INNOCENTI GLOBAL SEMINAR

PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT
21-29 May 1990

SUMMARY REPORT

UNICEF International Child Development Centre
Spedale degli Innocenti
Florence, Italy

Prepared by
Bilge Ögün and Karen Houston Smith
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Florence, Italy

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# INNOCENTI GLOBAL SEMINAR
## Participatory Development
### SUMMARY REPORT

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Each of the great social achievements of recent decades has come about not because of government proclamations but because people organized, made demands and made it good politics for governments to respond. It is the political will of the people that makes and sustains the political will of the governments.

JAMES P. GRANT
Executive Director
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
FOREWORD

Whatever else might be said about the subject of 'participation', it is certainly not a new theme. Described as it is in this report as concerning issues of power, decision-making and access to resources, the concept is probably as ancient as the first stirrings of human society. Without even initiating a search through the ancient classics, or looking beyond the beginnings of the 'golden age' of Florence, one encounters numerous examples of common people struggling to take greater control over their own destinies.

The most famous of these early efforts here in Florence has been described by some historians as "the most significant episode of urban social conflict in Europe during the Middle Ages". In 1378, some 15,000 unskilled and semiskilled workers in the city's prosperous wool industry rose up to establish a more egalitarian political order in which merchants, artisans, and workers were assigned a fixed proportion of offices and a guaranteed share of political power. Although often described as an attempted 'revolution', in an important sense these workers were seeking greater participation in an established political order, dominated by the medieval guilds. Their initial victory, gained through a combination of violence and political maneuvering, resulted in the establishment of three new guilds in Florence — for the tailors, the dyers and the woolworkers — which were to share power with the existing twenty-one guilds, or so at least the 'moderates' among them imagined. But the victory of those low-paid workers, responsible for beating and carding the wool, was short-lived. The ciompi, as the woolworkers were called, controlled Florence for just six weeks before their new guild was suppressed by the forces of the wealthy merchants and other powerful groups of 14th century Florence. We are told in one account, however, that the new guilds for the more reputable tailors and dyers managed to survive.

For our purposes, it is especially interesting to examine what various historians have concluded were the immediate causes of the failure of the ciompi revolt. Virtually all agree that they were up against powerful political odds and that it is rather remarkable they were able to hold power for as long (or short) a time as they did. Beyond that there is considerable debate. One Florentine writer recently concluded: "Like any group convinced that they had won a battle and defeated the enemy they felt that there should be no more sharing of power. On the contrary, it was all theirs. They began to agitate once more, this time against their old leader, Michele di Lando ... He advised his comrades to think again and to understand that it was necessary to proceed with care. This was the best way to make himself unpopular with those who, the day before, had considered him a hero." A contemporary British historian has added that the 'jealousy of their fellow workers in other trades, combined with the power and money of their employers' was sufficient to destroy the early gains of the ciompi.

Over three hundred years after the ciompi revolt, a much less significant demonstration took place in Florence. It has, however, a certain symbolic importance for UNICEF since it took place in the piazza just outside our International Child Development Centre and it was organized by the adolescent girls in the foundling hospital, the Spedale degli Innocenti, which houses our group. As described in the museum booklet summarizing the early history of the Spedale, it was on 16 August 1687 that the "resident girls (nocentine) assaulted the Grand Duke's carriage in Piazza della Santissima Annunziata, shouting that they were mistreated and were only given brown bread". Hardly more successful, apparently, than the ciompi (although dealt with more humanely), the girls did manage to have their claims looked into but they were determined to be 'unfounded'.

Looking back from today's perspective at these early and frustrated attempts at increasing the participation of common people in political processes, historians might derive some satisfaction from the much higher success rates of popular movements in much of the 20th century — and also from the often extraordinary gains which have been achieved in recent years through non-violent means.

If I may be permitted to skip lightly over another three centuries following the nocentine incident, as well as to add a personal reference, I would pause on the early 1980s when I had just joined UNICEF's Latin American programme, coming from the non-governmental world of de-
If I were to try to find fault with what was clearly a very stimulating seminar on this venerable topic of participation, or 'empowerment' as some would prefer, I would worry that perhaps we were gathered together, with few exceptions, to preach to the converted. This subject does tend to lend itself to unusually wide gaps between theory and practice and between professorial attitudes and actual behaviour. Most of us, this writer certainly not excepted, have encountered countless examples, in our homes, our workplaces, our communities and our societies at large, where our commitments to participatory approaches have been seriously compromised by the realities of pressures of time, money, managerial responsibilities, political necessities and a host of psychological factors serving with excessive self-esteem. Devoted advocates of more participatory approaches to development are probably well-advised to study with considerable care the formidable obstacles one encounters in the real world to achieving the desired outcomes. One useful step in that direction is opening more direct dialogues with those who either count themselves among the sceptics, warning us about 'too much participation', or who have developed a fine sense of knowing the inevitable limitations of participation in practice.

Although I remain concerned that this term still stretches across too broad a spectrum of virtues and vices, within and well beyond UNICEF, the eight-day 'Innocenti Global Seminar' on participatory development held in Florence in May of last year certainly helped this participant to find some order, if not always precision, in the conceptual language of this subject. In line with one of the main objectives of our Innocenti Centre, it does no disservice to UNICEF to recognize that many of the excellent contributions to the Seminar came from participants from outside our organization, including from the non-governmental sector which, many of us appreciate from personal experience, has — at least in its better performances — a comparative advantage in 'calling a spade a spade'. I think many of our non-UNICEF colleagues at the meeting were also impressed with the progress we have made, notably in the past six or seven years, in sharpening the quality of the economic and socio-political analyses underlying our programme approaches and — perhaps to a lesser extent — our programme documentation. And all participants, I think, would agree that efforts to foster more participatory development are unlikely to succeed if based on simplistic assumptions and misunderstandings about the socio-political and economic realities underlying these well-meaning approaches.
creativity, energy and involvement of the people, the progress of development will be halting at best. These leaders, not just in Eastern Europe but in a growing number of 'developing' and other countries as well, are discovering the dangers of neither 'listening' to their people nor widening the effective space for their political participation.

The second reason for optimism, related to the first, has to do with what the Innocenti Seminar report describes as empowerment through knowledge. "Participatory development happens when people are empowered with the knowledge and the means to decide their own priorities, to improve their own skills, to meet their own needs, and to find their own fulfillment." One of the most dramatic achievements of the 20th and early 21st centuries may be for most nations of the world to have achieved universal primary education and close to universal literacy. The closing years of this century are also witnessing a totally unprecedented degree of access to information and knowledge, largely through the mass media and new communications strategies, on the part of common people living in the most remote corners of the world, including people with the lowest levels of income and access to material resources. Admittedly it requires something of an act of faith to conclude that the combination of enormously increased access to information, side by side with what will surely be the persistence of great poverty in the world, will lay the basis for important strides towards the goals of human development. It is at this point, however, that the burden of proof should shift to the sceptics on the subject of participatory development. It is difficult to imagine the emergence of a secure and even remotely stable — let alone equitable — world in the next century unless for more effective participation in our societies is achieved for the masses of newly and more powerfully informed people on this small planet Earth.

JAMES R. HINES
Director UNICEF
International Child Development Centre
I. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The UNICEF International Child Development Centre

UNICEF’s International Child Development Centre (ICDC) located in Florence, Italy, has been in operation since 1988. The Centre is housed within the Spedale degli Innocenti, a foundling hospital designed by Filippo Brunelleschi and serving abandoned or needy children since 1445. The Spedale is one of the great architectural works of the Early European Renaissance.

In keeping with the Spedale’s historic mission for children, ICDC’s primary purpose is to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF and of its cooperating institutions to foster an emerging global ethic that responds to the needs of children and their families. In accomplishing this objective, the Centre provides opportunities for the exchange of information among professionals in various fields, and undertakes or promotes policy analysis, applied research, and dissemination of concepts directed towards the goals of child survival, protection, and development. Over the next decade, ICDC aims to become both a vehicle and a voice for improving public policy related to children.

ICDC’s initial activities are concentrated in four major programme areas: (1) National Capacity Building for Child Survival and Development in Africa, (2) Economic Policies and Mobilization of Resources for Children, (3) Rights of the Child, and (4) Needs of the Urban Child. The Centre’s core-programme expenses and basic operating costs are financed by the Italian government.

An important component of ICDC’s work is to translate the results of research and policy analysis into relevant training programmes. Drawing on UNICEF-supported field experiences, NGO expertise, and resources from universities and research institutes, the training programmes invite the participation of UNICEF’s professional staff, their national counterparts, UNICEF National Committees, and other key allies. To avoid duplication with university-based study programmes, the Centre’s efforts concentrate on policy issues and problem-solving techniques. The topics of the training seminars are selected to reinforce issues of importance to UNICEF’s programming and policy analysis. The Centre regards its training process as a catalyst for ongoing initiatives and follow-up activities.

Innocenti Global Seminar on Participatory Development

UNICEF cannot accept the proposition that significant progress for children must await an improvement in the overall economic climate sometime in the later 1990s or in the early part of the twenty-first century... It is now that their minds and bodies are being formed and it is now that they need adequate food, health care and education... What is required is a new commitment to a style of development which Mahatma Gandhi called antyodaya, a development which gives priority to the poor and particularly to the health, nutrition and education of their children.


As its contribution to this new commitment, the UNICEF International Child Development Centre chose the topic of participatory development as the focus of its second Global Seminar. Based on its own experience, and observing the experience of others, UNICEF believes that a development process which empowers people to take greater control over their lives, to determine priorities and take action to meet their own needs, as well as to work together towards their fulfillment, is the most effective way of achieving equitable social and human development. Such a participatory approach facilitates the transformation of society, creating more self-reliance and more effective citizen involvement in decision-making without which truly sustainable development is likely to remain an illusion. Such participation, especially at the community level, also facilitates reaching the unreachable, the ‘poorest of the poor’, by helping to empower them to resolve many of their own problems. While clearly an appropriate means towards the accomplishment of specific development goals, participatory
development is also a process worthy of support in its own right, an expression of the rising worldwide tide of concern with people's increasing democratic control over their lives and their political, social, and economic environment.

What exactly are the implications of this view in day-to-day development work? Can participatory convictions be widely acted upon, including by 'development' agencies, and if so, how? To what extent will the world development climate in the 1990s promote or inhibit the practice of such approaches? The survival and development of children has human meaning only to the extent that they have the opportunity for life-long realization of the potentials of body, mind, and spirit, free from the deprivation of their basic human needs. How can UNICEF, with its modes, size and limited resources, influence the development assistance movements by advocating people-centred policies that will assure access by the poor to the productive resources on which they depend for their livelihoods, and also to establish community responsibility for essential services?

How can UNICEF's strong historical interest and established track record in health, water and education services be used as entry points to establish relationships and credibility that will allow us to deal with broader and politically more sensitive priorities? Where these services are only sporadically available, or are unreliable and unresponsive to the needs of the majority of the people, can UNICEF promote 'accountability' to the people served as a key to correcting these deficiences? How can UNICEF help institutionalize user-controlled systems for services? How can UNICEF use existing policies, procedures and structures to accelerate wider understanding, acceptance and practice of participatory approaches, or are changes needed in UNICEF itself? These were some of the principal questions discussed in the course of the eight-day Seminar. The complete Agenda is attached as Annex 1.

The Seminar's conceptual framework was developed by a steering committee of senior UNICEF staff from New York Headquarters, ICDC, Florence, and the field. (Please refer to Annex 2.) Bilk Ögün and Steve Woodhouse of ICDC and New York respectively, were the staff responsible for detailed planning and implementation.

The Seminar had three specific objectives:
1. To update participants on the latest development theories and practices and their implications for people-centred participatory development.
2. To identify appropriate policy, programme and management options that would be supportive of participatory development and that could be advocated by UNICEF to its development partners.
3. To review UNICEF's own policies, programmes and operational procedures in the context of participatory development, identifying both their supportive and constraining features.

Thirty-eight participants in all, including 27 from UNICEF, and 11 people from outside, attended the Seminar. At the time of the Seminar, participants were on assignment in 19 countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. UNICEF staff came from offices at sub-national, national and regional level, as well as from New York headquarters and ICDC, Florence. Participants all came at their own initiative. They were not assigned to come. They applied to join the Seminar in response to an announcement issued by ICDC, Training Section, and Programme Division, and brought with them a high level of interest and, in most cases, considerable experience with participatory development. This experience, plus related reading material distributed by ICDC, provided the focus for discussions. Speakers were drawn from among the participant group and invited resource people. (See annex 2 for list of participants and resource persons.)

The Seminar's success was due importantly to the pre-Seminar involvement, encouragement and participation of internationally known and respected resource people. Equally significant were the contributions of other experienced presenters whose field experience complemented Seminar deliberations. The participants involved themselves fully in the process of the Seminar and were extremely diligent in reading the lengthy background documentation and in contributing to the discussions.

