



Scrutinizing Success and Failure In Development

Institutional Change Capacity Development and
Theories of Change

Capacity Development and Institutional Change Programme
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Wageningen International

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BACKGROUND

The last decade has seen significant changes in development thinking. A shift has occurred from providing 'technical support', often at the local level, to creating enabling institutional conditions for empowerment and development. Yet, contradictions and paradoxes remain. The rhetoric of empowerment, participation, and institutional change often clashes with the demand for specific, short term results.

A significant cause of failure of many well intended development interventions is a limited understanding of institutions and false assumptions about processes of social change. Furthermore, linear and technical models of development continue to be applied uncritically in situations that are characterized by complex, 'messy' and dynamic processes of social and political transformation.

Hence a 2 day seminar "Scrutinizing Success and Failure In Development" - Institutional Change Capacity Development and Theories of Change" has been organized.

The first day was open to the general public and second day was devoted for an open space workshop with a limited invited organizations.

The 2 days have been be an exploration of how a better understanding of institutions and theories of change can be integrated into development policy and programmes to foster greater impact.

SEMINAR ORGANIZER

The Seminar was organized by the Capacity Development and Institutional Change Programme (Wageningen International) in collaboration with the Communication and Innovation Studies group (Wageningen University).

SEMINAR WEBSITE

<http://portals.wi.wur.nl/successfailuredevelopment>

DAY 1: SEMINAR

Welcome note

The director of Capacity Building and Institutional Change Programme, Wageningen International, Jim Woodhill welcome the participants (see annex 1) and introduced the programme as shown in annex 2 and summarized the objective of the seminar:

- To provide an introduction to the latest thinking on institutions and theories of change,
- To explore case studies from different sectors in development,
- To engage participants in drawing lessons and insights for their own work,
- To assess the implications for policy and capacity development.

Before the participants engaged in interactive groups, the director introduced the 3 concepts central to the seminar: theories of change, institutions and capacity development.



Interactive Groups

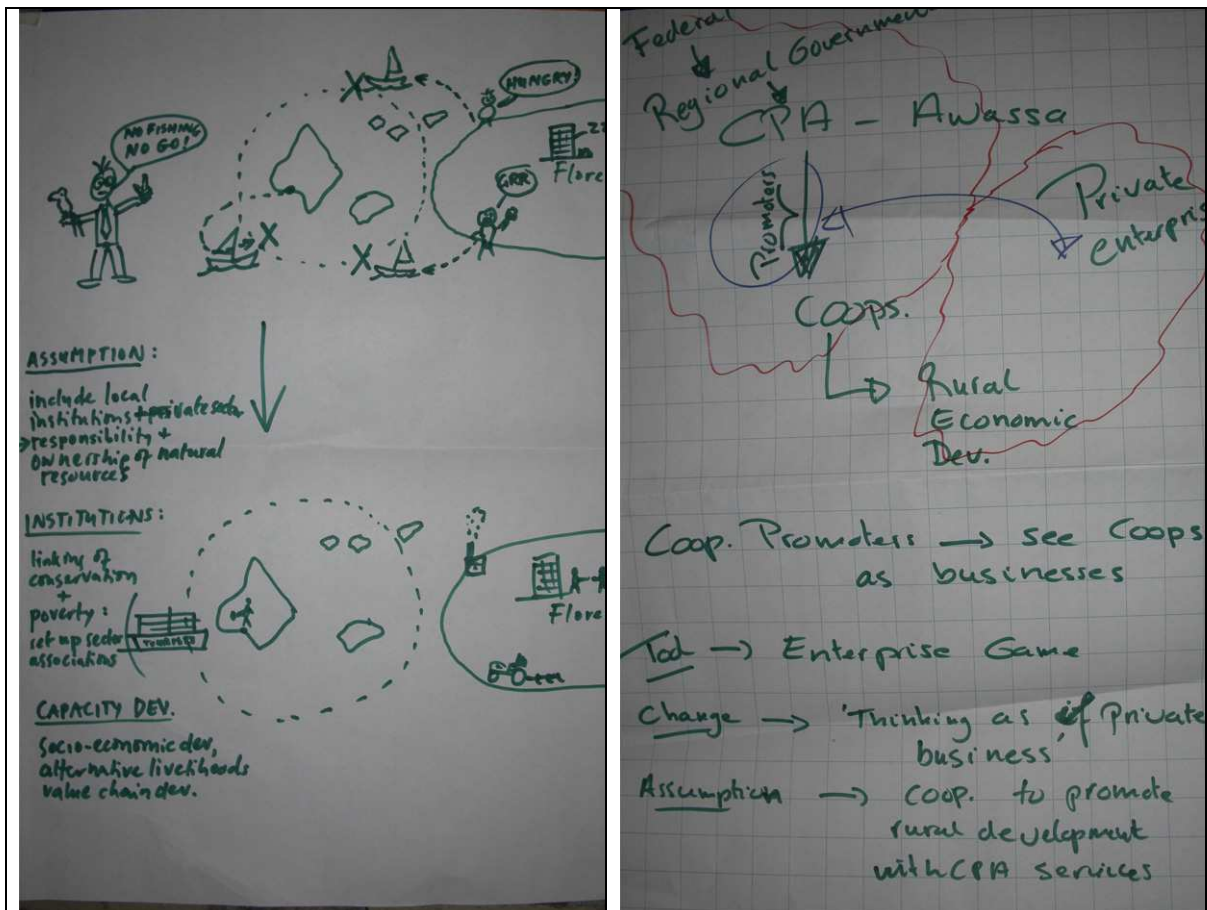
The main objective of the morning parallel interactive workshops was to engage people and create a learning moment by having participants frame the relevant issues for them. It allowed participants to share experiences around issues of institutional change, capacity development, theories of change that motivated them to come to this seminar.

