (World Bank 1996).
- The process by which members of a society (those not holding office or administrative positions in government) share power with public officials in making substantive decisions and in taking actions related to community (Roberts 2008).
- Public participation refers to actions that allow people to move their interests, needs and values to the decisions and actions related to public issues (Nabatchi 2012b).
- Public participation can be any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and gives full consideration to public input in making that decision (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2014).

These definitions merge well with the foundational concepts of community development, and support the notion of people having voice in public decision-making processes. Three basic

characteristics can be suggested regarding direct public participation, based on these definitions. First of all, public participation allows citizens to actively take part in decisions and actions that affect their lives. Second, direct public participation is a process that conveys people's choices and needs to the administration. Finally, with direct public participation, the decision-making power is shared between public and the government. Within the scope of such sharing, an attempt will be made to put forward with various typologies to what extent citizens have the power to influence government decisions and actions.

Regarding citizens' impact on the decision-making process, the typology proposed by Arnstein (1969) identifies various levels of participation with a ladder consisting of eight steps. Each step shows the effect of citizens on government decision-making processes. The eight steps are divided into three broad groups:


- Non-participation: it is unquestionable that citizens have an effect on decision-making process. This group consists of the steps of manipulation (1) and therapy (2).
- Degrees of tokenism: while it is possible for citizens to obtain a wide variety of information and to make recommendations, the power to make the final decision lies with the power-holder. The steps of informing (3), consultation (4) and placation (5) are in this group.
- Degrees of citizen power: although citizens have the potential of negotiation with power-holders, they are able to obtain the majority in decision-making. In this group are the steps of partnership (6), delegated power (7) and citizen power (8).

Arnstein's public participation ladder has been the basis of numerous studies from the late 1960s (Wilcox 2003). Conversely, it has been subject to much criticism (Conner 1988). Since Arnstein, many models have emerged attempting to identify the level at which citizens affect the decision-making process. In White's participation model (White 1996) there are four forms of participation—nominal, instrumental, representative and transformative. Wilcox (2003) evaluated the level of participation in five steps—information, consultation, deciding together, acting together and supporting. Pretty's participation typology (Pretty 1994) consists of the steps of manipulative participation, passive participation, participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation and self-mobilization. OECD (2001) examined the level of participation under three headings—information, consultation and active participation.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2 2007) also suggests a spectrum for public participation. This typology presents classifications that indicate the level of citizens' impact on the decision-making process (see Table 32.1).

According to the spectrum in Table 32.1, the impact of citizens on the decision-making process increases towards the right-hand side of the table. At *Inform* level, the aim of public participation is "to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and solutions", and the state gives citizens a promise by saying that "we will keep you informed". At the next level of the public participation spectrum, which is *Consult*, the aim of participation is "to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions", while citizens are given the promise that "we will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision". The aim of the *Involve* level is "to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered", and citizens are given the promise that "we will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision" At the *Collaborate* level,

Table 32.1 IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum

Increasing Level of Public Impact 					
	<i>Inform</i>	<i>Consult</i>	<i>Involve</i>	<i>Collaborate</i>	<i>Empower</i>
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendation into the decisions to maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fact sheets – Websites – Open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public comment – Focus groups – Surveys – Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Workshops – Deliberative polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Citizen advisory committees – Consensus-building, – Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Citizen juries – Ballots – Delegated decision

Source: International Association for Public Participation (2007)

the aim of public participation is “to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution”. At this level, the promise made to citizens is that “we will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the. decisions to the maximum extent possible”. Lastly, at the *Empowerment* level, where citizens have the greatest share of decision-making, the aim of participation is “to place final decision-making in the hands of the public”. Then, citizens are promised that “we will implement what you decide” (IAP2 2007).