This report is intended to highlight major issues touched on during the Seminar in the hope that readers may find their interest aroused or
reinforced, and their understanding of participatory development expanded and clarified. This report is *not* a recipe book for participation. Indeed, a 'standard package' would be contrary to the spirit of participatory development. On the other hand, certain principles of participatory development are clear, and certain kinds of activities are characteristic.

This report is organized in three main sections:

1. **Introduction: Basic Concepts and Practices of Participation:** Characteristics and elements of participatory development as explored in the Seminar.

2. **Transformation Strategies:** What can be done now to support the practice of participatory development on a wider scale? How does participation happen, what are the obstacles? What strategies can be used to transform government bureaucracies and management systems from controllers to enablers?

3. **Programming, Management, and Policy Issues:** Recommendations for UNICEF and its allies: What can we learn from ongoing programmes, and what more can be done?
II. Basic Concepts and Practices of Participation

Some Theoretical Considerations and Perspectives from Field Experiences

In the initial days of the Seminar, presentations were made by several participants with long-standing interest and involvement in people-centred, participatory development. These were followed by general discussions to explore and agree on some basic concepts which would provide parameters for the deliberations during the rest of the Seminar.

Characteristics of Participatory Development

Participatory development is concerned with issues of power, decision-making, and access to resources. It facilitates the redress of inequities through empowerment of the poor and the powerless — with women not least among them. These people — individuals, families and groups — have too often been ignored, excluded, or bypassed by conventional development activities; but they are of special concern to UNICEF, both as human beings and as primary care givers to most of the world’s children.

In the Seminar, participatory people-centred development was defined as having several essential characteristics:

- It is an ongoing process. It is neither a sector nor a project, nor should it be one;
- It is a conscious and voluntary process involving choice and decision on the part of those participating. It is not mere compliance with instruction;
- It is a process in which people organize themselves in groups to solve problems they have in common, gaining access to information and resources they need, and learning to manage them effectively;
- Participation must involve women as well as men so that they become essential and equal agents of change;
- Participation is both an end and a means; * Alejandro Angulo, Karl-Eric Knutsen, David Korten, Junia Maeda, U Nyi Nyi, Mary (Holstein) Racelis, Anisur Rahman, Varindra Tarite Vithachi.

- Equity among all those involved is the basis of participatory development.

Participatory development can be equated with either participation for development or development through participation. True participation (empowerment) can only occur when people are in a position to develop their own alternatives and make decisions.

Participatory development attaches equal value to enhanced human capacity and to increased well-being. Participatory development happens when people are empowered with the knowledge and the means to decide their own priorities, to improve their own skills, to meet their own needs, and to find their own fulfillment.

The formation of groups, and their work in identifying, selecting, and resolving problems, brings more than the obvious benefit of improving people’s welfare. The process also gives group members a strengthened self-image, greater confidence, and a heightened sense of willingness and capacity to take action in their own best interests. Furthermore, the formation of groups demonstrates to others that the groups and the people must be taken seriously.

In summary, participation is the process of empowerment — the enhancement of people’s individual and collective capability to improve their own lives and to take greater control over their own destiny.

Since the 1950s, there have been periodic swells of interest in development circles about increasing community participation in development. However, the term ‘participation’ has taken on different meanings at different times, and today it is still used interchangeably when, for example:

- someone pays for their own health or other public service; or
- people take part, on instructions from a community leader or a government official, in a mass campaign conceived of, planned, and decided upon by people hundreds of kilometres away; or
- a group of women decide to organize themselves for a joint farming project, negotiate with
the village council for access to land, and start producing food crops and raising funds to support a community health station or a supplementary feeding programme or perhaps to go into business for themselves.

On the surface, these may all appear to be forms of 'participation' but with one significant difference: the location of power and decision-making.

In the first case, people use an available service but probably have no control over it. In the second, while the people may be physically present, there is no authority with the people. In the third case, the women in their groups are deciding for themselves, gaining some control over a resource (land), creating new resources (capital and food crops) and acquiring new skills — and confidence — by carrying out activities which will change and improve their own lives and those of their families. They have become, in a small way, a power to reckon with and this experience may well lead over time to their involvement in other activities either for their own good or the good of the community. Clearly, in terms of achieving the broader goals of sustainable human development, the participatory process in the latter case is far more effective.

The Environment for Participation

It is clear that some environments are more hospitable to the practice of participatory development than others. The stable, open, democratic, or democratically-structured state which is organized around the principle of accountability of its leaders and public institutions to their people, clearly provides the ideal setting to develop participatory approaches and institutions. Few situations, of course, have all these favourable components. Many settings appear far from that ideal and, in fact, they may seem unpromising in the extreme. Nonetheless, there is agreement, both in the literature and in the experience of Seminar participants, that in most settings one can find what the International Conference on

Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa referred to as 'democratic space' — that is to say, space within which people's initiatives can begin to grow and people can organize themselves.

It is the task of UNICEF and others interested in supporting participatory processes to forge a common cause with the people and with groups who have found those spaces and are working in them, or working to expand them. One can almost always find people in government or in the larger bureaucracies who are inclined and open to a strategy of supporting people to expand their democratic space. It should not be forgotten that numerous senior staff of UNICEF, of its allies and of major NGOs, were government civil servants at one point in their careers. Their respect for the value of human beings, and their concern for equity, were no different than they are today.

It is inappropriate and counter-productive to see governments as antagonistic forces to deal with. Instead, one must capitalize on forging new alliances with them, on encouraging decentralization and devolution of decision-making, while at the same time respecting the important and necessary role of government. Simultaneously, we must also encourage the right type of interaction and pursue participatory programmes to the extent that the potential of the situation allows. How decentralization is managed, and how local officials in control devolve their power to communities, is a critical concern. It requires mature handling from all sides.

The ultimate concern of participatory development is to bring about change and realignment of power, and to make access to information and resources at the community level more equitable. However, it is important to keep in mind that a community does not exist in a vacuum. Outside action, relationships and events, particularly interaction between the community and outside agencies, can often facilitate or frustrate a participatory process in the community. For this reason, most supporters of participatory approaches agree that due attention must be given to the links and interaction between people's organizations and government institutions. Both sides — community and government — must learn new skills of dialog-

3 Unless its revenues are retained locally and community management structures are in place, as is promoted by the "Humalo Initiative", as one of its main principles.
guage, planning, negotiation and cooperation to work effectively together and to promote functional participatory processes within the community.

Communication and relations among various levels of government are also important. It is important to help them give attention to the whole government staffing structure to increase their understanding of participation, as well as helping them find ways to enhance their ability to respond. The lowest level of government has a special and vital role in this regard, and one must understand the importance of having the authority and resources to make meaningful decisions in response to people's demands, which often increase from a healthy, participatory process. If government staff are not in a position to take such action, they almost invariably feel defensive about their programmes, and negative towards activities which may stimulate community requests for support.

Elements of Participation

The key actors in the process of participatory development, the critical decision-makers, and the managers at the community level, must be the people themselves. On the other hand, the Seminar underscored the importance of being sensitive to the makeup of 'the people' or 'the community'. A community is a result or an expression of a need for participation. A community is not the same as a settlement structure. It is a multifaceted complex of social, economic, and cultural forces, and has a life of its own. Thus, it is not merely a physical entity; it is also a community of identity, interest, purpose, organization and solidarity. However, few communities are the idealized, harmonious and homogeneous whole which outsiders sometimes portray. Factionalism and inequities often abound. Unless they are taken into account, they can discredit and disrupt participatory efforts and discredit well-mean development activities.

The romantic notion of 'asking people' who have never experienced any real control or power over their own situation how best to fulfill their basic needs must be replaced by respect for their 'common sense'. In the early phases, communities need options and transfer of resources such as knowledge, skills and funds. Once aware of their options, they should be trusted to participate in the final decision-making and to assume the responsibility for their decisions.

Ignorance or naivete on the part of outsiders trying to stimulate or support participatory efforts can lead, unintentionally, to greater oppression of the poor. For example, new resources made available through traditional mechanisms may only strengthen the powerful and increase disparities.

Power is a central element in participation, because a key feature determining the nature and the extent of participation is the relative power controlled by individuals and social groups. Obvious sources of power are military strength, political influence, wealth, knowledge, skills, status of traditional elders and healers, religious leaders, status of men in certain societies, and organizations. Clearly, in most cases these sources of power are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. It follows that in promoting participation for the disadvantaged, mechanisms and processes contributing to empowerment become crucial. One of the practical solutions to resolving the empowerment dilemma is to promote people's organizations.

Among the most conspicuous disparities in the community are those stemming from economic differences, and in many parts of the world, from gender. If poor people have no money, their participation may be marginal. Instead, the participation will be from those with money or access to other resources, such as knowledge and social networks. But there are other divisions as well: age and ethnicity create inequities of power and influence, and in some areas, frictions are sharp between long-term residents and new arrivals in the community.

Participation must be considered from different points of view. A politician, a civil servant, a U.N. official, a relatively well-off villager, a deprived villager, or some other segment of the same village, may all talk about it differently and support it in different aspects. Participatory development is political by definition. It is normative
Alternative Concepts of Development and Participation

Dharam Ghal

The notion of development is an ambiguous one and is subject to different interpretations. We may distinguish three interpretations. First, development is often treated synonymously with economic growth and is thus interpreted to mean increases in labour productivity, declining share of agriculture in total output, technological progress, and industrialization with the consequent shift of population to urban areas. While these structural changes are generally associated with economic growth, equating them with development shifts the focus to economic aggregates and away from living standards and human dimensions.

The second interpretation of development seeks to remedy this deficiency by concentrating on such indices of living standards as poverty, income distribution, nutrition, infant mortality, life expectancy, literacy, education, access to employment, housing, water supply and similar amenities. This way of looking at development brings it closer to the common-sense view and endows it with greater human reality. Nevertheless, the emphasis continues to be on economic and social indicators and individual human beings and social groups tend to be off-stage passively supplied with goods, services and materials.

In contrast, the third view of development puts the spotlight on human potential and capabilities in the context of relations with other social groups. According to this view, development is seen in such terms as greater understanding of social, economic and political processes, enhanced competence to analyze and solve problems of day-to-day living, expansion of manual skills and greater control over economic resources, restoration of human dignity and self-respect, and interaction with other social groups on a basis of mutual respect and equality. This notion of development does not neglect material deprivation and poverty but the focus shifts to realization of human potential expressed in such terms as human dignity, self-respect, social emancipation, and enhancement of moral, intellectual and technical capabilities.

The three ways of looking at development are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Indeed the optimal pattern of development should embody elements of all three: the growth of human capabilities and potential must be accompanied by the progressive reduction of material deprivation and social inequalities which, in turn, should flow from structural change and modernization of the economy. But in practice, these aspects of development seldom evolve in a harmonious relationship and typically emphasis on one or the other would have different implications for organization of economic activities, patterns of investment and design of programmes and projects.

(continued)
As with development, the concept of participation is also riddled with ambiguities. Once again, it may be useful to distinguish between three different interpretations. One common usage of the term refers to 'mobilization' of people to undertake social and economic development projects. Typically, the projects are conceived and designed from above and the people are "mobilized" to implement them. Their participation thus consists of their contribution of labour and materials, either free or paid for by the authorities. The projects, which generally tend to be of an infrastructural nature, are meant to benefit the rural poor. But in many cases the benefit may accrue mainly in the form of employment generated during the construction phase. The distribution of the benefits from the assets and facilities created would depend upon a variety of factors such as the patterns of ownership of productive resources, the distribution of political power among social groups and the nature of the project. At their best, such projects may result in a widespread diffusion of benefits both in the construction and the subsequent phase. At worst, 'participation' may result in free provision of labour and materials by the poor to create facilities that benefit primarily the affluent groups.

The second interpretation equates participation with decentralization in governmental machinery or in related organizations. Resources and decision-making powers may be transferred to lower level organs, such as local officials, elected bodies at the village or county level or local project committees. While this may make possible local-level decisions on the choice, design and implementation of development activities, there is no presumption that this need imply any meaningful participation by the rural or urban masses. Indeed, the distribution of political and economic power at local levels in many countries is such that decentralization may well result in allocation of resources and choice of development activities that are less beneficial to the poor than when such decisions are taken at the central level.

The third view of participation regards it as a process of empowerment of the deprived and the excluded (Gran, 1983; Oakley, 1987; Oakley and Marsden, 1984). This view is based on the recognition of differences in political and economic power among different social groups and classes. Participation is interpreted to imply a strengthening of the power of the deprived masses. Its three main elements have been defined as "the sharing of power and scarce resources, deliberate efforts by social groups to control their own destinies and improve their living conditions, and opening up of opportunities from below" (Dillon and Stelf, 1987). Participation in this sense necessitates the creation of organizations of the poor which are democratic, independent and self-reliant (Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 1979; International Labour Organization, 1976).

One facet of empowerment is thus the pooling of resources to achieve collective strength and countervailing power. Another is the enhancement of manual and technical skills, planning and managerial competence and analytical and reflective abilities of the people. It comes close to the notion of development as fulfillment of human potentials and capabilities.