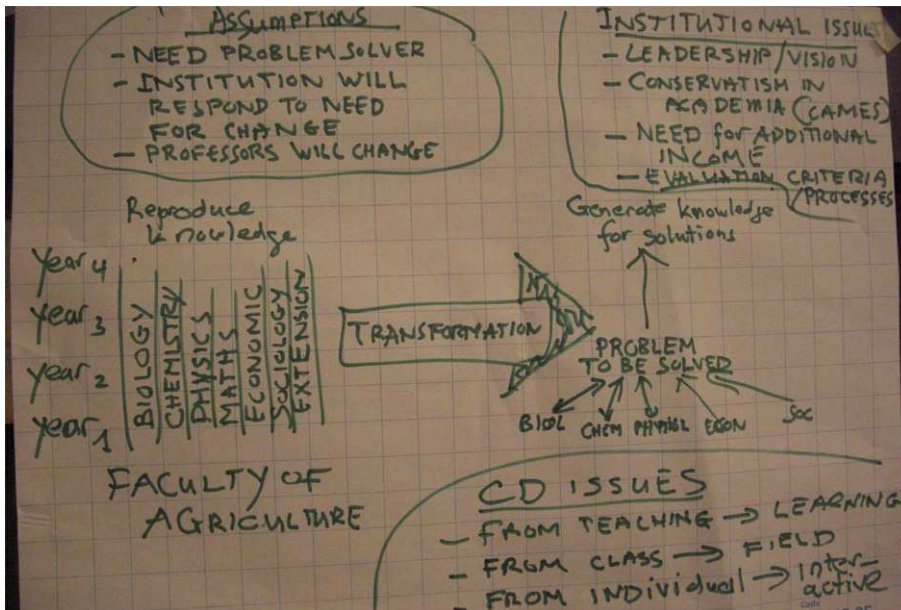
Each participant was requested to:

- Think about a desired change that succeeded or failed.
- Draw (or summarize) it on a small flipchart.
- list a key learning about institutional change.
- list a key learning about capacity development.
- list the underlying assumptions about the desired change.

The resulting stories - flip charts were shared in small groups. The flip charts were later posted in the plenary room.

Some examples:





Keynote addresses

The keynote speeches were held around the two main themes: theories of change (Irene Guijt) and on capacity development and institutional change (Jaap Voeten and Saeed Parto). Both presentations are found at the seminar website: <http://portals.wi.wur.nl/successfailuredevelopment>

Irene Guijt introduced the concept “theory of change” and the distinction between a theory of change and a theory of action. She further listed the elements of a theory of change (what is ‘in’ a theory of change) and the relevance of a theory of change: better informed, coherent and more transparent decision making.

Irene continued her keynote address with linking 5 frameworks of development to the underlying assumptions. In order to have a basis for learning together about what is working, about success and failure of development, it is important to articulate the theory of change because assumptions cannot be tested if they haven’t been articulated.

Irene Guijt mentioned four core challenges:

1. articulating underlying assumptions to come to a clear ToC (in a manageable way – you can’t focus on *all* assumptions)
2. aligning espoused theory (the official story) with theory in use (the messy reality)
3. aligning theories and the bureaucracies that manage change processes
4. reconciling diverse ToCs in a group, between groups

She linked to the other 2 key concepts of the seminar (institutional change and capacity development) by listing 4 key questions we need to answer to start making our theory of change explicit:

- What institutions do we think need changing?
- How do we think institutions change?
- How is ‘capacity’ present in our theory of change about institutional change?
- What values, passions, beliefs underpin our ideas

In their keynote address, Saeed Parto and Jaap Voeten introduced the concept and definitions of institutions, the functions of institutions and key issues around institutional change. Saeed Parto illustrated how institutional analysis can help finding solutions in complex policy processes in Afghanistan. In their analytical framework, Voeten and Parto use a typology of institutions with 5 “layers” (from informal/social to formal/societal):

1. Behavioral
2. Cognitive
3. Associative
4. Regulative
5. Constitutive

They conclude that mapping institutional context helps to plan and anticipate change.

Thematic Sub Groups

Five thematic sub-groups were organized on Institutional Change and Capacity Development (IC&CD):

- IC&CD in relation to Market driven development
- IC&CD in relation to Peace & Conflict
- IC&CD in relation to Natural Resource Management
- IC&CD in relation to Gender and empowerment
- Capacity Development in practice

In each subgroup, various cases were presented. A summary of each case is and synthesis of its discussion is presented below). The following questions guided the discussion:

- What are the key informal and formal institutions influencing the situation (in the case study)?
- Was a Theory of Change used? How could using a Theory Change (making the underlying assumptions about the logic of change explicit) help the change process?
- How can Capacity Development better integrate institutional analysis and theories of change?

Theme 1: Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Peace & conflict

Facilitator: Jan Brouwers

Case 1: Theories of change and local land disputes in Burundi

Mathijs van Leeuwen – WUR – Disaster Studies

Early 2005, local and international development organizations expected that with the end of the transition period in Burundi many of the 400,000 refugees mainly living in Tanzania as well as 100,000 internally displaced people would soon return home. It was expected that their return to their communities of origin would be accompanied by a significant number of land disputes. Development organizations' responses to those land disputes have been rather diverse, however. There were different understandings of the character of land disputes and their relation to the preceding civil war on the one hand, and of the most appropriate institutions to support for the resolution of those disputes on the other. Those different perceptions had important repercussions for the development interventions taking place.

Matthijs reflected on the different theories of change underlying the interventions of international and local development organizations, and how those emphasize different needs for capacity building of different institutions. He underlined the political implications of adhering to particular theories of change. Different theories of change promote different strategies on what institutions to support, whose and which capacities to develop. Theories of change and related intervention strategies legitimize particular practices of conflict resolution at the national and the community level which are highly controversial. The case is based on a research I conducted in 2005 together with the Burundian Catholic organization CED-Caritas, to assess the possibilities for strengthening local conflict resolution mechanisms, in particular the Justice and Peace commissions of the Catholic Church.