The spectrum has been criticized at the Inform level for not being participatory because of the lack of it at this stage. In addition, critics claim that concepts of Involve and Collaborate mean the same thing, and the word Empower is misleading since there is no such power in democracy (Carson 2008). The spectrum has also received criticism from Nabatchi (2015) that it does not include the communication models used at each level of participation—rather it examines public participation in terms of decision-making only. Nabatchi and Leighninger (2012a) stated that the Inform stage involves one-way communication, the Consult level involves one- and two-way communication, the Involve level mostly contains two-way communication, the Collaborate level usually requires deliberative communication and Empower level generally involves deliberative communication. Despite some shortcomings and criticism related to the spectrum, it is one of the most widely used models today since it can help explain public participation levels in the context of respective and clear examples of participation techniques.

Another important area of work is the exploration of which participation tools would be more useful at which levels of participation. In the spectrum related to public participation (Table 32.1), IAP2 (2007) mentioned several tools that can be used at each level: the Inform level includes fact sheets, websites and open houses; the Consult level contains public comment, focus groups, surveys and public meetings; the Involve level includes workshops and deliberative polling; the Collaborate level involves citizen advisory committees, consensus building and participatory decision-making; and the Empower level includes citizen juries, ballots and delegated decisions. Many new tools were added, and such diversity in direct public participation tools can create difficult situations for the governing bodies involved with direct public participation. Failure to select the correct engagement techniques may result in negative consequences for both management and citizens. While resulting in loss of time and cost for the government, it may also damage citizens' confidence in government by frustrating them (Lukensmeyer and Jacobson 2013).

Public participation tools will vary according to what is expected from the participation, the purpose and the problems or issues discussed. Ideally, the right tools, selected on the basis of the nature of the public problem, will be implemented and discussed at the right time and in the right place. If the goal is only to inform citizens, making a selection by taking into account the profile of citizens makes it easier to achieve your goal. If a decision needs to be made, for example, about building a park in a certain neighborhood, the tool to be used in this case may be surveys or opinion polls. As for planning and renewal of the infrastructure in a city, then a deliberative tool can be selected which brings together specialized officials to discuss the matter in depth with citizens and residents representing the city. The most logical approach would then seem to be to select public participation tools according to the nature of each issue or subject.

Participation in Turkey

Local governments are those governing or administrative units closest to citizens and the official bodies that citizens will mostly have the opportunity to participate with for decision-making. In local government, public participation improves the quality of service provision and it provides an important contribution to the development of democracy at the same time. Public participation practices in local governments have increased in Turkey since 2000. With the framework of Agenda 21 adopted in 1992 during the United Nations World Environment and Development Conference in Rio, some local governments in Turkey implemented city councils as a public participation tool. In addition, Municipal Act No. 5393 (adopted in 2005) (Municipal Law numbered 5393 2005) provided the legal basis for establishment of city councils. The

following provides an exploration of participation in Turkey. First, we provide a short background on local governments. Next, the legal framework that allows public participation is described. Finally, the level of direct public participation and public participation tools used by local governments in Turkey are evaluated using the framework of the IAP2's public participation spectrum.

Local Governments in Turkey

As a unitary state, in Turkey, management roles and responsibilities are carried out by two organizations—centralized government and decentralized government. In Turkey, local governments were first formed during the Ottoman Empire in order to keep rural control and ensure more regular collection of taxes rather than as a democratic requirement (Tekeli and Ortayli 1978). Local governments were like rural extensions of the central government provinces (Oktay 2008). Article 127 of the 1982 Constitution (T.C. Constitution 1982) states that local governments are defined as “public entities whose establishment principles are specified by law and whose decision-making bodies are elected by voters referred by law in order to meet common need of residents of provinces, municipalities villages”. In this context, there are three local government units in Turkey: (1) provincial special administrations, (2) municipalities and (3) villages. In Turkey, local governments were subject to a number of laws and regulations until 2004. With new laws enacted after 2004 (The Greater Municipality Act Numbered 5216 dated 2004, Municipal Act Numbered 5393 dated 2005 and Special Provincial Administration Law Numbered 5302 dated 2005), significant increases have taken place in the duties and responsibilities of local governments. However, revenue growth has not been realized to help meet increased duties and responsibilities. The majority of local government revenues emanate from the share received from central government. This situation impacts effectiveness of government operations. In Turkey, legal arrangements to support public participation, which is viewed as one of the most important tools to increase efficiency of local governments, have been widespread since the 2000s.