Taken from Participatory Development: Some Perspectives From Grass-Roots Experiences in "Journal of Development Planning, No. 19, 1989. Human Development in the 1980s and Beyond".
— the right of people to take decisions. It is a means to sustained and effective activity, and it is a long-term process.

In this context, three basic prerequisites for participation should be respected: a) a conceptual and practical understanding of the issue; b) the need for commitment to participatory development structures, but with simultaneous and equal commitment to the values and traditions of those within or using those structures; c) and most importantly, a concern for individuals, for they must be empowered, not communities.

Indeed, individuals must understand their rights and their options. They must gain the confidence to exercise them, if necessary organize to obtain access to services which are their constitutional or moral right. People should be helped to analyze their situation and to utilize the resulting knowledge as part of a strategy for their own advancement. Organizations must be accountable to the people.

When we examine the historic achievements of countries with favourable equity track records, we usually find that what has been achieved was not because the state was uniquely benevolent. The results have been mainly due to constant struggles in which people’s movements have transformed the state, at least to some extent, into a service organization for its people. When the state works with the community, community participation becomes constructive.

It is important to distinguish between genuine people’s organisations that are rooted in the community and other groups, such as local, national, or international NGOs. NGOs often appear to outside donors as ‘ideal partners’ for work in the community, and some are. Others, however, though well-meaning, are conservative, authoritarian, and non-participatory in their methods, and are not well suited to local people’s concerns. In short, NGOs are no panacea. By external administrative criteria, they may be good partners, but as a means of supporting genuine participatory development, it may be more effective to raise the understanding and skill of local government to work in participatory ways than to work through an external NGO. A thorough analysis of social organisations in a given area, examining their strengths and weaknesses might provide a good tool to decide which NGOs might be best partners on what type of issues.

The notion of participation may be examined from several different levels and perspectives. It can be seen as the end result of several actions, such as: the mobilization of people by the combination or creation of popular and political will; the decentralization of governmental mechanisms; the process of empowering the disadvantaged through such measures as joining people’s organizations; or through acquiring skills — including learning, literacy, or numeracy.

Participation can also be examined in the public domain (i.e., political participation), in the workplace, and in the home, as well as at the local, community, regional and national levels. There is a relationship of interdependence in participation at different levels and in different domains. For example, participation in the political domain may reinforce the ability to participate in the economic domain, or, participation in the home can enhance the ability to participate in the workplace or at the local level. Issues of participation are equally important at the family level and have significant impact on UNICEF programming. Democratic home and participation in decisions on issues such as the expenditure of household income, the allocation of family labour to subsistence, cash-earning and household tasks (including child rearing), and the size of the family, are not only important in their own domain and level, but they can also influence the potential of family members, whether woman, man or child, in other domains and at other levels.

**Development Strategies: Conventional-Oriented to Economic Growth, or Social-Oriented to Enhanced Human Capability?**

Among economic theorists, Amartya Sen, in particular, has pioneered the now widely-accepted concept that the ultimate role of economic

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"For further clarification of these issues, please refer to "The Concept and Practice of Participation," a paper by Bharat Giri presented at the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, February 1990."
Human Development: The Case for Renewed Emphasis

Keith Griffin and John Knight

... Human fulfillment is about whether people live or die, whether people eat well, are malnourished or starve, whether women lead healthy and tolerable lives or are burdened with annual childbearing, a high risk of maternal mortality, the certainty of lifelong drudgery, whether people can control their lives at work, whether their conditions of work are tough and unpleasant, whether people have access to work at all, whether people control their political lives, whether they have the education to be full members of society with some control over their destiny. These are all aspects of the standard of living – but only loosely included or not included at all in the measure of GNP per capita.

Any approach that puts people first must come to terms with the fact that in the third world the average age of the population is low, although it is tending to rise slowly. In 1980 in the developing countries as a whole, 39.1 per cent of the population were less than 15 years of age as compared to 23.1 per cent in the developed countries. Conversely, only 4.0 per cent of the population of the third world is over 65 years, whereas in the developed countries 11.3 per cent of the population is older than 65. Thus, human development in the third world is necessarily concerned in large part with enhancing the capabilities of the young. The debate today is not over whether inequality within countries has increased but whether increased inequality is inevitable. The balance of recent evidence suggests that the degree of inequality is not closely related to the level of income per capita, as was once thought, but to factors dependent upon the strategy of development that is followed. These factors include the distribution of assets (particularly land), the distribution of educational opportunities, the employment intensity of the development path and the general policy stance of Government. It is possible, therefore, for Governments successfully to pursue distributive equity objectives as well as growth objectives. Similarly, Governments have it within their power to promote the enhancement of human capabilities by means of their education, health, nutrition, participation and other policies. Moreover, the twin objectives of distributive equity and human development will often involve the same policies.

Taken from Human Development: The Case for Renewal Emphasis in "Journal of Development Planning, No. 19, 1989. Human Development In the 1980s and Beyond".
development is human development. This concept holds implications for those who are involved in the development process, whether as policymakers, as national or international civil servants, as NGOs, or as people’s organizations: certainly, they must be concerned with the production of goods and services, or rate of growth, but they should be equally concerned with what is happening to people. Economic growth is nothing but a means, but nevertheless an important one, to the end of enhancing people’s capabilities and fulfillment. Therefore, the focus should also be on whether people are well-nourished, whether they live long and are free from avoidable illnesses, and whether they have access to safe water. And can they read, write and count? Can they communicate freely, and develop their minds? Do they have dignity and self-respect?

Notwithstanding the importance of economic growth, any development theory which does not give consideration to both economic growth and human fulfillment is bound to be ineffective in the long run.

People-Centred Development Alternatives; Equity-Led Growth Strategy.

In the last decade or so, momentum has been growing, particularly among the progressive NGO community, towards a new definition of development. This was expressed by David Korten as, “Development is a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations.”

This approach emphasizes the ‘process’ of development and focuses on personal and institutional capacity. It is based on a view which draws parallels between the resources of the planet Earth and the finite store of physical resources in a life-sustaining spaceship. Its assumptions, values, and policy preferences are very different from those of growth-oriented strategies.

David Korten has translated people-centred development into an operational strategy termed ‘equity-led sustainable growth’. It is a strategy which makes equity the foundation for broad-based integrated growth. To achieve the goals of people-centred development, strategies must be developed which aim for certain conditions and elements being seen as prerequisites. These include: strong integrated domestic economies with institutional foundations; high levels of adult literacy and education; strong local administrations and member-managed, multi-tiered local organizations; government policies favouring reduced population growth; land reforms; prioritizing growth of particular economic sectors; and the right combination of incentives and protection.

The equity-led sustainable growth strategy, with its six sequential stages, (Stage I: Preparation for Change, Stage II: Asset Reform and Rural Infrastructures, Stage III: Agricultural Intensification and Diversification, Stage IV: Rural Industrialization, Stage V: Urban Industrialization, Stage VI: Export Promotion) builds from the basic pattern of economic transformation found in most country experiences, draws attention to environmental sustainability, and emphasizes the need to mobilize democratic forces in support of the asset-control reforms which provide the foundation of the strategy. The most important element, however, is the “choice of priorities for the sequencing of development interventions”.

Dynamics of Politics, Leadership, and Change

Politics is the everyday understanding of the dynamics of the society in which we live and work. How a society organizes itself and functions determines the basis for participatory development. Equally important is an understanding of the dynamics of a society, in particular, of how values and motivations are created, of how different groups in society relate to each other, and ultimately, of how social change takes place.

Real social or economic development is part of a political process. And there can be no social development without political development. An
understanding of politics and its forces is important in the achievement of any development strategy. It is particularly important for participatory development because such a strategy focuses mainly on people and their actions. For example, going national, or going to scale, (which is sometimes unjustly seen as the antithesis of a participatory development process) is easiest when it happens to be good politics. A fuller understanding of the dynamics and mechanisms of the 'going to scale' process would be very useful, since its elements could then be promoted and used in a systematic way to achieve greater success.

A key question is whether to promote 'participation of the people' or 'people's participation'. However, in most cases, knowledgeable practitioners recognize that an intelligent mix of both approaches gives the best results.

According to the needs and circumstances, the validity of both approaches to participation — 'bottom up' and 'top down' — should be considered. Top down approaches, which often reflect an unsympathetic authoritarian flavour, are not necessarily and invariably bad. They sometimes embody important efforts at orderly development and equitable distribution of resources. Bottom up, which is usually considered truly participatory, can lead toarchy. Each has its merits and demerits. In real life situations, both processes co-exist. The real challenge is to achieve equilibrium through checks and balances and through accountability of leaders to their people. A system of accountability is the demarcation line that protects true participation in real life situations. What needs to be kept in mind is that democratization cannot occur without participation; however, participation can take place in centrally controlled societies.

Leaders are major actors in participatory development. They emerge through natural consensus or election, or through trickery or by force. Good leaders usually demonstrate concern, vision, organizational ability, and good communication skills. They are usually with the mass of their people in their understanding and concerns, yet are ahead of their times in their wisdom and ability to precipitate change. When promoting participatory development, the entry point with leaders is that they all want to be liked, and they seek popular acclaim.

The challenge to those promoting participatory development is to analyze negative and positive forces in a given situation and determine how to play the balance. Working to mobilize leaders calls for sound prior knowledge of the potential political costs to all concerned, and also of the potential gains.

Effective proponents of participatory development need to understand the process and thoroughly examine the factors that make people change, and act the way they do, in different cultural and socio-political contexts. Change is difficult and complex; it requires in-depth study and operational research. In other words, one cannot underestimate the importance of putting oneself in the shoes of the 'target group' concerned and attempting to analyze issues from their perspectives. But, it also needs empathy to understand both the hesitancy of the poor to push for change and the hesitancy of leaders — administrators, technocrats, and politicians — to open themselves and their plans for dialogue. In order for people to participate, they must be reached, empowered with knowledge and skills, and have a structure for involvement and participation.

Local and Central Decision-Making Structures

One must analyze the socio-cultural context carefully in order to understand and describe the politics of decision-making structures at local level, and ultimately, their impact on participatory development processes. In most societies, the behaviour of individuals is at least partly determined by group influences, such as those at work within households, clans, communities and traditional social systems. Furthermore, patterns of division of labour, which are often based on traditional, functional and task-oriented structures, as well as group formation around pragmatic issues and activities, need to be examined and understood. Some typical examples of groupings are: credit systems, collective farming operations during peak periods, teamwork for building or maintaining infrastructures such as roads and bridges,
funeral societies, age groups, defence groups, church groups, and so on.

The importance of these groups, some of which may have been in existence for centuries, as illustrated by examples by Justin Maeda, is that they were formed to make it possible for people to accomplish as a group what they could not accomplish individually. To understand them, and to establish alliances with them can be a useful strategy if they are open to change and participatory approaches.

Mobilization of local groups which have been isolated from the process of social change is not a sufficient measure to ensure participation in itself. Current socio-political analysis indicates that macro social movements which actively seek to transform society are usually politically motivated. Moreover, the ideological and institutional factors which define the content and the direction of political change also create conditions which enable individuals and their associations to participate in the process of change. Participation thus fulfills a function of legitimizing change, while it is in itself an expression of one of the new dimensions of this change.

If governments seriously intend to encourage the participation of people's groups, they must first create public participatory institutions at the local and national level and then establish mechanisms to ensure that the people's groups are effectively being represented in these institutions. As suggested in Crisostomo Pizarro's paper*, governments must apply strict socio-economic criteria to identify the target groups to be represented in these institutions. This is the only way to prevent social benefits from 'leaking' to higher income groups.

Central decision-making structures particularly related to development also need to be studied and understood. In order to assess clearly their probable impact or effectiveness in participatory development processes, the following factors should be looked into: statutory laws (or the inherited colonial laws if applicable); political and administrative structures at the sub-national and national levels; tribal structures (if applicable).

The political dynamics of participatory development at macro (central) and local levels are different and thus more. Macro-level decisions are, by their very nature, somewhat removed from reality and deal with averages and 'some problems'. At the local level, decisions involve economic, political, cultural and social realities. It is mainly for this reason that the more it is politically feasible to decentralize, or lower, the decision-making process for development programming and action in effect localizing situation/needs analysis, identification of priorities, design, planning, implementation, and evaluation, the more participatory the development process can be.

Information, Communication, Social Mobilization for Participation

Empowerment Through Knowledge: The Role of Information, Communication and Education

A prime challenge is to determine how to bridge the knowledge gap that exists today and which is such an important factor in keeping many people underprivileged. How do people become empowered with knowledge? How do people become motivated to use knowledge to promote the kind of change which contributes to participatory progress?

In considering the empowerment of people through knowledge, some general and basic factors have to be taken into account. For example, learning begins at birth, and everyone should be given the opportunity of several years of schooling; the 'communication revolution' of recent years, with its plethora of new technologies, offers us extraordinary opportunities; the communication of knowledge — education — can come through many channels; and how can all available channels, and low-cost technologies, which offer a new and important potential for
communicating with the disadvantaged, be mobilized to help them to acquire more knowledge, or to learn how to learn?