Case 2: Roadmap to Peace in Sulu: the Capacity Building Approach of the AIM-Mirant Institute for Bridging Societal Divides

Bettye Pruitt - Generative Change Community

This case is based on the work of Ernesto Garilao, director of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Mirant Center for Bridging Societal Divides and an active member of the Generative Change Community. Over the past five years, the AIM-Mirant Center has engaged nearly a thousand leaders from all sectors in Bridging Leadership training programs and fellowships. These programs are aimed at developing the personal commitment, leadership skills, and practical tools to address the challenges facing Philippine society through multi-stakeholder engagement strategies. In 2006, together with some of the graduates of the Bridging Leadership training, AIM-Mirant co-sponsored and facilitated a successful multi-stakeholder dialogue aimed at bringing peace to the war-torn area of Sulu, in the province of Mindanao, Philippines. We have worked extensively with Professor Garilao to articulate and understand the theory of change guiding this program, and this is what we plan to share with the group in Wageningen.

Synthesis of theme 1: the Peace & Conflict Thematic Group discussion (B. Pruitt)

This group focused its discussion on how to initiate change – recognizing that ultimately change has to happen at different levels – individuals, relations and institutions both at cultural and structural aspects – a question which needs to be raised at strategic level is: how do you decide in which areas of those you need to focus first on your strategy? It was confirmed that, is often best to be flexible and identify leverage points as well as engaging people on the ground to determine these entry points.

Theme 2: Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Natural Resource Management

Facilitator: Arend Jan van Bodegom

Case 1: Institutional change for sustainable urban development: The challenges of urbanization and nature conservation in Bulgaria

Vanya Simeonova – WUR Alterra

The integration of nature conservation and biodiversity concerns in local land use planning is a major challenge for many municipal authorities, planners and environmentalists. Urban areas continue to face significant development pressure and are in circumstances where development targets sit uneasily with nature conservation. Although scientists have begun to develop methods to integrate ecological understandings into local land use planning process (Beatley, 1994, 2000, McKinney, 2006; Crist et. al. 2000, Theobald et.al. 2000), important institutional barriers to this integration remain.

The socio-economic transition in Bulgaria is a natural experiment for studying the problem we address and for clarifying possible solutions for decoupling objectives of urban growth and the destruction of natural areas at local level of governance. In Bulgaria since late 90s progress has been made in changing the socio-economic system from centrally planned to a market oriented and decentralized one. Urbanization has occurred and continues to occur presently in many urban regions in the country. Due to rapid changes in the economic system the escalation of land use development initiatives such as construction of housing and technical infrastructure both by private and public actors has increased the misbalance between build up environment and nature.

It is not clear what institutional changes are needed so that the local governmental organizations in Bulgaria and their divisions can establish better communication to share responsibilities and knowledge and involve other stakeholders in decision making concerning ecological impacts of land use plans. In this presentation we address the following critical questions: 1) To what degree the current institutional framework and organizational culture in Bulgaria enables or hinders the effective integration of nature conservation and biodiversity concerns into local land use plans?; 2) What mechanisms for inter-institutional communication and decision-making local authorities have at their disposal and do they generate positive results in the current institutional framework within which the local administration operates?

Case 2: Institutional Development for Agricultural Heritage Conservation

Frank van Schoubroek - Space for Innovation and Arend Jan van Bodegom - Wageningen International

FAO is developing an initiative to “dynamically conserve” agricultural heritage systems, such as rice terrace systems, oasis systems and mountainous landscapes, in which nature and human culture are intricately intertwined. Modern state and market institutions undermine such systems worldwide. Question is how can policy makers conserve “agricultural heritage”? How can the proposed “holistic management”, “multi-stakeholder processes” and “rights-based approaches” contribute to enabling actors to learn to adapt traditional systems to modern institutional environments? The paper shows how a social learning process can be designed by applying conditions defined in “emergent change theory” in “theories of change”.

Case 3: Development approaches versus traditional pastoralist systems

Mohammed Ali – PENHA - Eritrea

The presentation gives general overviews of the Eritrean Development and rehabilitation programs and its impact on pastoral communities. It will also assess pastoralist's participation as a reflection to adjust and adopt the developmental approaches on one side and to maintain their living style on the other side.

The major focus of the presentation is on practical stories of the local pastoralist community's developmental and traditional organizations and their role on attracting community participation on development and changes.

Finally it recommends integration of traditional and developmental institutions and encouragement of behavioral participation at community level.

Synthesis of theme 2: the Natural Resources Management Thematic Group discussion (Niels Röling)

Main discussions touched upon the relationship between formal and informal institutions – the importance of looking which perspectives you need to use when you are analyzing a case i.e. the side of the institution one belong and believes is bounded to determine the way analysis is done and the quality of the anticipated institutional change – biased analysis?

Theme 3: Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Market driven development

Facilitator: Jim Woodhill
<p>Case 1. Institutional change and the development of seed markets</p> <p>Derek Eaton WUR – LEI</p> <p>Presentation about the link between institutional change and capacity development in commercial vegetable cultivation in India & SE Asia, and the possibility to define a theory of change to think about replicability or transferability.</p>
<p>Case 2. How to create a broad based economy for small scale producers in rural areas in Bolivia</p> <p>Koos Michel – Oxfam-Novib</p> <p>Bolivia has been going through a series of turbulent changes and the new government is still facing major challenges in the development process. What are the major factors determining change and how is a development agency as Oxfam-Novib dealing with these changes in her strategy for rural development in practice over the years?</p>
<p>Case 3. Missing links: growing organic value chains for small-scale producers' benefit</p> <p>Joost Guijt - Outdoor Organic</p> <p>Much donor money has been spent on stimulating the organic agriculture sector in East Africa with the intention of creating income generating opportunities for small-scale producers. Two models for intervention support lead to very divergent outcomes. One model supports NGO's - with whom there often is an historical relationship- in refocussing existing sustainable agriculture activities on accessing markets. The other supports business-led initiatives, stipulating a focus on SSP as a condition of funding. Businesses are far more successful than NGOs in creating income generating opportunities for SSP.</p>

Synthesis of theme 3: the Market Driven Development Thematic Group discussion (Saeed Parto)

Current obsession on market driven development was questioned whether is punishable or for development in the south – the notion of market led is developed by the north policy makers and economists - but its transformation to the south has resulted in the creation of a small group of business entrepreneurs and leaves out a great number (about 6million) of rural poor people unchanged – and the south states being one of the biggest accountable body to its citizen is asked to develop a social safety nets for the left out category of poor citizen!