Legal Framework for Direct Public Participation in Local Governments in Turkey

Among the legal documents allowing for direct public participation in local governments in Turkey is Municipal Law No. 5393. Article 13 of the Municipal Law, under the Fellow Countryman Law title, states that “everybody is a citizen in the place of resort”, and it reads as follows:

Fellow citizens have the right to participate in municipal decisions and services, obtain information about municipal activities and to benefit from the subsidies of the municipal government. . . . Municipalities carry out necessary works for development of social and cultural relations among fellow citizens and protection of cultural values. Municipalities take measures to ensure participation of universities, professional organizations in the nature of public institutions, trade unions, civil society organizations and experts in such works.

Article 20 of the Municipal Law states that municipal council meetings are open to the public and those meetings may be in the form of closed sessions, with absolute majority of the participants upon reasoned request of the president of the council or councillors where necessary. Though

allowing for citizens' participating in council meetings is an admirable move, this application seems to be lacking in two respects. First, citizens attend such meeting as listeners only, so they are not given the right to speak, or council members are not given the opportunity to contact the citizens. A second shortcoming is that council meetings may be closed to the participation of citizens following a decision by an absolute majority of councillors.

Municipal Law Article 76 mentions city councils as a tool that can be considered essential regarding participation: "City council works to develop the city vision and fellow citizen awareness, to protect the city's rights and rules, to realize sustainable development, environmental awareness, social assistance and solidarity, transparency, accountability and accounting, participation and decentralization principles in city life". The same article of the law stipulates that municipalities provide aid and support for works of city councils consisting of representatives from professional organizations in the nature of public institution, trade unions, notaries, universities, if any, relevant non-governmental organizations, political parties, public institutions and organizations and neighborhood headmen as well as other relevant parties. The working principles and procedures of the city council are determined by the Regulation of the City Council dated 2006 (Regulation of the City Council 2006).

Concerning participation, Municipal Law Article 77 mentions "voluntary participation in municipal services". The provision, which reads as "Municipalities implement programs for participation of volunteers in order to ensure solidarity and participation in the town in making services for the elderly, women and children, the disabled, the poor and the needy through health, education, sports, environment, social services and assistance, library, park, traffic and cultural services, and to increase effectiveness, saving and productivity in the services", allows for voluntary participation of citizens in municipal services. In addition to the relevant article in the Municipal Law, "The Regulations on Voluntary Participation in Special Provincial Administration and Municipal Services" (Regulations on Voluntary Participation in Special Provincial Administration and Municipal Services 2005) came into force in 2005. In the above-mentioned regulations, the concept of voluntary is defined under article 4 as follows: "Natural persons and legal entities putting their knowledge, skills and abilities in local management services without expecting financial gain expectation in their respective work area by investing all kinds of collaboration, opportunity and time", and principles and procedures related to voluntary participation in local government services are determined. However, it can be said that voluntary participation does not occur often in practice; such practices have mostly been used by fire services and social services in recent years (Uçar Koca and Seçkiner (2015).

As an important law regarding public participation, the Right to Information Act makes it possible for citizens to request from the state the information that is necessary for their participation. After the Right to Information Act No. 4982 (Right to Information Law, numbered 4982 2003) entered into force in Turkey on April 24, 2004, information units were constituted in public institutions and organizations. Also public institutions and organizations started to place this information on their websites. As a result, citizens can claim the information and documents they need in the framework of the Right to Information Act online or by personal application.

Another law with important provisions on public participation is the Public Financial Management and Control Law dated December 24, 2003, numbered 5018 (Public Financial Management and Control Law, numbered 5018 2003). In this law, Chapter 6 titled Activity Reports and Final Accounts requires making public the administrative activity reports produced by public institutions and organizations. In response, a number of public institutions and organizations have begun to publish some information on their website, including their budgets.