Information and communication have an important role in making any development initiative succeed. In the case of participatory development, which relies heavily on people’s empowerment, and their access to information, education and new technologies, this central role of information and communication in development becomes crucial.

Those concerned with a participatory approach to development need to recognize the values and limitations of different types of news media and non-news media, (or of mass and group media as they are sometimes distinguished), before venturing to forge important development alliances.

In many countries, the mass (news) media form part of the regular propaganda apparatus of government. Information and communication activities aimed at furthering participatory development will often need to work with this apparatus, and with the established print media, but at the same time, perhaps even greater emphasis should be placed on working with non-news or group media, and with change agents in participatory communication nodes at the community level.

Radio and television in most developing countries are owned by the State and tend to be centralized. In principle, they are also accessible, and likely to transmit development-related messages if development agencies nurture good relations with them.

Radio and TV reach far and wide in most countries and have the advantage of overcoming the barrier of illiteracy. The emergence of the cheap transistor radio was a technological revolution that brought radio ownership to countless millions in the remotest corners of the developing world. However, TV has the advantage over radio of appealing to the senses of both sight and sound, as well as having subliminal power to affect minds. In the case of both radio and TV, however, hearing bombarding sentences and watching fast-moving messages, have the drawback of not allowing analysis and debate within the mind, which reading, on the other hand, provokes and feeds.

Furthermore, research into the effect of mass electronic media on behavioural change has produced conflicting findings, and there is general consensus that only when their use is part of a strategic communication plan, which orchestrates and reinforces messages through various channels, is there likely to be any noteworthy impact.

Print media is more often privately owned, in which case it requires a different approach and strategy by development practitioners if they are to have their messages taken seriously and printed.

Technological revolutions of major significance have been taking place in many areas of communication hardware, and they are providing a geometric increase in the opportunities for participatory development communication. The declining cost, greater reliability, and the improved portability which is resulting from miniaturization, are bringing the information and communication revolution into the world of the disadvantaged. The poor are increasingly connected by a common information flow of facts, ideas, images, and shared language, through TV tubes, portable video recorders, satellite dishes, telephones, faxes, modems, computers, photocopiers, and the like.

Today, rural communities can — and in some developing countries already do — use video recording and playback to help them to a clearer understanding of their situation and of their development options, and to build consensus and solidarity for group action and change. Video is also used to introduce ideas, which may emanate from successful experiences in similar communities, as well as to explain and teach the improved technologies that often go with change. A rural African village can today, through the use of a laptop computer with word processing and printing capacity, analyze instantly its epidemiological trends, discuss them with the visiting regional medical officer, make decisions or, through desktop publishing, come up with their own bulletin.
which can then be photocopied in a nearby town, as is the case in Rwanda and in several other East African countries.

These examples illustrate the transformation in power relationships and accountability that can be — and in some cases already is — being introduced through decentralized group communication techniques. Put differently, and as an example, the fact that barely literate peasants or traditional birth attendants (TBAs) can be taught to use portable video recorders is changing access to information. With the increasing affordability, and more manageable size and user friendliness of equipment, not only are people empowered at a rapid pace, but it also becomes more difficult to withhold or ration information.

Non-news, or low-cost group media, and interpersonal communication have traditionally been the most effective channels for people’s empowerment and participatory development. The groups of people that form initially around communication activities, such as a series of video recording and playback sessions, or listening to rural radio programmes, usually evolve into groups that undertake development activities, and as we shall see in a later section, group formation is the cornerstone of participatory development.

In the past, significant communication and change agent roles have been played by school teachers, religious leaders of all denominations, people’s organizations, NGOs, and selected professional or artistic groups. They should continue to be relied upon as important channels of interpersonal and group communication and as promoters of transformation.

Information can be the basis for empowering people — or, for that matter, for alienating them — but information alone will do little, because to hear or know information is not enough. People have to internalize new information, see it in the light of their own situation, and assess its usefulness to their own needs and aspirations. They need to be helped to do this, and this is where the importance of non-news and group media is reaffirmed. Such media can localize information and make it specific to the circumstances, fitting it into locally acceptable concepts and understandable language, and explaining it with examples from the everyday life of the people. Furthermore, such media can generate and replicate information through recording in audio, video, or photographic form at the community level. New information, enriched and amplified by such inputs of local commons and experience, has shown itself to be a powerful mobilizing instrument when taken to other communities that face similar problems, but which have not yet taken serious steps to resolve them.

People and their organizations are increasingly able to benefit from the power of information. Although a computer or data base certainly will not give people or their organization the ultimate power of decision-making, it greatly affects their knowledge and negotiating strength.

As element which is important for any communication strategy, but which is particularly so for participatory development, is a good communication analysis. This needs to be thorough and specific. It should identify audience segments and for each segment, it should investigate existing perceptions, attitudes, aspirations, felt needs and the most used and influential channels of information and communication. In addition, of course, what to communicate, to whom, how, and when, and how to reinforce the communication work through multiple approaches all need to be clearly defined. And how can the communication strategy attain maximum participation and thereby become more sustainable?

Education through formal schooling, through self-learning and through non-formal means can make a crucial difference to people’s lives. Several studies have established the positive correlation that exists between the educational levels of mothers and small family size, greater child survival rate, better nutritional levels, and higher income. Other studies reveal that farmers’ productivity and their educational level are similarly linked. Also, education is the only resource over which deprived people have some control.

Since basic education is another key tool for empowerment leading to participatory development, challenges dealt with in the context of the
Education for All Conference are pertinent. For example, how do we better prepare children for schooling, and schools for children? How do we lower the cost of the formal education system, and concurrently and even more importantly, make it capable of retaining students? How do we go national to scale in successful examples such as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)? How can basic education be universalized?

How can we create the conditions necessary to make people literate, to give them a voice in shaping and governing their society? How do we maximize the impact of efforts such as 'Facts for Life' to reach the people in the margins of society with basic life skills?

When Social Mobilization Leads to Empowerment: The Creation of People's Will to Strengthen Political Will

'Social mobilization' has probably become the most used but least understood term in development circles in the past ten years, and inevitably means different things to different people, including across cultures and languages. UNICEF's Evaluation Division, charged with assessing the impact of social mobilization in increasing coverage and sustainability of Expanded Programmes on Immunization, defined social mobilization in collaboration with UNICEF's Programme Communication Section, as '...a process for engaging a large number of people in action for achieving common societal goals through self-reliant efforts. It engages different levels of the society such as: the decision and policy-makers, the service providers, the media and education systems, non-governmental partners, the community and, finally, the individual users. It aims at:

- modifying or reinforcing behaviour leading to appropriate practices and technologies.'

While the definition is comprehensive, it would be more appropriate if there were greater emphasis on the individual users; for the long-term results are determined entirely by individual users internalizing new ideas and introducing sustained behavioural change.

The relationship of social mobilization to empowerment for participatory development has not been widely debated until the Seminar. For a variety of reasons, ranging from people not being willing to spend the time necessary to understand its complexities to their being put off by its 'command system' taint, social mobilization has at times been treated simplistically or with some disdain. In some situations, no doubt, such disdain is warranted.

Social mobilization, properly conceived, has two intrinsically meshed components. Its success relies on the creation of popular will and the creation of political will.

Popular will, which leads to empowerment, is the key element for sustained participatory development, but building it is a complex and time consuming process. Popular will is closely related to political will, since in many countries, without the blessing and the commitment of the top decision-makers, one cannot even start the process of creating popular will. In other and less centrally oriented contexts, endorsement and reinforcement by those at top policy levels can be inspirational in promoting popular will and social mobilization are, therefore, a necessary tactic for the success of the process. The timing and sequence of building popular or political will are critical strategic elements. Their timing has to be determined perceptively, in the context of the society’s culture and political complexities.

Social mobilization is not a one shot campaign whereby a prominent political figure kisses a child and gives a polio drop. Nor is it a ten-day media campaign, a song by a popular group, a comic book or a poster. Each of the above initiatives, if properly integrated, might make important contributions toward a final goal. However,
social mobilization requires a strong strategic framework and a complex of interrelated tactics and activities within that framework. A proper social mobilization initiative around any issue requires at least two years of concentrated effort, followed by a less intensive and longer term follow-up, until one is sure that the people have internalized the concepts and are empowered to sustain the desired effort and actions.

If planning for follow-up is carefully and consciously thought out in advance, social mobilization can become a starting point for a longer term and more participatory process. People who have shared working experience in social mobilization may feel very positive about what they have accomplished together. Government and communities may have organized well and have developed new structures for communication and cooperation. For example, in the health field, if intensive health campaigns are carried out by persuasion and good organization, rather than by authoritarian methods, they often bring together community people, local government, and the formal health services entailing cooperation in which the division of labor and complementarity of effort is clear and satisfying. At the end, the partners are proud of what has been accomplished together and proud to have contributed their share to the overall success. A new measure of respect and trust is thus born among the partners.

With one goal accomplished, people can be encouraged to think of other problems they might like to work on, or to think about reorganizing themselves around needs and objectives they themselves choose. A reflective and more self-reliant process may be started.

In summary, if the necessary time and persistence are given to understand social mobilization properly, to plan it conscientiously and strategically, to prepare a multitude of allies and segments and levels of society properly through effective and representative interpersonal and media communication, and if it is thoroughly executed social mobilization can be an important starting point for building toward genuine participation.
III. Transformation Strategies

How Does Participation Happen?

How does the process of participatory development take place? What starts people taking action to improve their own lives, and what sustains it in an autonomous and self-reliant way? The elements which contribute to the process are not, in fact, mysterious and unknown, though they are dynamic. The pace, depth, and direction of change brought about is unique in each situation, and in the course of the Seminar, the discussion of theory and experience demonstrated the degree to which the participatory process is, indeed, context-specific.

Organization

The basic element for the participatory process, particularly if one is concerned with people who are not part of the existing power structure or power networks, is organization. People must come together in groups to give themselves and each other courage to take action. Groups can be the bridge between individual and outside resources. The "insignificant" and easily-ignored demand by the individual for resources becomes, when voiced by a group, an irresistible chorus which cannot be ignored.

The group can serve as a vehicle for receiving and managing goods and services. Groups can become a source of training and experience which help the individual become better able to deal with his/her own life and with the rest of the world. Groups are the vehicle for moving towards reductions in disparities of power and influence in society.

The special urgency of group formation among the poor and powerless is that, in the normal course of events, it is those who are already endowed with power, authority and position who will always participate. Or more precisely, they will control. Seminar discussions underscored that if a major concern is increasing equity in development through participatory approaches, one must give particular attention to ensuring the participation of those who would normally be excluded. There must be some Seminarian participant referred to as "an ethical bias for the poor".

In this connection, the Seminar again mentioned several times the need to identify whether an NGO (national or international) is a genuine people's organization or works with them in participatory ways before creating an alliance with it.

Research and experience in some parts of the world have shown that poor women, in particular, lead exceedingly circumscribed and overburdened lives. There are particular benefits to be had from helping them organize themselves for participation. They have extraordinarily limited sources of information and contact outside the household circle. They are busy with their multiple roles as household manager and often as breadwinners too. In most parts of the world, they rise earlier than the men and children and they go to bed later in the evening. There is increasing recognition too of the especially heavy burden that falls on women, when. by virtue of abandonment, divorce, death, seasonal migration, or their own flight from abuse, find themselves household heads. Surveys which distinguish households by gender of their head almost invariably show that households headed by women are over-represented among the poor.

Women have the right to doubled attention from UNICEF. They are among the most oppressed and burdened by poverty and by social and family obligations, and yet they have shown themselves again and again to be among the most responsive and responsible when helped to achieve increased autonomy, authority, and resources. Almost everywhere in the world, whether acting as individuals or in the concert of a group, women have proved themselves in the forefront as advocates and activists for child welfare.

In extreme situations of social conflict, political disorder and economic distress, it has been the efforts of women that have provided some measure of consistency and continuity to social services.

Finally, it was pointed out in the Seminar that, in much of Africa, women are the backbone of farming and food production, and in many parts of the world, they play a key role in the small
market economy. They are central and influential in the whole development process. And yet frequently, they are still overlooked or excluded when development plans are being formulated.

Given their marginalization, the masses of poor women around the world have special reasons and incentives to become involved in activities which might help them improve their situation, but they also face special risks. This combination of factors seems to make participatory efforts with and by women consistently among the most successful. This has been particularly so with credit programmes in various parts of the world. In general, if women make commitments to credit programmes, they manage them well and repayment rates are excellent. Accordingly, women deserve very serious and favourable consideration when it comes to facilitating them to organize for participation.

Animators

The process of organizing, which is so fundamental to equitable participatory development, may begin as a spontaneous initiative by a group of people. More frequently, however, it is a process that needs the help of someone or some group from outside to get started (e.g. the way unions from 'outside' help organize workers). Experience shows that this is particularly true in the case of the really poor. The outsider, an animator¹, (a word derived from the French 'animateur'), is a person who indeed tries to animate people in the community, to stimulate them to discuss their situation, to form groups and think about how they might solve their common problems.