A reference was made to the micro credit system case presented from Afghanistan (presented by keynote speaker, Saeed Parto) – one questioned why ‘*AREU Kabul*’ institution did not build on the existing informal institutions/systems and instead developed new structures for delivering credit to the community? Were there no existing opportunities to build on these institutions? One referred to market led policies failures in the south and added that, the use of the informal institutions could be a better strategy to catch/reach more than 6million farmers and rural poor who are left out.

A concern was raised if all the informal institutions are reliable and equitable – it was added that with a genuine interest from the donors, there is a possibility to analyze and study these informal credit institutions and try to see how to make them more equitable and comfortable for all institutions involved – and probably introduce buffer institutions that are complimentary -and act as accountability holder on both sides –i.e. prevent any excessive abuse as well as protect the borrowers from losing their collaterals/assets in case they failed to pay back the credit as planned – but it is observed that most donors are not willing to invest in studying local context in order to build on local/informal institutions – focus is too much on quick results!

Theme 4: Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to gender and empowerment

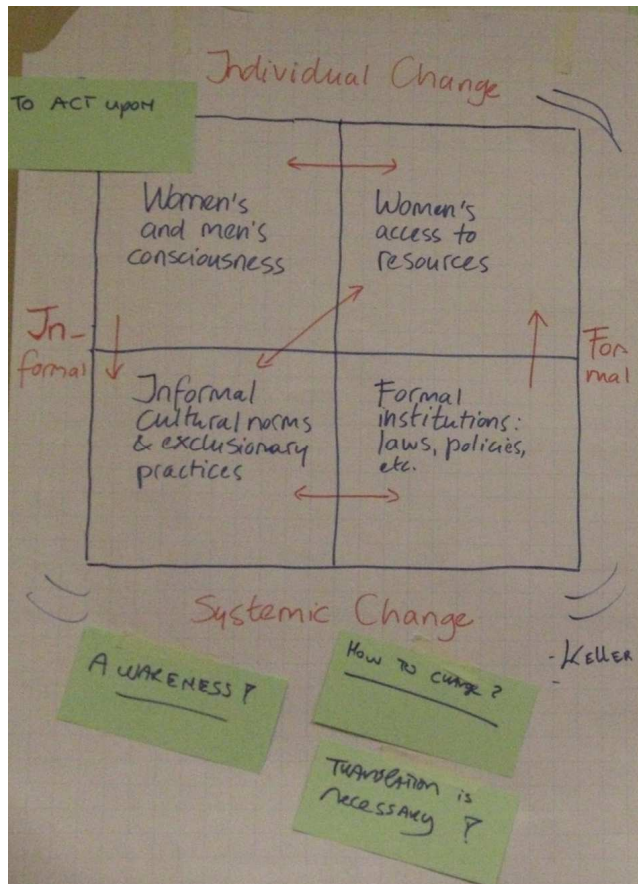
Facilitator: Simone van Vugt

Case 1: The theory of change and the practice: experiences with gender and agricultural development

Edith van Walsum - ILEIA

Gender is by now an 'old' theme. There is no need any more to convince anyone about the importance of a gender perspective in development, and of the need for empowerment of women. At least, that is what many in the development sector are inclined to believe. But what have been the successes and the failures when it comes to gender mainstreaming? Have women been truly empowered? What are the lessons learnt from past experience, and how have we taken them further in today's development practice?

A deeper look into the institutional dimensions of gender and change will help in understanding where we stand today. I will use two examples to trigger the discussion; both are about gender issues in an agricultural development context. The first is about the efforts of a "classical" irrigation project in India to involve women. The second is about a Fair Trade production chain development programme that supports small producers and plantations in West Africa, Latin America and India. I will introduce the Rao-Kelleher quadrant which I found a helpful tool in analyzing institutional constraints and opportunities in both situations. A question for further discussion is: What are the implications for capacity development strategies that want to be gender aware and empowering?



Case 2: Authority and endogeneity – a paradox in capacity building for empowerment

Bettina Bock – WUR – Rural Sociology Group

Capacity development departs from the idea that people learn how to take care of development themselves. It is seen as “an endogenous process that involves the main actors taking responsibility for the process of change”. At the same time programmes for capacity development such as the NPT programme predefine the direction of the development and the capacities needed to arrive there. We could even say that the programme not only aims at transferring our institutions – our way of doing things but even presupposes this transfer in order to fulfill the NPT rules of the game. This seems to be a paradox if we think in terms of ‘us enabling an endogenous process to develop’. At the same time the experience of a NPT project in Yemen seems to demonstrate that this dominance is needed for disrupting the local relations of power and the locally dominant way of doing things. In doing so new ways of acting open up and new players may be allowed to enter the stage.

Maybe capacity building is not so much about learning new competencies but about disrupting existing constellation of power and identity, and allowing for the development of a new sense of control among those supposed to be powerless.

Synthesis of theme 4: Gender and women empowerment (Edith van Walsum)

The group raised more questions from the discussions. It was learned that different people have different ToC – when a group of multi-stakeholders come together they bring in different perspectives of ToC as well as different institution views. It was agreed that step one is to realize this difference. Step two raised questions: are we able, capable and competent in managing and handling these difference respectfully in ToC? Harmoniously, it was concluded that gender is often a forgotten element when ToC are put on the agenda. It was added that a critical analysis of ToC with a gender perspective can help in revealing that gender is not built in most ToC - that is useful to understand –and then one need to draw from gender theories and take its elements e.g. practical and strategic gender needs and incorporate into ToC.

Theme 5: Capacity Development in Practice

Facilitator: Hettie Walters

Case 1: The role of a training centre in Organisational and Institutional Development

Prudence Kaijage - MS-Training Centre Tanzania

The role of a training centre in capacity development is premised on the assumption that there exists a direct and indirect relationship between training and capacity development at different intervention levels. This makes it imperative for a training centre to develop a conceptual framework and appropriate strategies to ensure that impact is realized at the different levels.

MS-TCDC has for the last more than 10 years been a leading capacity building centre for civil society organizations in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region. This presentation is a brief reflection of how it has worked with Organizational and Institutional Development. It will explore MS-TCDC's Three-level conceptual framework and briefly discuss its strategy in terms of ensuring relevance, sustainability, efficiency & effectiveness. The presentation will also briefly highlight the key successes, challenges and lessons learnt in the last 5 years.