Evaluation of Public Participation Level and Tools in the Scope of the IAP2 Spectrum

As mentioned above, the levels of public participation proposed by IAP2 consist of “inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower”. In this section of the study, we aim to analyze the level of public participation of Turkey’s local governments using the framework of the IAP2 spectrum.

The “Inform” Level

In Turkey, local government units inform citizens about their decisions and various activities by means of brochures, advertisements, flyers, reports and social media and so on. Among local government units, municipalities are undoubtedly the most active units that provide the most services. Almost every municipality has a website and citizens are able to access certain information such as strategic plans, performance reports, bus schedules, directions and contact numbers on these sites. Citizens can also obtain information and documents from information units located in municipalities in line with the Right to Information Act, which requires information to be provided within 15 working days (Right to Information Act, Article 11). This Act, with some exceptions,¹ holds public institutions and organizations responsible for providing citizens with all requested information and documents. Nevertheless, especially due to the uncertain scope of the exceptions from information and documents related to government secrets, public institutions and organizations may decline to provide requested information and documents citing this exception if they do not want to give such information and documents.

Also, the quality of the information provided for citizens is of great importance for participation. In other words, the information given to citizens should be “understandable, accessible, complete, accurate, timely and free or low cost” (Piotrowski and Liao 2012: 81). Piotrowski and Liao (2012: 86–88) carried out an analysis on the “information usability and information quantity” and they found that providing all the information can sometimes prevent citizens from finding the information they are looking for. Citizens’ access to complete and accurate information at the inform stage plays a major role in the success of public participation. Measuring and evaluating the quality of information is beyond the scope of this study.

The “Consult” Level

In Turkey, local governments vary widely in their use of various tools at the consult level, such as city councils, satisfaction surveys and polls. City councils are one of the most controversial tools of direct public participation among today’s local governments due to issues with implementation. City councils gained legal ground in 2005 with Municipality Law No. 5393, Article 76. However, they have not yielded the expected results for public participation although more than ten years have passed. Article 5 of the Regulations on City Councils set out the working principles and procedures of the councils. The article stipulates that “city councils are formed with the members referred to under article 8 within 3 months following municipal elections where municipal organizations are in their place”. Regarding who is to participate in city councils, Article 8 of the Regulation states,

the highest local authority or representative in the district; mayor or his representative; not more than 10 representatives of public institutions and organizations to be determined by provincial governors or district governors as applicable; . . . representatives of political parties which had formed the organization in the district; at least one and not more than two representatives from universities, one representative from

each university in the case of more than one university in the district; . . . one representative from each council and working groups established by the council.

Article 6 of the Regulations requires that suggestions proposed by the city council will be presented to the municipal council for consideration. City councils have been exposed to considerable criticism on both legal and practical grounds. One criticism is that city councils actually resemble representative public participation rather than direct public participation. Considering the formation of city councils, it is seen that the majority of council personnel are composed of representatives of public, private and civil organizations or various groups. This poses an obstacle for citizens who are not members of a group in expressing their ideas to the city council (Demirci 2010: 21–46; Özdemir 2011: 31–56). It seems possible to overcome this shortcoming by allowing for individual participation to a certain extent within city councils (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Public Works and Housing 2009).

Another criticism of city councils is that they do not include different sectors such as children, the young, women and the disabled (Demirci 2010: 36). At this point, it can be said that there are some shortcomings in the composition of city councils. The participation design includes questions such as: “As an issue affecting the efficiency of public participation, who should attend? How will participants be selected?” (Nabatchi et al. 2015; Fung 2006). If the participation design is not capable of accommodating different elements of society, efforts toward participation will likely result in failure. For example, if there are no predetermined criteria for designating representatives from universities and representatives are selected merely on the basis of close political proximity, then city councils would only be a source of finance rather than contributing to the municipality’s delivering a better service. In practice, this situation varies from municipality to municipality. Some municipal managers are willing to take advantage of city councils, while others do not believe in the benefits of city councils—they just create the councils as a legal requirement and are content to fulfil the formalities. While the city council is formed as a legal activity, there is no mechanism to check whether it is actively working.