The animator, (who gets paid very modestly by some sponsoring NGO, government institution, or rarely by the community group) usually has nothing to dispense except encouragement, information, questions and comments to help people reflect on their situation and on what they might like to change, and on how they might try to do it. The animator is a true development worker — a facilitator promoting human development and helping people to think for themselves, rather than telling them what to think. The most effective animators are not motivated by pity for the 'downtrodden poor', and they do not confuse illiteracy and lack of opportunity with stupidity. They are respectful of their fellow human beings and often enormously impressed by the creativity and resilience of the people with whom they work, and by their ability to make life 'livable' under 'un-livable' circumstances.

At the same time, however, the experienced animator holds no fuzzy-minded and romantic notions about the poor. They are realists who know, as Karl Erik Knuttson put it, that, "People at the community level are as good and bad as the rest of us." The animator, who is usually specially trained for this work, may be a man or woman, a technical person or a generalist. The important thing is not gender or origin, but rather that they be possessed of a strong spirit and a clear understanding of their role. And that role is primarily to nurture the process of people learning to talk together, to reflect on their situation and on what they would like to change, to learn to take initiatives, to find, gain access to, and manage appropriate information and resources, and thereby to improve their lives and that of their families. In short, the animator facilitates the process of empowerment which comes from people discovering they have the ability and courage to control their own lives, and realizing that they are not irretrievably at the mercy of fate, or of the more educated, or of the landlord.

Animators are distinct from various other kinds of community workers in a number of ways. Government extension workers, for example, are generally trained and paid to teach, promote or manage a specified set of activities in certain villages and during a given period of time. For example, the agricultural extension worker will introduce crops or seed varieties and methods for their care and harvesting, and possibly also for their use or sale. He/she may get involved in organizing groups, but they would generally be related to agriculture in a fairly narrow sense, for example, groups to make it easier to carry out agricultural training; groups to facilitate distribution of seeds and pesticides; groups to share

People’s Self-Development: Breaking the Monopoly of Knowledge

Anisur Rahman

Those who are working with the people to promote their self-development do not, by and large, have a dogmatic position on the question of collectivism. The people when they are mobilized and deliberate themselves to set priorities and tasks, do a lot of pooling of resources and talents, and cooperation, and engage in a lot of collectivist initiatives (as the two illustrations from Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe show). They do so as they see the objective advantage of doing so, and as they feel inspired from working together to identify and solve problems and develop greater trust in each other. The poorer and the more oppressed the people are, the more, other things equal, are they likely to see the advantage of such cooperation and solidarity among themselves for material improvement as well as for resisting oppression and emotional security. The development of such cooperation among the people may be enhanced by sensitive ‘animation’ work, but cannot be forced, without alienating them, by some ideological principle external to the organic evolution of their life, a principle to be applied mechanically (e.g. collective ownership of land or such other ‘means of production’). And it may not be guaranteed that full collectivism may be attained some day, or even that there will be no retreat back toward some more individualism, in a possible permanent movement of dialectical tension between these two identities of the human species. There cannot be people’s self-development with any ideological dogmatism external to the people’s evolving life and consciousness.

In any case, with the turning around of the great socialist experiments of the century toward greater individualism, the ideological debate over individualism and collectivism is weakening. At the same time it is being witnessed that rule in the name of the people and ‘democracy’ in the (so-called) ‘free world’, and in the name of ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ and ‘socialist democracy’ in the (so-called) ‘socialist world’, actually represents rule of some or other category of elites over the people. This is clarifying the real ideological issue to be the question of real social power — whether the working people could have the power to determine their own destiny within a framework of horizontal social interaction with other classes, as equals and not as inferiors. This, ultimately, is the question of real democracy, not the democracy merely of periodic elections and the freedom to express the verbal word on what should be done, but the freedom and opportunity of the people to take the initiative to do it themselves.

Anyone’s self-development starts, as it must, with one’s self-understanding to guide one’s own action, and is a process in which self-understanding develops as action is taken and reviewed. Formal efforts at social development have, however, been in the hands of elites who have in general considered themselves wiser than the people, and instead of seeking to promote the people’s self-inquiry and understanding have sought to impose their own ideas of ‘development’. In doing this they have protected their own self-development in some ways, while bringing the world into the dismal state in which we find it today. In any case, this had to be at the cost of people’s self-development, for one cannot develop with somebody else’s ideas. This has been, I suggest, also the single most important intellectual error in many otherwise committed efforts toward social change for people’s liberation, which seek to indoctrinate the people in a vertical relation with them, and give priority to structural change over liberation of the mind. Only with a liberated mind (of the people) which is free to inquire and then conceive and plan what is to be created, can structural change release the creative potentials of the people. In this sense liberation of the mind is the primary task, both before and after structural change.

This implies breaking the monopoly of knowledge to the hands of the elites — i.e., giving the people their right to assert their existing knowledge to start with; giving them the opportunity and assistance, if needed, to advance their self-knowledge through self-enquiry as the basis of their action, and to review themselves their experiences from action to further advance their self-knowledge.

Taken from “People’s Self-Development”, National Professor Atwar Hussain Trust Fund Lecture, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 18 October 1989.
equipment too expensive for one farmer to own. If questions about other problems arose, most agricultural extension workers would not have the time or information to help. If the extension worker uses appropriate methods, the people he/she works with may well learn to identify and solve their problems better, but that is seldom the case. Usually, agricultural extensionists just lecture people on how to be better farmers.

Experience has shown that, in general, experienced extension workers have difficulty switching from the teaching role to the animation role. They seldom become effective animators. However, learning to work in a more participatory way, to listen with care and respect to people’s viewpoints, to dialogue and be more responsive and less instructive, are important and can give great satisfaction both to the extension worker and the people they work with. We should note that, this generalization, like many other things about participation, is also context-specific. One case study of a participatory planning project at village level used retrained extension workers as their animators and with marked success.

Volunteers and staff from charitable organizations present another situation. While they are usually very effective, they are sometimes so overwhelmed by the conditions of the poor that they want to do everything for them. Thus, they may say, “They are too poor to pay for it. We must give it to them.” Or, “They don’t have enough experience to deal with the people from the government land office. We’ll negotiate for them.” Or, under pressure from their funding sources, they are forced to show measurable improvements within a specific time frame. The outcome seems good in the short run. Poor people get the services they need, but when the helping hand is gone, they may be no better off than before. They have neither the service arranged for them, nor the skill and self-confidence to demand or negotiate for a new service, nor to organize their own.

"If Participation Is So Wonderful, Why Isn’t this Approach Used More Often?"

We have seen participation as a promising means for accelerating the process of human development, an almost sure-fire route to sustainability. Nevertheless, despite all the benefits — both direct and indirect — which can be derived from a process of participatory development, the approach is used less frequently than one might expect. The central problem of participation lies with individuals, as was fully elaborated by Alejandro Angulo as the central theme of his paper. "Essentially most of us are individualistic and unwilling to work harder than we need to. And that is why basically we don’t want to participate. And, when we do participate, we often get tired of it very soon. Unless we have a very powerful interest to fight for, we would rather leave the burden to others." If we are mature enough to be self-critical and accept this hypothesis, we can start to search for ways to bring participatory processes to whatever we are doing.

With this central reality in mind, and imbued with belief in the process, the Seminar participants nonetheless pulled themselves back to reality again and again to discuss the very real obstacles to the wider application of the participatory, people-centred processes discussed here. They identified many reasons for resistance to their wider use. The resistances can be grouped in various ways. For example, one can analyze them from the perspective of structure, politics and administration. But one can also group them by their origin, whether within the community or outside.

Obstacles within the Community

True participatory development, as we have seen, gives priority concern to groups that have previously been excluded. The ultimate result of the process, if successful, is: "Wider sharing of power and scarce resources, deliberate efforts by social groups to control their own destinies and improve their living conditions, and opening up

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of opportunities from below.” (Dillons and Steifel, 1987; Quoted on p. 218, “Human Development in the 1980s and Beyond’; D. Ghai.) For people in the community who have always had the dominant voice in local affairs, it can be seriously threatening to have new groups forming, making new demands, voicing new concerns, and taking actions based on their own priorities.

It can be equally difficult for the poor to overcome their lack of confidence and their skepticism about the potential for change. In most places, the problem is not that the poor are lazy; they are busy trying to survive and may never before have succeeded in asserting themselves. They have felt themselves to be at the mercy of forces beyond their control. Furthermore, in addition to shedding these very real spiritual and psychological burdens, the poor must overcome other concrete obstacles that result from generations of deprivation — lack of information, lack of resources, and, perhaps most important, lack of experience in finding companions with whom to forge a common cause, discuss problems, consider alternatives, and take action.

Obstacles from the Outside

Those very characteristics of participatory development which make it important in the community — its ongoing and dynamic nature, its local management, its concern with issues of power and resources and their wider distribution, its potential for reducing inequities in the community — all make it a complex and delicate process to comprehend, and to make it work. Once participatory processes are established, they take on a dynamic of their own and are not susceptible to simple control, and particularly not from outside. The unknowable, unpredictable and uncontrollable are threatening to many people and systems. Official and unofficial structures, or groups and institutions, outside a community in which poor people are organizing and taking action may tend to put obstacles in the way of the process rather than support it.

For outsiders who would like to help the process, the questions are always: Who? How? and how much? When and what? For a key element in people-centred development is the search for self-reliance and control over the local environment — social, political, economic and therefore, support must be appropriate in nature, size and timing. It must be in proportion to local resources, needs and capacities. It must not overwhelm the sense of local accomplishment or introduce unnecessary complications. Faced with this somewhat unpredictable, very human and sometimes volatile mix, many outsiders — whether official or unofficial — may decide ‘not to get involved’ and so resources of information, materials, training are withheld.

Finally, within institutions there are sometimes deskbound bureaucrats watching over the conduct of the processes and procedures related to release and accounting for materials, supplies, funds, etc. which are neither practical nor appropriate when attempting to use participatory approaches. In many cases, programmes draw upon plans that are tied to fixed quantitative goals, with detailed work plans that include pre-determined time schedules but which seldom make reference to the people who will be responsible for implementing the activities. Bureaucrats and programme officers under pressure for quick-fixes do not want to take the extra time and energy required to give attention to elements of true participation, which often bear indeterminable and unquantifiable costs, including those linked to a project that does not become self-sustaining.

Having mentioned the many difficulties facing bureaucraties in finding appropriate paths to participatory development, we should also remind ourselves that “difficult” is not the same as “impossible”. As it was put in one Seminar paper, “It is often forgotten that systems are made of people, and frequently working with people one can resolve what initially appeared to be problems with the system.” Indeed, we need to be humane and persistent in our search for allies and partners within the often unsympathetic settings of formal government or donor structures. They have an important role to play and cannot and should not be circumvented or ignored.

Caution must be exercised against going over-
board as ‘champions of the people’ or in making a
‘black and white issue’ of the difference between
government and people.

Strategies to Transform Government
Bureaucracies and Management Systems
from Controllers to Enablers

The important and unique role of government
was again stressed by the Seminar participants,
for government has a major potential to play a
positive role, and in addition, it has extraordinary
resources. Governments are also the inherent axis
for UNICEF collaboration.

If governments are such an important resource
and potentially key allies, what can be done to
bring out the best they can offer to encourage
people’s participation and development?

A number of countries have taken the route of
decentralization in several forms:
- Delegation of functions within the central
government;
- Delegation of functions to parastatal or semi-
autonomous corporations;

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Devolving Power from the State to the People

Mary Racelis and Mattias Stiefel

A participatory policy basically implies deconcentration of power, with the state divesting itself
of control and responsibility in many fields. It implies a different philosophy in which the
government is not the main actor, but the people are. The government’s role is to help and facilitate;
to create the political, legal and institutional framework for the expression of diverse popular interests;
through associations, organizations and interest groups; to establish and maintain viable and
effective social and economic infrastructures; and to safeguard national sovereignty and security
for all the populace. The guarantee of basic civil and political rights, such as freedom of
association, is of course a fundamental prerequisite.

African societies have a long tradition of communal institutions and of organized collective
action in defense of people’s livelihoods. This is a priceless asset, and it is not surprising that the
majority of successful participatory experiences have been built on this tradition. A participatory
policy implies that governments provide ‘space’ for people’s activities to emerge, flourish and be
replicated. It means government bureaucrats and technicians must be ready to learn from such
experiences, and reduce bureaucratic obstacles to a minimum.

Participatory mechanisms have to be established in a manner calculated to make government
administrators accountable to the people whom they are supposed to serve, rather than the
reverse. A collaborative style must evolve that allows a flexible response by administrators to
people’s perceptions and interests. Bureaucratic resistance to popular participation may at times
be so persistent that the central government must be prepared to intervene to protect participatory
activities when its own resisting bureaucracy poses a serious threat. The ‘project approach’ to
development will have to be replaced gradually by a more holistic ‘process approach’ that involves
frequent peer interaction by the parties involved.

Taken from a paper prepared by Mary Racelis and Mattias Stiefel, “Putting the People First”,
for the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development
• Devolution of functions to local or regional governments;
• Transfer of functions to non-governmental organizations.