Case 2: Good CoP, Bad CoP: the paradoxes of (capacity) development for re-creating (higher) education in Africa

Arjen Wals - WUR Education & Competence Studies Group

In this case some of dilemma's, contradictions and misunderstandings will be shared that emerged, and continue to emerge, during my participation in three NUFFIC-supported programs that seek to make higher education in Africa more relevant by grounding the curriculum in the needs of the labor market and making education more problem-based and competence-driven. Using a heuristic that helps understand the kind of capacity building (or lack thereof) that takes place in three cases (Tanzania, Benin and South Africa), I would like to have a conversation about the following paradoxes: how can endogenous capacity-development be supported from the outside? If a key element of capacity-development is 'people acting together to take control over their own lives' then what needs to be done when the institutional spaces for taking such control are very limited, if not, non-existent? And finally, how can we move from a Community of Performers in the theatre of development, to a Community of (reflexive) Practitioners committed to genuine societal change?

Synthesis of theme 5: the Capacity Development in Practice (Jan Übels)

Agreement was reached that more analytical frameworks to analyze institutions will be helpful –the focus now is more on MSP issues and the underlying institutions analysis is missing – both analysis are equally important. It is reported that the real ToC are not available – clarified that people have less sophisticated ToC. What is key and more important is that one needs to be able to work with various ToC around certain issues and avoid focusing on one formal defined ideal ToC.

Synthesis – day 1

Introduction to panel discussion

The synthesizing of the first day of the seminar was done through a panel discussion. This was done in a "hard talk" mode, in order to try and raise the real issues and not remain stuck in some kind of academic discussion - "yes it is very important but we cannot change the reality". The panel discussion was expected to get to the bottom line on what will happen to development policy / development programmes if the (intersection) between Capacity Development, Institutional Change and Theories of Change are not integrated / addressed. What are implications for development policy / programmes / research?

The panelists consisted of keynote presenters who introduced institutions, a framework for institutional assessment, institutional change in capacity development, and theories of change as well as case presenters in the earlier thematic group discussions. Panelists raised key insights of the day which included key issues that were raised during thematic group discussions.

Panelists:

- Edith van Walsum (Gender + Empowerment)
- Bettye Pruitt (Peace and Conflict)
- Jan Ubels (Capacity Development in Practice)
- Niels Röling (Natural Resources Management)
- Saeed Parto (Market Driven Development and keynote speaker)
- Jaap Voeten (keynote speaker)
- Irene Guijt (keynote speaker)

Panel discussion - Hard Talk

Prof. Cees Leeuwis as a panel discussion moderator, organized a session as a hard talk show by posing a list of a provocative questions like:

Where is the institutional change mostly needed – in the North or South? (A list of hard talk questions is given in annex 3).

Interestingly, the majority of the panelists (5 over 7) concur with the notion that institutional change is needed mostly in the North as compared to the South. Most panelists believed that most of the formal global rules of the game institutions are made in the north.

One urged that both sides equally need institutional change – both sides could benefit from change -what is key is that during institutional analysis process, one needs to demarcate the boundaries of study area and analyze critically if theories of change that are advocated from the north fit into the locally designated local institutions.

Unfortunately many practitioners (both from the south and north) blue print North made ToC to the south without understanding its implications in the local institutional system – in most cases institutional analysis and expected change thereafter tend to suffer from what is mentioned as “analysis paralysis” – everything gets connected to everything – and at end chaotic results are observed.

That north (north with a meaning of global) needs institutional change more than the south was illustrated with the example of the applicability of the northern theory of change “free market” in the context of West Africa. In West African farming the majority of the poor are rural poor. The reason for their poverty is that they can't sell anything because of the cheap imports – so what

is needed is to create a condition whereby poor farmers can sell their produce to the local market as well as export their product without being hampered by the global ToC - free market. Competition has been supported in the past as being very efficient in economic terms. However, poor farmers have very little, if any, capacity to join this competition. One mentioned that institutional change in the North needs to happen at individual to societal level.

Someone noted that it seems to be easier to deal with formal than informal institutions. An example was given: gender and women issues are often well articulated in global and national policies and strategies (eg. PRSPs) – at implementation level – very little is happening. That means that formal institutions are unable to relate with informal types of the institutions (gender is socially and culturally embedded in all societies). The question is that so how less tangible institutions (mainly local values and norms) could be brought into contact with formal institutions in order to bring about the desired institutional change.

One added that, when thinking about institutional change – automatically it brings about competing assumptions, there is a need for the complimentary strategies that works together –one bringing change at individual level (from within) and another that works with advocacy to bring change at a massive level.

A caution was raised that, many institutions (rules) are not set by formal policies . A confusion which is perpetuated in the development jargon is the assumption that by getting the policies right is the same as the institutional development and change. The experiences from many southern practitioners show that it is the good habits at the local level at the end results into formal institution change. If one thinks the other way round is the truth – one should analyze and understand why most of the national policies do not influence local level institutional change – or do not change the life of the rural people significantly. Despite good intention national poverty policies, the poor remain poor.

It is questioned whether informal institutions at local level do not perpetuate power in the hands of few powerful individuals or groups. It is said that if lobbying and advocacy strategies (eg. by civil society) at local level are systematically applied, it is possible to show that change (power shifts-institutional change) can happen at community level and from below, thereafter it is possible to influence policy change at national level. However, advocacy should be deliberately consultative, engaging and involving. The efforts should be to build the capacity of various actors to be able to take up their changing roles – not to introduce new institutions.

Discussion continued by underpinning that the act of undertaking institutional analysis is a challenging exercise – especially when conducted with global and local stakeholders views. It is often difficult to agree for the way forward to develop a common understanding on the needed institutional change and thereafter the capacity building needs –global and local actors have different perspectives or understanding of the institutions under analysis (reference was made NFP Vietnam case by Jaap Voeten – ref; IKEA).