Another frequently criticized issue relating to city councils is that the suggestions raised by the city council are not binding on the municipal council. Cities are not obliged to make decisions in line with the suggestions of the city council (Akdoğan 2008: 11). However, suggestions made by the city council are needed for purposes of evaluation at the first municipal council meeting (The Regulations on City Councils Article 14). We can say that regarding city councils, the level of citizens’ impacts on decisions or activities is not clearly known.

The “Involve” Level

Concerning the criticism and shortcomings of city councils, it does seem they do have some public participation tools at the consult level defined by IAP2. Of course, it could be misleading to say that this assessment applies to all municipalities. There are some city councils with good examples of effective practice. Yet, there are others which were formed for the sake of formalities and are not involved in performing any activities, where tools are not used. With increasing examples of municipalities that benefit from city councils, can these councils be turned into a tool used at the involve level rather than at the consult level? Both citizens and managers need to internalize the direct public participation mechanisms first (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Public Works and Housing 2009). Internalizing participation mechanisms is directly related to the participation culture. In all developing countries, one of the most significant barriers to participation is the lack of a participation culture (Denhardt et al. 2009). It takes many years to build such a culture. If both government and citizens are willing to create a culture of public participation, then it is

more likely to result. Aside from building a participation culture, it is a different debate whether or not city councils could allow for two-way communication and public participation at the involve stage, considering the number of participants and structure of the council.

The “Collaborate” Level

It seems difficult to identify the existence of public participation at the “collaborate” level in local government in Turkey. While some governments implement this management tool, it is not widely used. Further, there are issues around power-sharing in decision-making process. This level of public participation does not seem likely.

The “Empower” Level

Among the commonly used participation tools at this level is participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting, in general, brings together many people in informative and deliberative discussion on how to spend public funds (Nabatchi and Leighninger 2015: 275). While many local governments across the world use it, participatory budgeting techniques have been piloted by some authorities in Turkey. In the scope of the EU-funded Support to Local Administration Reform Project supported by the United Nations Development Program, Çanakkale Municipality was selected in 2007 as pilot municipality for participatory budgeting practices (TEPAV 2007: 2–4; Evrim-Akman and Özden 2009: 134). In Çanakkale, municipality participatory budgeting process brought together municipalities, village leaders, the city council and citizens as the main actors. In order to ensure public participation in decision-making and budgeting processes, citizens were informed on complicated budget processes over a period of about three months. In the participatory budgeting process, tools such as public meetings, focus group meetings, information brochures and visual and print media were utilized. In 2007, about 500 inhabitants, accounting for approximately 6 percent of the town, attended the budget meetings (Evrin-Akman and Özden 2009: 13–132). A participatory budgeting technique has been implemented in some pilot municipalities of Turkey to test what advantages and disadvantages might emerge. However, the existence of some pilot projects does not mean that participation is embedded in local governments at the empower level in Turkey. Implementing these practices in local governments, pilot projects can be considered a positive practice for the development of direct public participation.

Conclusion

There are several aspects to consider as we conclude this chapter. First, community development has at its core, public participation as an underlying foundational concept. Communicating freely and openly among citizens, residents and local government can be viewed as a core essential function or people’s right. Participation is the pathway to guide decision-making, which in turn impacts community development outcomes.

Second, direct participation is not always as readily accessible to citizens and residents as we would hope. Using the case of Turkey, it was found that several participation tools have been implemented since 2000, when legislation began to change to allow for more local governance and involvement.

The framework we presented in this chapter allows for insights to be made on how local governments are integrating participation tools on a number of levels. It can help gauge local governments’ efforts and effectiveness in regard to direct participation. Finally, local governments

can further their development by embracing direct participation methods to help ensure people have voice in what happens for them, to them and with them.

Note

- 1 The Right to Information exceptions are laid down in Article 4 of the Right to Information Act. These include, among others, “the actions outside the judicial process”, “information or documents related to state secrets”, “the information and documents related to the country’s economic interests”, “the information and documents related to intelligence” and “internal arrangements”.

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