It is difficult to judge if these efforts have produced the expected positive returns because so many other factors enter into such an evaluation. However, certain general conclusions can be reached, as follows. Decentralization is not effective unless sufficient financial resources accompany the power transferred to those organizations that are to assume the responsibilities. The major implementation problems that may beset decentralization are due to several factors. The most important of these are insufficient central political and bureaucratic support, and centrists' attitudes and behaviour patterns on the part of political and administrative leaders. Faulty conceptual design and application is another cause contributing to implementation problems during decentralization. Of course, there have also been positive cases where decentralization resulted in greater participation in development activities, and more effective management of rural and local programmes.

While the state is obviously here to stay and continues to have important functions and roles to play, the nature of this role must change if participatory approaches are to be used. The state needs to be transformed from controller to enabler. The state can assume a stronger role in coordination, in helping and complementing existing activities. It can adapt its efforts to people's initiatives, protect, and give direction and recognition to local participatory organizations. The state can create a favourable environment for the work of people's initiatives and assist them with technical expertise and complementary resources. It can institute policies which, on the one hand, create incentives that stimulate and enable people to contribute optimally to their own development, and on the other hand, policies that encourage government agencies to support efforts of the people.

Seminar discussions on transformation of government agreed that it is possible to convert technically-oriented and conventional public agencies into organizations using more people-centred strategies. The case of the Philippine National Irrigation Administration1 was discussed as an example of such transformation, but illustrated that it is not easily or quickly achieved. It requires a policy framework that is supportive of clear roles for people in development and which gives equal attention to legal, financial and organizational aspects. It requires strong leadership focused on appropriate organizational methods and management, good human capacities, and extraordinary patience. Also, needed, of course, is attention to the human element. Both the people and the managers must clearly understand the benefits of working together. Particularly, the managers and bureaucrats must be helped to see that by enabling the people, not only can more be done for them, but they themselves have a role in having achieved more and earn plaudits and recognition for it. At the same time, they have to be accountable to the people. The budgets of the provincial irrigation offices had to cover a portion of their operating budgets through collections of loan amortizations from the water user associations. They were, however, aware that if the systems were not working and the farmers were not happy with the services provided by the provincial office, these amortization payments would be very difficult to collect.

Another lesson to learn is that a participatory project that goes national, or at best, to scale, does not replicate the complete model. In other words, if we have a successful pilot project serving 10,000 people, we do not go to scale by increasing its coverage to one million people. Instead, we aim to create 100 such small projects serving 10,000 people at different localities with their internal dynamics.

Successful change is almost never accomplished by rewriting policy and procedure manuals, or through a one-shot series of training courses, or a three-year project. Official efforts to promote participation are conceived on a project basis to be carried out in a comparatively brief time-frame — two, three years. And, once designed and committed to paper, we consider the job done. In his address to the Seminar, David Korten summarized the following points as

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1 Flavio F. Korten, Robert Y. Sy, Jr. (Eds.), Transforming a Bureaucracy: The Experience of the Philippine National Irrigation Administration, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, CT, 1989.
being the key to strategies for transforming systems through applying methods of social learning:

* A government development agency cannot move from a top-down bureaucratic approach to one of participatory capacity building at community level simply because a project design calls for it. The problem is agency-wide and must be approached through an agency-wide strategy that may require a commitment of ten years or more to complete.

* The change must be supported by a social learning process through which the organization learns from its own field experience. This process should begin with small-pilot efforts that are intensively monitored to extract lessons about the adequacy of the operational approach being tried and how it fits with the structures and procedures of the organization.

* Systematic attention must be given to building a change coalition comprised of key people from within the agency ideally supported by a number of talented and committed people who command institutional resources external to the agency. The insiders provide legitimacy and authority. The outsiders bring resources and a freedom of action and are not constrained by the internal control mechanisms of the bureaucracy.

* The transformation from a centralized bureaucratic organization to a strategic capacity-building community-service-oriented organization will often depend on changing almost every aspect of the organization, including its policies, staffing patterns, organization structures, budgeting, and evaluation systems. The comprehensive nature of the changes involved is rather awesome and explains why the changes must evolve over time and be based on learning from the organization’s own experience."

"Bureaucracy is the tentacles of power. To tame bureaucracy, let's look at the eye of the octopus, not the tentacles."

ALEJANDRO ANGULO
Florence, May 26 1990
IV. PROGRAMMING ISSUES, MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS: LEARNING FROM UNICEF AND ALLIES

Having read several UNICEF and non-UNICEF case studies and discussed them at length, certain principles and modes for supporting participatory development became clearer to the Seminar. (The cases discussed included: the Bamako Initiative; the Centre for Research and Popular Education, (CINEP) experience in Bogota, Colombia; the Village Family Welfare Movement (PKK) in Nusa Tenggara Timur Province, Indonesia; the JNSP Iringa experience and the Triple A approach in Tanzania; the Philippines National Irrigation Administration; Women’s Mobilization in Peru; and Planning Rural Development at Village Level in Tanzania.)

How can one support the process?

1. Listening and dialogue: The first requirement for people who want to join in the search for more humane, equitable, sustainable development is to cultivate the habits and skills of listening (with understanding) and of dialogue (as contrasted to monologue or ‘instruction’). If these habits are well developed we will learn what we can contribute, how, and when, from those we want to help. Sometimes we will discover that nothing more than encouragement is needed or wanted. As advocates for participatory approaches, we will practice these skills of listening and of adapting our ideas and support to what we hear and understand from those we want to help. And we will encourage our partners to acquire the same skills and to use them.

Given the range of things which need to happen, and the number of factors external to the community which are important to the continuation of participatory processes, it becomes clear that there is much that can be done to facilitate the process in various settings. Clearly, activity at the community level should be the basis of all other activities, but attention needs to be given to the support structure outside of the community as well. Those interested, therefore, can concern themselves with either activity within the community or activity outside designed to support the

people. One must remember both sides of the equation and learn to listen intelligently, and dialogue respectfully.

As Karl-Eric Knutsson said, “the real landscape where development has to take place is the mind”. Seminar participants agreed that the provision of basic education and information has a key role in supporting the process of transformation.

2. Education: As was stated in the earlier section on Empowerment through Knowledge: The Role of Information, Communication and Education, certain general factors have to be given consideration:
   - Learning begins at birth;
   - Everyone should be given an opportunity of several years of schooling;
   - The ‘communication revolution’ and application of new technologies offer us extraordinary opportunities;
   - All channels and low-cost technologies that offer new potential for communication with the disadvantaged must be mobilized to help them to acquire more knowledge.

Basic education is a key tool for empowerment, and UNICEF and its allies now have a major new opening through the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs. This opening must be exploited to the full.

In the context of our everyday work with the governments with whom we are cooperating, the use and impact of initiatives such as ‘Facts for Life’ should be maximized in order to raise the knowledge level of common citizens, and to give them self-confidence and a voice to ask for the services which are their due.

Alan Durning, in his ‘Action At the Grassroots: Fighting Poverty and Environmental Decline’. (Worldwatch Paper 88, 1989) says: ‘At the local level, particularly among the close to 4 billion humans in developing lands, it appears that the World’s people are better organized in 1989 than they have been since European colonia-

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Footnote: More on this subject can be explored in Alejandro Angulo’s paper “An Experiment in Participatory Development” prepared for the Seminar. See the section on “Meeting as a Tool”.

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3. Working with others: Forging alliances, as UNICEF has been advocating for years, has to be taken even more seriously and applied widely, not only in advocacy work, but in the implementation of programmes as well. A critical, innovative role for UNICEF and its allies who want to accelerate the participatory process is to facilitate alliances between local groups, or people's organizations, that possess potential 'social energy', and their national governments, who have the resources and authority to create favorable conditions for development. This complex facilitation role must range, on the one hand, from promoting necessary social and legal policy reforms and tapping new funding sources for inputs such as technical assistance, to, on the other hand, enhancing accountability and fostering new responsibilities among the people's groups. This in turn requires capacity building to strengthen the skills and competence levels of people's organizations.

In looking for modalities for technical assistance and capacity-strengthening activities for people's organizations, UNICEF and its allies should take advantage of programmes such as ICDC's initiative for National Capacity Building for Child Survival and Development, or consider borrowing its basic principle — university-community/government-institutional linkages — and adapt it to their contexts. This programme, un-

"New Alliances for Achieving Education for All"

James P. Grant — Executive Director of UNICEF

The single greatest gift of this century could be crystallized during the coming decade. It would be to mobilize and restructure, in the 1990s, all existing channels of education — of communication — for empowering people, including particularly those currently largely unreached, for more than ever before, with the vital relevant knowledge presently available. It would be accomplished if, as the background document for this Forum and the World Conference states, the structure and content of learning activities were: "...determined to equip all children, youth, and adults with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes they need to survive, to improve the quality of life, to empower them to participate fully and responsibly in the life of their communities and nations, to adapt to changing circumstances — and to continue learning according to their individual needs and interests."

If this is accomplished, societies of the future will take for granted that education is everyone's concern and responsibility. Such an ethic would help ensure the well-being of children for generations to come, and it would offer convincing evidence that we are progressing as a more just and humane civilization.

Taken from an address delivered at
North American Regional Forum on Education for All
Boston — 6 November 1989
derway in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, aims to facilitate national efforts to mobilize universities and similar institutions to play a focused and active role in providing community, government and non-governmental organizations with information, technical assistance, training, and organization. The programme seeks to foster a self-sustaining learning process within and among these groups as they direct their attention to the solution of problems related to the changing needs of children. Further, the capacity building programme ensures that today's university students — future leaders of the next decade — are not studying in protected ivory towers but are sensitized to the problems of their communities. They should begin to see themselves in the role of an 'enabling intelligentsia' rather than a 'commanding elite'.

4. Practising as well as supporting participation: Finally, UNICEF and its allies must practise what they preach. As is shown in one case study after the other, without change in individuals' attitudes, or the rules of the organizations in which they work, it will be unrealistic to expect transformation. Therefore, we must recruit people with positive attitudes toward participatory development, and strengthen the capacity of our own staff to analyze, advocate, and implement programmes leading to greater participatory development.

How does one Evaluate Popular Participation?

One supports or shares in participatory, people-centred approaches believing in their effectiveness as:

a) a tool for reaching the poor;

b) a way to increase access to and effective management of the goods, services, information and other resources that bring improvements in the quality of life for more people, particularly the poor and powerless;

c) a process which can release people's creativity and give them opportunities for more active control over, and responsibility for, their own lives and their environment.

Evaluation, therefore, must use methodologies and criteria for measurement which are appropriate to those objectives. One must look at both process and results. Qualitative and quantitative criteria should be used. The concern should be with changes over time, and one should not measure exclusively with external or absolute criteria. And, because of the ongoing and dynamic nature of participatory development, the process of evaluation also needs to be ongoing.

The evaluation of greatest importance is participatory projects is made by the people concerned, without the aid of highly paid experts, investment of vast amounts of time, and elaborately designed instruments and tools. It consists of people considering in some systematic way what they find useful, what they tried to do, how they went about it, how far they have come, what they feel went well, and what they would like to do better. Such an evaluation becomes one more source of information for the people and gives them a new picture of their own situation to compare with an earlier one. Evaluation of this sort is important for continuity of the participatory process.

On the other hand, if people have used external resources in their activities — from government, a private donor or an international agency — other kinds of evaluation will also be needed. And therein lies a problem: "Such evaluations often have difficulty with activities which are being done using participatory approaches." As a process, participation evolves at its proper pace and rhythm, adapted to the people involved rather than to bureaucratically or politically defined project plans or goals. It may go in unforeseen directions and may not, in the short term, have an immediately quantifiable or measurable impact. Historically, these differences in viewpoint between the detailed and carefully planned 'development project' and activities growing out of an evolving, participatory development process have often deprived participatory projects of any out-


side support because development agency structures, regulations, and operating procedures have been too rigid to support such an open-ended process.

There is, however, a rising level of interest in human development and increasing recognition of its central role as a driving force, rather than merely being a possible side benefit. This is reflected in the UNDP 'Human Development Report' as well as in discussions within some of the international development agencies and banks. It has become clear that without the commitment, creativity, energy and interest of the people concerned, progress in development will be halting at best. Again we see this in the 'African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (Arous-S, 1990)' where it is written:

We affirm that nations cannot be built without the popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic crisis be resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without the full and effective contribution, creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of people. We are convinced that Africa has no alternative but to urgently and immediately embark upon the task of transforming the structure of its economies to achieve long-term self-sustained growth and development that is both human-centered and participatory in nature.

It remains to be seen if this new concern will be reflected over time in new kinds of development objectives, and in less technocratic kinds of project design and evaluation. Until this happens, it is likely that people using external resources will still be subjected to external project evaluations which may seem of little relevance or use to them. And the development agencies working with people's organizations may continue to be frustrated by projects the shape and direction of which are somewhat unpredictable because, like the human beings who make them, they grow and change.