Institutional change is an emerging process that one can only attempt to facilitate some ideas that are emerging or need to emerge from within. It was noted however that, most north institutions use donor aid to bring about institutional change in the south.

A question was raised whether institutional change advocated by the north in the south is legitimate or not? One urged that, this depends on where ones values are. For instance gender equality/women's rights is often is considered as a western institutional change agenda which isn't right for the southern institutions. Here one could mention that, human rights are universal – whether advocated by the south or north doesn't matter.

On the other hand some policies advocated by the north/global to the south can be described as illegitimate e.g. DGIS/LNV agricultural policy that embrace market driven led agricultural chain with social safety nets solutions -without understanding its implications to the thousands of farmers who neither qualify for safety nets nor for the local or global markets. One should ask why should the north advocate so strongly on market led agricultural change in the south? “Worse enough this institution is further reinforced by sending north experts to the south to help people to set safety nets institutions – as if these social network institutions do not exist!”

Another example was given related to the international assessment on agricultural science and technology for development. It is noted that the study has clear goals on poverty reduction and sustainable development. However, the authors (mainly from the global level) have difficulties to agree on the ultimate desired and accepted change that need to occur in the south –more serious conflict is anticipated when this assessment is to be presented to the government bodies (mainly in the south) who are expected to adopt the agenda. One needs to review critically the theories of change and institutional change applied here – are there no other institutions solutions for this desired change – for poverty reduction and sustainable agriculture/development in the south?

Closing remarks: by Cees Leeuwis

The moderator confirmed that theories of change are implicitly part of everything we do. It is therefore highly appreciated that WI put this topic into discussion because it is an important agenda that will stick to us for the next couple of years.

Leeuwis also reminded the participants that it is an interesting topic but also very political. It is about values and power, about who sets the rules, and whose rules. So by bringing ToC into discussions, we are introducing politics through the back door -talking about institution change through participation. Apparently we can't head on tackling political issues directly – we always have to go through participations, institutions etc.

Seminar's discussions confirm that different contexts require different Theories of Change. The question is raised on what is then a legitimate way of going about change in different cultural context? Theories of Change are part and parcel of institutional set up we are dealing with – there are therefore different pathways towards institutional change within a specific context.

An acceptance that change is not a linear process, not controllable in a clear way, having an emergent character, poses a challenge for the development sector that focuses very much on results.

The development sector has clear institutions to measure these results and determine what results are and not. One should ask what type of institutions are needed that will take into considerations these challenges and enable societal learning? What type of ME is needed that is able to embrace all the complexity elements?

Shouldn't we focus on changing the potential for change instead of bringing about change: changing the landscape where change takes place. This requires institutional change efforts from the north (as highlighted during the first motion).

Lastly, the moderator mentioned that, technology was raised indirectly during the discussion – he commented that technology is an important institution that needs to be addressed explicitly during the theory of change and institutional change agenda debate.

DAY 2: OPEN SPACE

Institutionalizing and de-institutionalizing of formal and informal institutions

For this open space session three cards had been prepared:

1. Integration of formal and informal institutions by Mohammed Ali (Eritrea)
2. How to deal with disintegration of formal and in formal institutions?
by Arend Jan van Bodegom (WI, Netherlands)
3. Competences in institutionalizing and de-institutionalizing, by Jan Brouwers (WI, Netherlands).

The following topics have been discussed.

Mainstreaming and **institutionalization**: are these the same? No Mainstreaming has to do with laws, job descriptions, budgets etc. Institutionalization is about change of rules, also the informal ones. It is at a deeper level.

Abolishing certain institutions is not always bad:

- **Disintegration** of institutions may be negative, e.g. when indigenous people loose their culture, habits and traditional system, while only a rather superficial type of culture - a new way of life - is replacing it. It may also happen when the old formal rules disappear, and the new rules are not clear.
- **Re-institutionalization** together with de-institutionalization may be positive. Old, outdated institutions are abolished, non-functional institutions are removed.

Power is an issue, especially when dealing with indigenous people and their informal institutions. The powerful often say: 'your system is informal', and as to science: 'we have – universal – science, you have local knowledge.' However, in certain situations, informal systems may be quite powerful, e.g. institutions of traditional chieftdom in a country with new, post-colonial systems.

How to deal with **disintegration** of institutions? Some options are:

- New products and services based on local production, blending ideas from elsewhere with own ideas. Example there are two ways to react to the McDonaldization:
 - 'Modern' food – the type of quickly to be consumed - based on local products.
 - The 'Slow Food' movement, strong in Europe, but not only there.
- Informal institutions should be analyzed, recognized and made public. In this way they become also explicit, like the formal ones.
- Create space for new institutions, e.g. through a platform, or create space for traditional institutions (e.g. traditional agricultural systems).
- Science and capacity building: action research, joint research.

How to increase **competences** for institutionalizing and de-institutionalizing:

- Build in creativity in institutions and rules
- Build in time for reflection
- Create an enabling environment for creativity, innovation, including time, money and facilities.
- Artists could play a role

Creativity is very important, but when it comes to formal, informal institutions and beliefs, creativity may also hurt people who may be very attached to certain institutions. So the question is: what are the ethics of creativity? We found two elements (list not exhaustive):

- Diversity should be valued
- Respect

Reflections on Open Space sessions – day 2

- What have you taken away from today's open space workshops?
- What are the implications for moving forward from here / ideas for follow-up of the 2 day seminar?

What have you taken away?

“ Realization that people from different fields are advancing in parallel towards a similar idea. The idea that it is important to look at an interior stage (which you frame as institutions).”

“ I find that in some of the conversations and the terms that we use, we are still seeking to establish what they mean. It would be good to have a shared meaning. Promoting that idea we will become much more powerful if that's what we have (shared language, established terms etc.). I feel excited about keeping and growing the conversation, because people come from different fields and are interested in similar things. That would be very beneficial.”

“ My concern is that there is too much abstraction to analyze something complex. Abstraction is OK but with feet in practice. We should never lose sight of practical implications”

“ You have to take your time, to learn. You have to create space to learn. People in this forum could be one of the inputs in this time I plan to take to learn.”