Whatever methods and criteria are used, and whatever the focus of evaluation, two basic principles should apply in evaluating participatory projects: firstly, participatory methods should be used for at least some portion of the exercise and, secondly, the results of the evaluation should be shared in a timely and intelligible manner with those involved in the activity being evaluated.

This latter requirement sounds easy, and yet experience shows that it happens far too seldom. Foreign evaluation teams go home or write their reports in a foreign language. Local evaluation teams go home or write their reports in evaluation jargon or both. The results of the evaluation are considered too delicate to share on a wide basis, even if the evaluation is commenting on activities that people have been carrying out themselves.

There are a hundred and one reasons why evaluation findings seldom get back to the people involved, but none of them has much validity in the context of participatory development.

Evaluators who take the time to involve the people in the evaluation process — design, implementation, or analysis — are often struck by the extraordinary perceptiveness and creativity expressed by people in identifying appropriate situation-specific criteria for evaluating and analyzing their own situation.

Evaluation specialists interested in participatory development will have a great contribution to make in trying to develop appropriate guidelines for evaluation of participatory projects.

What More can UNICEF do?

UNICEF is the lead agency in the United Nations concerned with the survival of children and their right to develop to their full potential. With that mandate goes the prerogative and obligation to concern itself with the existence or the absence of the environment which will ensure children the opportunity to realize these rights. It is clear that children do best in situations where people are in control of their own destinies, manage the activities and facilities needed to nurture their children, have ways to monitor the well-being of children, and are able to take compensatory action if needed.

Such settings do exist, but inequities in a community often lead to uneven family security, unpredictable access to resources, and inadequate support for children. At the community level,
those with power, wealth and authority can and do ensure that their own children are well cared for, that they, themselves, are well informed. They avail themselves of opportunities provided by their social and natural environment and by government programmes. Generally, in fact, they obtain more than their share. UNICEF, therefore, has a special interest in helping those who are less able to influence their surroundings, less well informed and whose children, as a result, suffer particular disadvantages.

Sadly, the pattern of inequities and uneven access to, and control and utilization of, resources repeats itself at every level, from the family to the international community. And the ripple effect carries the impact back through the system and down to the level of children. Therefore, UNICEF and its staff, faithful to their concern for the world's children, of necessity must become concerned with national and international relations, with national security and national budgets, with politics and economics, as well as with child care, family income, nutrition, health, and education.

Participants at the Innocenti Global Seminar on Participatory Development discussed at length how best to achieve Goals for Children and Development in the 1990s (Annex A). It was agreed that participatory processes are the most effective means of achieving equitable social, economic, and human development. Participatory processes incorporate important social values and thereby foster the concept of human development. It was also agreed during the Seminar that the Goals and Development for Children and Development in the 1990s will be achieved and sustained only if people-centred approaches are the basis for the entire effort.

Seminar discussions paid tribute to the progress already made in programmes and management within UNICEF. Particular mention was made of the Bamako Initiative, the new nutrition strategy, home-based CDD and ARI management, staff training, and the budget process. Nevertheless, it was felt that UNICEF must do better if children and women, particularly the poor and politically weak, are to be reached on a sustainable basis.

Accordingly, the participants examined in detail UNICEF structures, policies, programmes, procedures, rules and regulations, management styles and working methods with a view to suggesting how they might be modified or better implemented to strengthen participatory development strategies. In the process, many elements were identified that are already compatible with participatory development, such as UNICEF's highly decentralized country programming, its flexible procedures, and its Global Staff Association. At the same time, however, it was noted that a number of structures, procedures, and attitudes act as constraints to participatory development.

Participants made a recommendation to the Executive Director that he consider establishing a Task Force for Promoting Participatory Development. The Task Force would review the broad range of UNICEF structures, policies, programmes, procedures, and operations to identify constraints to participatory development, as well as existing elements that are conducive to it. The Task Force would work in liaison with other groups in UNICEF that are already engaged in studying various aspects of policy, programming, and operations in order to ensure complementarity and compatibility. The terms of reference for a Task Force, with explanatory notes, were prepared by the participants in the Global Seminar (Refer to Annex A). It is not yet clear whether the proposed Task Force approach will be found useful in the UNICEF institutional context. Nevertheless, the Terms of Reference have been generally agreed upon as representing useful guidelines for UNICEF and other agencies seeking to strengthen their capacities to foster more people-oriented participatory development.

From what we have seen of the potential benefits of participatory, people-centred development, UNICEF has a deep interest in supporting activities at all levels which will either directly or indirectly have the effect of expanding the possibilities for more participatory approaches in development.

* These explanatory notes are intended as a supplement to the proposed Terms of Reference for the Task Force for Promoting Participatory Development.
Happily, there is much that UNICEF can do in this direction, and with a wide range of partners. In the course of the Global Seminar, drawing on both the literature and the vast reservoir of practical experience among participants and resource people, many possibilities were identified:

**At Community Level**

- Promote and support use of animators (other community development workers in addition to technical extension agents) and help with appropriate training and capacity building;
- Encourage more participatory planning and more participatory designs for community service programmes. For example, in project planning and management, include representatives of people’s organizations side by side with people from formal power structures;
- Increase availability of small block grants, credits, and other such programmes, but taking care that criteria for awarding such support does not simply reinforce the privileged position of existing elites; instead, promote community responsibility in the management of resources for development, including management of resources generated by the communities themselves for social services;
- Increase development and support of activities specifically intended to reach and serve women, providing them with more effective opportunities to gain the resources and the confidence to exercise more control over their own lives and the lives of their families and community. Training, credit, information, and encouragement are all important in this context;
- Ensure that training programmes are adequate in content, and appropriate in methodology and timing, to promote the combination of personal growth and increased skill and knowledge that are the equal prerequisites in participatory development. Task-oriented training is important, but it should be complemented by learning experiences which build confidence, release creativity, and strengthen the sense of shared effort;
- Make full use of existing approaches, such as the UNICEF nutrition strategy, to institute participatory processes of planning, implementing, and monitoring activities.

**At Intermediate Levels**

- Give special attention to training and experience for government and local leaders to increase their understanding of, and commitment to, participatory development and to improve their skills as facilitators. Specifically, UNICEF should promote efforts to increase the skill of intermediate level officials, including extension workers, in participatory styles of communication, and in work with each other and with communities.

**At National Level**

- Encourage the development of policies and structures which permit area-based development, with real devolution of authority from the centre to the lower level, and give special emphasis to the use of participatory processes and disparity reduction.¹ This might be done through simple advocacy, or through more elaborate efforts based on action research, seminars, and the like;
- Practise participatory modes in working with government counterparts;
- Support appropriate action research by local institutions to make the process, benefits and difficulties of participatory development more widely known and understood;
- Encourage the use of narrowly-defined targets for service delivery and campaigns as important entry points for long-term and more participatory efforts. Plan immediate follow-up to these circumscribed activities, perhaps with the use of animators, to build on and reinforce the patterns of cooperative effort and credibility that were attained;
- Introduce greater flexibility in budgeting and timing of programme and project design to make it easier to accommodate local decision-making, changes in details of project implementation, etc;
- Encourage and support participatory methods of planning, implementing, monitoring, and eval-

¹ It must be recognized, however, that some regional or local authorities may be more autocratic than those at the central level.
In conclusion, we can do no better than to remind ourselves:

"Finally, when attempting to promote participation, one must be aware of its limits. A central authority is always needed to define larger national, common and long-term goals (as opposed to local, specific and short-term goals) to coordinate local action, reconcile divergent interests and protect the weak, the losers and sometimes minorities. Creating a more participatory environment and society thus means constantly to pursue the optimal balance between concentration and deconcentration of power, between participation and authority. It also means accepting that such a balance, once found, must always be redefined and adapted to the local, sub-national, national and international scenes which are changing constantly as new technology, new political forces, economic interests and social actors emerge." 

# Agenda

## Monday 21 May

### Morning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Chair: J. Himes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.30/10.30</td>
<td>Introductory Remarks</td>
<td>J. Himes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Welcome and Participants’ Introduction</td>
<td>B. Oglin</td>
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<td>Seminar Purpose and Objectives</td>
<td>S. Woodhouse</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Administrative and Logistical Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30/11.00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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### Session 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>I. Participation</th>
<th>M. Racelis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.00/12.30</td>
<td>Reaching a Common Understanding of Participation</td>
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<td>Concept and Practice of Participation: Some Theoretical Considerations</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participatory Development: Some Perspectives from Field Experiences</td>
<td>J. Maeda</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
<td>A. Rahman</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.00/14.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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### Afternoon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Chair: D. Korten</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.30/16.00</td>
<td>UNICEF’s Goals and Strategic Choices for the 1990’s: People’s Participation - from Romantic Fads to Realistic Strategies</td>
<td>K-E. Knutsson</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Information and Communication in Participatory Development</td>
<td>V.T. Vittachi</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>16.00/16.30</td>
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<td>16.30/18.00</td>
<td>Eastern European Experiences: People's Participation and Democratization Discussion S. Sipos</td>
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<td>Tuesday 22 May Morning</td>
<td>Chair: K.-E. Knutsson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>IL. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00/10.30</td>
<td>Alternative Development Strategies                                    A. Cornia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conventional Growth Oriented</td>
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<td>Basic Needs - Growth with Enhanced Human Capability</td>
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<td>Socialist Strategies</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>10.30/11.00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Achieving Human Development Goals - Present Context                  A. Cornia</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00/12.30</td>
<td>Economic Crisis Adjustment and Debt</td>
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<td>Adjustment with a Human Face and ECA/AFSAAP</td>
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<td>Human Development Report (Disparity Reduction and Reallocation of Existing Resources) Discussion</td>
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<td>13.00/14.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 22 May Afternoon</td>
<td>Chair: T. Vetachi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>People-Centred Development Alternatives                               D. Korten</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.30/16.00</td>
<td>Equity-Led Growth Strategy</td>
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<td>Toward a Multi-Level One-World Economy                                Discussion</td>
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<td>16.00/16.30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Equity-Led Growth Strategies and its Potential Application to Country Realities in which UNICEF Operates Discussion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Session 1

- **9:00-10:30**
  - Dimensions of Participation
  - Economics and Politics of Participation  
    - J. Himes
  - Benefits and Costs of Participation  
    - D. Parker
  - Politics of Participation: Local and Central Decision-Making Structures  
    - J. Maeda
  - How can People be Best Empowered?  
    - A. U.N. Jadhun
    - U. Jonsson

- **10:30-11:00**
  - Coffee break

### Session 2

- **11:00-12:30**
  - Politics of Participation:
    - Budgetary and Legislative Processes  
    - U. Jonsson
  - How can UNICEF make a difference for the adoption of Participatory Strategies?
    - J. Maeda

- **13:00-14:30**
  - Lunch

### Session 3

- **14:30-16:00**
  - Politics and Participation - Latin American Experience  
    - C. Pizzaro
  - Group Work

- **16:00-16:30**
  - Coffee break

### Session 4

- **10:30-18:00**
  - Groups to present their conclusions
  - Discussion

### Thursday 24 May

#### Session 1

- **9:30-10:30**
  - III. Transformation Strategies
  - Strategies to Transform Government Bureaucracies and Management Systems from Controller to Enabler  
    - U. Nyi Nyi
    - D. Korten
Learning Process Approach
Presentation of Philippines National Irrigation Administration Case Study
D. Korten

10.30/11.00
Coffee break

**Session 2**
Planning Rural Development at Village Level: A Case Study from Tanzania
K.J. Kweder
J. Maeda

11.00/12.30

13.00/14.30
Lunch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday 24 May</th>
<th>Afternoon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 3</strong></td>
<td>Operationalization of Transformation Strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.30/16.00</td>
<td>Four groups to discuss:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) What are the obstacles for governments in supporting participatory development strategies?</td>
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<td>b) How can UNICEF best assist governments towards their transformation?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Groups to present their conclusions</td>
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<td>16.00/16.30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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</table>

| Session 4       | Capacity Building (Training) for Participatory Development |
| 16.30/18.00     | Education for All |
|                 | Capacity Building for UNICEF and Government Staff |
|                 | Capacity Building for or of People's Organizations and Networks |
|                 | Capacity Building at or for Universities |
| U. Nyi Nyi       | S. Woodhouse |
| A. Rahman        | A. Lemma |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friday 25 May</th>
<th>Morning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNSCHEDULED MORNING for individual study and reflection</td>
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13.00/14.00
Lunch (served on premises - Istituto degli Innocenti)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Confidence: Medium</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Learning from UNICEF Programmes:</td>
<td>Group work (continued)</td>
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<td>14:00-16:00</td>
<td>Peru: Women's Mobilization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>UNICEF Programmes and People's Participation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Group work from previous day resumed</td>
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<td>16:00-16:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:30</td>
<td>Presentation of groups' conclusions</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:30</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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**Saturday 26 May**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Confidence: Medium</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Participatory Development - Latin American Experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00-10:30</td>
<td>An Experiment in Participatory Development:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Case of CINEP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A. Angulo</td>
<td>A. Hewett</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>S. Kessler</td>
<td>25 min.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10.30-11.00</td>
<td>L. Rivera</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>Social Mobilization and Participation</td>
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<td>11.00-13.00</td>
<td>Facts for Life (video from Philippines)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Panel discussion: Communication, Planning and Evaluation of Social Mobilization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A. Hewett</td>
<td>S. Kessler</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
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<td>L. Rivera</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>13.00-14.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Group work begins on: Appropriateness of UNICEF Policy, Procedures and Operations to Support Participatory Development</td>
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<td>40 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.00-14.00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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</table>
### Saturday 26 May

#### Afternoon

**Session 3**

14.30/18.00  Group work continues (to be continued on Sunday, also)

### Monday 28 May

#### Morning

**Session 1**

9.00/10.30  
**Participatory Programme Options**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues of Participation in Indonesia Experience</td>
<td>N. Mboi</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>K.H. Smith</td>
<td>25 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banako Initiative as a Participatory Strategy</td>
<td>D. Paker</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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10.30/11.00  Coffee break

**Session 2**

11.00/12.30  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues of Participation in Iriaga Case Study</td>
<td>B. Ljungquist</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>25 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF Nutrition Strategies - A Participatory Option</td>
<td>U. Jonsson</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>25 min.</td>
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12.30/14.30  Lunch

#### Afternoon

**Session 3**

14.30/16.00  Monitoring and Evaluation of Popular Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Indicators of Process</td>
<td>P. Oakley</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Framework for Judging Community</td>
<td>R. Shrimpion</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation Aspects of Primary Health and Nutrition</td>
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<td>30 min.</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group work starts</td>
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<td>20 min.</td>
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16.00/16.30  Coffee break
**Session 4**

16.30/19.00  
Group work continues - Definition of Policy, Programming and Management Implications and Recommendations  
2.5 hr.