“ A lot of conversations are coming together these 2 days. I hope we can embrace the idea of exploring multiple models and paradigms, rather than looking for one by combining / merging others. Maybe you can articulate the different models but we shouldn't want to merge them.”

“ Merge ideas around institutions / theories of change and capacity development
It is important to start an try and put things into practice before further developing some of the theories.”

“ This seminar has been an eye opener.”

“ The interaction between cases and theories has been very fruitful.”

“ I've got the idea that now there's resonance between these 3 fields (Capacity Development, Institutional Change, Theories of Change). I don't know where it will lead us, But the fact that the linkages are out in the open now, and that we seem are interested to continue working on them is for me the main outcome of this seminar.”

“ The seminar for me has be an eye-opener and gave me more clarity on institutions, but I am still looking for better “equipment” to analyze institutions.”

“ The last two days practitioners have said that we have been converging around ideas at which we have not been looking deeply enough. So looking more deeply at these ideas is not an academic exercise but really important for our work in practice. What also struck me is that we seem to be stranded in the middle. On the one hand we want practical tools to make it work for us but we are still a bit disconnected from the theories in the academic world. I hope we can bridge this theory practice gap.”

“ There are disincentives for making relations explicit (theories of change), because you will make explicit that there have been a lot of things that you have been doing wrong (personally and as an organization): the wrong theories, the wrong assumptions make you reinforce power relations, you are delivering not what you wanted to deliver, etc.

What is the incentive to make explicit what your practice is about? That you are busy with urgent unimportant things? If the only incentive is to learn about what is going wrong and what could be going wrong, you are expecting strong characters to want to do that.”

“ The tools I have seen these two days are not really applicable to the NRM sector, so that I can show to other people in my sector that it using this tools for analysis will lead to a better change.”

How to take it further?

Try and think of something taking the importance of this idea into the field. That would be a significant statement.

Regular share ideas, regularly come together.

Share ideas + data on work that you are doing.

Get projects that would allow us to do this work.

Share experiences – our new thoughts, through e-mail.

Think about how we can get/give access to data sets.

Answer my two questions:

1. Can you do an institutional analysis?
2. If you have conducted an institutional analysis, then what? How do you apply it, what are the practical applications?

“ We can try and create an internet exchange forum between us.”

“ I think it would be great to have a kind of action research site to try out some of these models. In action learning sites you can engage in a participatory change process with stakeholders and try to use these models.”

Get more focus on this action research idea.

We should try and work together and connect these theories and models into the real practice. We have a very varied , rich group here: academics, practitioners, policy makers. We can organize regional sharing events, and also share across regions, to see for instance what the influence of culture is.

“Continue work on these issues and its inter linkage and please also use it to begin a moderated (web-based) discussion group. The moderation is a key requirement. We should look for where can we get information, opportunities, to start doing the synthesis of the work. Make this colourful, using multiple models, multiple paradigms: weaving a carpet from our various experiences. This should also be the task of the moderator of a platform: look for where are the opportunities, where are the possibilities who is doing what type of work, bring people in, remind them of possibilities.”

We have been talking about the cross cutting issues around theories of change and institutions, but one of the challenges is how does it work back into sectors. If we go to anyone and say we want to do research on institutions they might as well say “forget it”. If you can combine it with a content area (e.g. how do you deal with poverty, or with market chains), you have more chance of making something happen.

“ I’d like to see some more commitment from our side to do something with it. For instance by making your theory of change explicit and share how that has been operationalized in your organization.”

We could organize rolling lunchtime discussions hosted each time by another MFS, in which they go into one aspect of their organization.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Seminar Participants

1	Patrick		Audi	Wageningen University
2	John		Belt	Wageningen International
3	Charlotte		Benneker	Wageningen University and Research Centre
4	Sylvia		Bergh	ISS
5	Wim		Blok	Woord en Daad
6	Bettina		Bock	Wageningen University
7	ArendJan	van	Bodegom	Wageningen International
8	Diana		Bosch	LEAD
9	Herman		Brouwer	ICCO
10	Marjolein		Brouwer	OXFAM NOVIB
11	Jan		Brouwers	Wageningen International
12	Jon		Daane	ICRA
13	Cees	van	Dam	Wageningen University and Research Centre
14	Peter		Das	Context
15	Kees	van	Dongen	Centre for International Cooperation
16	Derek		Eaton	LEI Wageningen UR
17	Chris		Eijkemans	Context
18	Marjan	van	Es	Hivos
19	Yvonne		Es	Oxfam Novib
20	Yvette		Evers	Institute of Social Studies
21	Jolie		Franke	
22	Chris		Geerling	Working Group on Ecology & Development
23	Dieneke	de	Groot	ICCO
24	Verona		Groverman	Verona Groverman Consultancy
25	Joost		Guijt	Outdoor Organic
26	Irene		Guijt	Learning by Design
27	Kookie		Habtegaber	Wageningen International
28	Willem		Heemskerk	Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen KIT
29	Simone	de	Hek	Wageningen International
30	Lucia		Helsloot	CORDAID
31	Minu		Hemmati	Generative Change Community
32	Wim Mohammed		Honkoop	Van Hall Larenstein
33	Ali		Ibrahim	MOE/ PENHA
34	Ab	van	Ittersum	
35	Prudence		Kaijage	MS-Training Centre for Development Cooperation
36	Dieuwke		Klaver	Wageningen International
37	Peter		Konijn	CORDAID
38	Margo		Kooijman	PSO Kenniscentrum
39	Augustin	Tèko	Kouevi	Wageningen University
40	Cecile		Kusters	Wageningen International
41	Bram		Langen	PSO Kenniscentrum
42	Arthur	van	Leeuwen	SNV