**Tuesday 29 May**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Chair: M. RACELIS</th>
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**Session 1**

9.00/10.30  
UNICEF in the 1990s: Participatory Strategies to Achieve Sustainable Development  
Groups present their draft recommendations (6 x 5 min.)  
Discussion  
30 min.  
60 min.

10.30/11.00  
Coffee break

**Session 2**

11.00/12.30  
Group Work - Incorporation of suggestions from plenary discussions into draft recommendations  
Presentation of final recommendations  
30 min.  
30 min.

12.30  
Closure  
30 min.

13.00/14.30  
Lunch - on premises (Istituto degli Innocenti)
# Annex 2

## Participants and Invited Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Position</th>
<th>Organization/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ofori Akwes</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>UNICEF Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karl-Eric Knutsson</td>
<td>Regional Director</td>
<td>UNICEF ROSCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anisur Rahman</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural Employment Branch, International Labour Organization, Geneva, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro Angulo</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Gregorian University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Korten</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>The People-Centered Development Forum - Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Schoelen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zonal Project Officer, UNICEF Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Cravero</td>
<td>Senior Programme Officer</td>
<td>ORT/CDD/ARI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bjorn Ljungquist</td>
<td>Programme Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF Tanzania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roger Shrimpton</td>
<td></td>
<td>Senior Project Officer, UNICEF Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muriel Glasgow</td>
<td>Assistant Representative</td>
<td>UNICEF Togo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bilge Öğün</td>
<td>Senior Programme Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF Florence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Houston Smith</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consultant, ICDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Hertenberg</td>
<td>Operations Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF Peru</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justin H.J. Maeda</td>
<td>Senior Programme Development and Planning Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF ESARO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthias Stiefel</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consultant, ESARO and ICDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony Hewets</td>
<td>Coordinator, Facts for Life</td>
<td>UNICEF NYHQ</td>
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ANNEX 3

Proposed UNICEF Task Force for Promoting Participatory Development

Terms of Reference

Introduction

Participatory Development is the most effective way of achieving equitable social and economic human development. The participatory process permits the transformation of society, creating a self-reliance that guarantees sustainability. Participation of the community in resolving its own problems also permits an outreach that facilitates reaching the unreachable — “poor of the poor”. Achievement of the development goals of the nineties will only be possible utilizing a participatory development approach.

At its best, participatory development is a process which can facilitate outreach to and empowerment of the poorest members of the community, making it possible for them to organize and begin to take control of their own lives. Participatory approaches facilitate the growth of confidence, skills and structures which can lead to increasing self-reliance of individuals, families and communities. This, in turn, helps ensure that change is not reversed but is an on-going and continual process. In short, participatory development can contribute to transformation of society, strengthening people’s democratic control over their environment.

Participatory development is not simply a new method of active service delivery to passive beneficiaries. It is a dynamic, evolutionary process and radically different from the conventional ‘packaged programme’. Support for this process, hence, differs in significant ways from support for other programmes and necessitates changes in programme development, content, direction, management, and evaluation.

Participatory people-centred development is a reorientation of development in favour of people and their own view of their needs, problems and alternatives for their resolution. UNICEF embraces this strategy in the belief that it is the most appropriate for creating and sustaining environments giving people equitable access to information and services for the good of children and their families. People’s groups, non-governmental organizations and governments all may have roles to play and UNICEF needs to be open to cooperation with a wide variety of partners.

The most significant characteristics/aspects of participatory development which need to be kept in mind during the Task Force’s review of UNICEF’s structures and patterns of work are the following:

1. Participatory development is a process which has implications for all aspects of programme support which may evolve and change over time. It is not a project which can be defined in advance and planned.

2. Support to participatory development is often labour intensive, particularly in the early phases. Specifically, the closer to the community, the more labour intensive it is. Community members and people from outside — whether from government, NGOs, other people’s organizations or UNICEF — must all learn how to work in participatory ways and this often requires reorientation and practice.

3. Many aspects of timing are unpredictable in activities using participatory approaches and there is a need for quick response once community decisions are made and people are ready to take action.

4. The use of locally available supplies, materials and know how is an integral part of participatory development which aims for self-reliance and sustainability.
Assignment for Taskforce

Keeping these characteristics/aspects in mind, the specific areas to be reviewed are as follows:

A. Structures, procedures and working methods

1. **Administrative, financial and operations procedures**: Review administration, finance and operations particularly as they relate to field programmes to find ways to streamline procedures. This would release staff time in field offices for more active work identifying, supporting and linking with appropriate people’s groups or organizations. Review might specifically aim to:
   a. reduce overall paperwork load and simplify the management information system/GFSS;
   b. expand possibilities for carry-over of programme funds from one year to the next in recognition of the flexible time frame often needed for effective support of participatory activity.

2. **Budget**: Review present policy and procedures for budget development and evaluation to ensure they allow for appropriate support of activity using participatory approaches in programme development, implementation and evaluation.

3. **Supply**: Review existing supply systems to develop methods and standards which:
   a. facilitate and give increased latitude for local procurement particularly for participatory activity and its support;
   b. might reduce current long lead-time for off-shore procurement in the light of the need for rapid response to people’s initiatives in activities using participatory approaches.

4. **Personnel**:
   a. **Recruitment**: Review and suggest revision (if necessary) in criteria for personnel recruitment so that due credit is given for experience in participatory development.
   b. **Human resource planning**: Further development of systematic, fair rotation scheme for personnel providing maximum exposure to a variety of field situations including practical experience with participatory development approaches.
   c. **Performance appraisals**: Propose indicators for assessing a staff member’s commitment and capacity for use and support of participatory development approaches in the country programming processes as well as the full range of UNICEF management tasks. Particular attention should be given in this respect to performance evaluations at the level of representative and division director in view of their decisive influence and responsibility on utilization of staff time and office priorities.

5. **Training and orientation**: Review the existing training programme and make recommendations to strengthen knowledge and skills of UNICEF staff to practise and support participatory development. Particular attention might be given to:
   a. fostering linkages with participatory NGOs and people’s organizations by various means, for example:
      - work and study leave for staff to acquire work experience with people’s organizations
      - development of NGO directories;
   b. exposing staff to existing, flexible participatory-friendly procedures;
   c. promoting field visits, seminars and other activities to provide Executive Board members and the donor community the opportunity to understand the potential and administrative realities of participatory development approaches and their support.
B. Programme:

1. Country programming process
   Maintain and strengthen country programming processes with the addition of more participatory approaches (as needed) and increased attention to planning for use and support of participatory development approaches within the country programme. This would include, over time, development or addition of explicit and appropriate guidelines on all phases of the country programming process from situation analysis through mid-term review and final evaluation to strengthen their attention to participatory development.

2. Reports and reporting
   Special guidelines would also be needed for reporting and should include suggestions of both:
   a. participatory methodologies and techniques which might be used in gathering information for reports, and;
   b. explanations of the kinds of activities, events and processes appropriate to report in connection with the organization’s efforts to encourage, monitor and learn about participatory development and its support.

3. Allies and the environment for programmes
   a. National legal structures can have significant impact on the climate for programme development and implementation. With reference to promotion of participatory development approaches, attention should be given particularly to:
      — ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
      — Laws and regulations relating to status, roles and rights of girls and women.
   b. Review should be made of implementation of existing policies which promote participatory practices within UNICEF and recommendations should be made to reinforce or revise such policies, as needed.

C. UNICEF and its partners
   UNICEF must be pluralist in its approach to forming alliances for the benefit of children and women. All institutions which might form a force for participatory development — people’s groups, non-governmental organizations, government — should be enlisted and support for both the formation and transformation of institutions should be provided.

D. Advocacy for participatory development
   There is normally a need to demonstrate in practice that participatory development approaches are more sustainable and effective than conventional ‘delivery’ approaches. Existing experiences need to be well documented and communicated to decision-makers and to programme beneficiaries.

E. Membership and timetable
   To be determined.
Goals for Children and Development in the 1990s

The following goals have been formulated through extensive consultation in various international forums attended by virtually all Governments, the relevant United Nations agencies including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and a large number of NGOs. These goals are recommended for implementation by all countries where they are applicable, with appropriate adaptation to the specific situation of each country in terms of phasing, standards, priorities and availability of resources, with respect for cultural, religious and social traditions. Additional goals that are particularly relevant to a country's specific situation should be added in its national plan of action.

I. Major Goals for Child Survival, Development and Protection

(a) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of infant and under-5 child mortality rate by one third or to 50 and 70 per 1,000 live births respectively, whichever is less;
(b) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of maternal mortality rate by half;
(c) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half;
(d) Universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal;
(e) By the year 2000, universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children;
(f) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level with emphasis on female literacy;
(g) Improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

II. Supporting/Sectoral Goals

A. Women's health and education

(i) Special attention to the health and nutrition of the female child and to pregnant and lactating women;
(ii) Access by all couples to information and services to prevent pregnancies that are too early, too closely spaced, too late or too many;
(iii) Access by all pregnant women to prenatal care, trained attendants during childbirth and referral facilities for high-risk pregnancies and obstetric emergencies;
(iv) Universal access to primary education with special emphasis for girls and accelerated literacy programmes for women.

B. Nutrition

(i) Reduction in severe, as well as moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half of 1990 levels;
(ii) Reduction of the rate of low birth weight (2.5 kg or less) to less than 10 per cent;
(iii) Reduction of iron deficiency anaemia in women by one third of the 1990 levels;
(iv) Virtual elimination of iodine deficiency disorders;
(v) Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences, including blindness;
(vi) Empowerment of all women to breastfeed their children exclusively for four to six months and to continue breastfeeding, with complementary food, well into the second year.
(vii) Growth promotion and its regular monitoring to be institutionalized in all countries by the end of the 1990s;
(viii) Dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food pro-
duction to ensure household food security.

C. Child Health

(i) Global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000;

(ii) Elimination of neonatal tetanus by 1995;

(iii) Reduction by 95 per cent in measles deaths and reduction by 90 per cent of measles cases compared to pre-immunization levels by 1995, as a major step to the global eradication of measles in the longer run;

(iv) Maintenance of a high level of immunization coverage (at least 90 per cent of children under one year of age by the year 2000) against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis and against tetanus for women of child-bearing age;

(v) Reduction by 50 per cent in the deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of five years and 25 per cent reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate;

(vi) Reduction by one third in the deaths due to acute respiratory infections in children under five years.

D. Water and sanitation

(i) Universal access to safe drinking water;

(ii) Universal access to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(iii) Elimination of guinea-worm disease (dracunculiasis) by the year 2000.

E. Basic education

(i) Expansion of early childhood development activities, including appropriate low-cost family- and community-based interventions;

(ii) Universal access to basic education, and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children through formal schooling or non-formal education of comparable learning standard, with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls;

(iii) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy;

(iv) Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living, made available through all educational channels, including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication and social action, with effectiveness measured in terms of behavioural change.

F. Children in difficult circumstances

Provide improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances and tackle the root causes leading to such situations.
ANNEX 5

Background Reading

Day One


Adei, A., Closing Statement to the United Nations Under-Secretary General and ECA Executive Secretary, presented at the International Conference on Popular Participation, Arusha, Tanzania, 16 February 1990.

Day Two


Jolly, K., Restoring Momentum for Human Development in the 1990's, op. cit., pp. 259-263.

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Day Four


**Day Five**


**Day Six**


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Annex 6

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