43	Mathijs	van	Leeuwen	Wageningen University
44	Cees		Leeuwis	Wageningen University
45	Thomas		Lewinsky	MDF Training and Consultancy
46	Arjan		Luijer	
47	Zaina		Maimu	Wageningen International
48	Ellen		Mangnus	Wageningen International
49	Mehret		Mesfin	
50	Koos		Michel	OXFAM NOVIB
51	Bruno		Molijn	Oxfam Novib
52	Jan Willem		Nibbering	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken
53	Hans		Nijhoff	Wageningen International
54	Jeanette		Oostijen	Maastricht School of Management
55	Chris		Opondo	African Highland Initiative (AHI/ICRAF)
56	Ana		Palma	Food Security Viceministry of Guatemala
57	Saeed		Parto	Maastricht University
58	Rob	van	Poelje	PSO Kenniscentrum
59	Peter	van de	Pol	RNTC Radio Nederland Training Centre
60	Krijn		Poppe	LEI Wageningen UR
61	Susanne		Prudlow	GRM International BV
62	Bettye		Pruitt	GCC
63	Íñigo		Retolaza Eguren	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation AECI
64	Niels		Roling	
65	Renaat	van	Rompaey	WLX
66	Pim		Roza	LEI Wageningen UR
67	Kees	de	Ruiter	ICCO
68	Rens		Rutten	CORDAID
69	Mirjam		Schaap	Wageningen International
70	René		Schoenmakers	Plan Nederland
71	Frank	van	Schoubroeck	Wageningen International
72	Vanya		Simeonova	Wageningen International
73	Sef		Slootweg	SNV
74	Herman		Snelder	MDF Training and Consultancy
75	Ann		Svendsen	GCC
76	Marcella		Tam	PSO Kenniscentrum
77	Ralph		Taylor	Metanoia Fund
78	Hans		Teerlink	Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies
79	Philip		Thomas	GCC
80	Bas		Timmers	CINOP
81	Kazbek		Toleubayev	Wageningen University
82	Jan		Ubels	SNV
83	Fons	van der	Velden	Context
84	Wilfred		Verweij	RSM Erasmus University
85	Jaap		Voeten	
86	Simone	van	Vugt	Wageningen International
87	Patricia		Wagenmakers	LNV - Dir. Kennis
88	Arjen		Wals	Wageningen University and Research Centre
89	Edith	van	Walsum	ILEIA

90	Hettie	Walters	ICCO
91	Seerp	Wigboldus	Wageningen International
92	Marlies	Willemen	Wageningen University
93	Jim	Woodhill	Wageningen International
94	Erica	Wortel	

Annex 2: Programme DAY 1

9.00	Welcome	Jim Woodhill <i>WUR Capacity Development and Institutional Change Programme</i>
9.30	Interactive groups	Different facilitators
10.15	Coffee Break	
10.45	Keynote	Theories of Change Irene Guijt: <i>Learning by Design</i>
11.30	Intermezzo	
11.40	Keynote	Capacity Development and Institutional Change Saeed Parto <i>Maastricht University / AREU Kabul</i> Jaap Voeten <i>Maastricht School of Management</i>
12.45	Lunch	
13.45	Thematic subgroups	<p>Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Market driven development Case presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Derek Eaton <i>WUR – LEI</i> - Koos Michel – <i>OxfamNovib</i> - Joost Guijt – <i>Outdoor Organic</i> <p>Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Peace & conflict Case presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mathijs van Leeuwen – <i>WUR – Disaster Studies</i> - Bettye Pruitt – <i>Generative Change Community</i> <p>Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Natural Resource Management Case presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mohammed Ali – <i>PENHA - Eritrea</i> - Frank van Schoubroek – <i>Space for Innovation</i> - Vanya Simeonova – <i>WUR Wageningen International</i> <p>Institutional Change and Capacity Development in relation to Gender and empowerment Case presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edith van Walsum – <i>ILELA</i> - Bettina Bock – <i>WUR – Rural Sociology Group</i> <p>Capacity Development in practice Case presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prudence Kaijage – <i>MS-Training Centre Tanzania</i> - Arjen Wals – <i>WUR Education & Competence Studies</i>
16.00	Refreshments	
16.30	Synthesis of the day Panel Discussion	Cees Leeuwis – <i>WUR Communication & Innovation Studies Group</i> Panelists
17.30	Closing and drinks	

Annex 3: Panel Discussion –Hard talk by Cees Leeuwis

Panel discussion: Scrutinising Success and Failure in Development. Institutional change, Capacity Development and Theories of Change

- Purpose:
 - collect / explicate main lessons
 - derive clear(er) implications for policy and practice
- How? 'Hard talk' (?)
 - delve deeper in our 'theories of change/action' (as the closest institution we may be able to change)
 - collect remaining lessons



Issue 1: Where and what?

- When talking about 'poverty reduction':
 - 1a. Where is institutional change most needed: in North or in South?
 - 1b. What kind of institutional change is most urgent?
 - Interpretative rules - modes of thinking (including theories of change/action)?
 - Economic institutions (markets, contracts, organisation)
 - Legal, policy, governance institutions



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Issue 3: How?

- 3. Is our role in achieving institutional change mainly:
 - to deliberately analyse, 'design' and induce?
 - to select/support when it emerges?
 - to reflexively act, experiment and diversify?



Issue 4: How?

- Through what 'mechanism' is coherent institutional change across different levels more easily achieved?
 - Inclusive democratic, dialogue in nested stakeholder platforms?
 - Charismatic / authoritarian leadership?



Issue 5: What kind of capacities?

- 5. Is capacity development critically important, and if so what kind of capacity development has the highest priority?
 - General education?
 - Organisational strengthening?
 - Learning and adaptation?
 - Political lobby?
 - Institutional analysis?
 - Media strategies?
 - Knowing when to use which 'theory of change/action'?



Issue 6: characterising the current state of affairs

- 6. Are institutions promoted by Northern aid mostly:
 - A legitimate and interesting alternative?
 - An insult to existing institutional frameworks?
 - A necessary evil in the face of globalisation?
 - Adapted to existing institutional frameworks?



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 - Adapted to existing institutional frameworks?



Remaining issues from the room?



Closing remarks

- We are dealing with a critically important topic
- Different contexts require different (culturally sensitive?) theories of change
- It is likely that there are different pathways to institutional change in specific contexts
- Non-linear character of change poses challenges to societal learning, experimentation, M&E, 'development industry'



Closing remarks

- Is our job to bring about change, or to change the potential for change?
- Should we not be thinking more / primarily about institutions in the North?
- Are we not overlooking Technology as an institution?

