Assessing Linkages between Micro and Macro Level Issues Meeting

13 February, 2002
New Delhi, India
Assessing Linkages between Micro and Macro Level Issues
Meeting Agenda
13 February 2002, Ambassador Hotel, New Delhi
10:00 am – 4:30 pm

Introduction
10:00 am - 10:20 am

Welcome Address
Dr. Brenda McSweeney, Resident Representative,
India Country Office

Aim of the meeting
Khalid Malik, Director, Evaluation Office

Status of SAPAP
Henning Karcher, Principal Programme Resident Representative for
SAPAP

Observations
Mr. Hafiz Pasha, Assistant Administrator and Director, RBAP

Session I
10:20 am – 11:20 am

Critical Issues for Developing Macro-Micro Linkages *
Presentation: Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed
Chair, Department of International Relations Dhaka University,
Bangladesh
Moderator: Dr. Neera Burra
Assistant Resident Representative, India

Break
11:20 am – 11:35 am

Session II
11:35 am – 1:00 pm

SAPAP: Macro-Micro Perspectives*
Presentation: Subrahmanyam Ponthagunta
SAPAP Regional Programme Coordinator, Nepal
Moderator: Mr. Asoka Kasturiarachchi
Assistant Resident Representative, Sri Lanka

Reception and Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Session III
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Dialogues on Impacts and Assessments:
Future Directions
Presentation: David Ellerman
Senior Economic Advisor, World Bank
Moderator: Henning Karcher

Break
3:30 pm – 3:45 pm

Session IV
3:45 pm – 4:30 pm

Priority Setting
Moderator: Khalid Malik

* Each session will commence with a brief presentation.
Introduction

On 13 February 2002, the Evaluation Office held a meeting, “Assessing Linkages Between Micro and Macro Level Issues”, in New Delhi. The purpose of the meeting was to survey lessons learned from various poverty alleviation programmes, such as the South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP), and to identify and explore critical issues encompassing macro and micro level issues in the South Asian region. National researchers, SAPAP representatives as well as UNDP staff attended the meeting to discuss lessons learned from relevant experiences and to consult on a future evaluative report comprising country-specific case studies on macro-micro linkages in South Asia.

Dr. Brenda McSweeney, Resident Representative of the India Country Office, began the meeting with a welcome address. In it, she explained that decentralization is one of the two themes guiding India’s United Nations Development Assistance Framework. She stated that a main reason to highlight the importance of the micro in development work is the need for decentralization to bring administration closer to the individual, household, and community levels, where development takes place. However, if only authority that is transferred to the lower levels of civil service, then decentralization is ineffective. Changes will only take place once the people at the bottom enjoy independence, knowledge and information in order to demand and capture the state resources they deserve.

The term linkages, implies “a two-way connection, yet often our one-way desire to influence the macro motivates us,” Dr. McSweeney said. Although the notion that the micro needs the macro to sustain it has guided mainstream thought processes, it is actually the micro initiatives that inform of realities such as dependence, oppression, and other problems such as those caused by globalization. There must be a constant effort to keep learning and then to influence state, national and international centers of power. This is what makes UNDP and its partners knowledge-based organizations. The quality of UNDP analyses must be more rigorous, more systematic, and more community-led, she added.

SAPAP is unique in that it empowers the poor to make demands of the system. However, at the same time, many developing countries are forced to cut back public expenditures on education, public health and food security, and it is usually the world’s women who especially bear the burden. The SAPAP ideology is that poverty alleviation must be based on social mobilization of the poor through community organization. However, SAPAP is focusing too much on micro-credit, which, in relying on market structures and economic growth opportunities, does not promote unity and solidarity. Education, health, and reduced vulnerability to crisis situations, however, provide a stronger impetus for community organization among the poor, especially when led by women.

Mr. Khalid Malik, Director of UNDP’s Evaluation Office, continued the introduction with a few remarks on the aim of the meeting. He stated that the assembled were not there to evaluate SAPAP, but rather to examine how to look at micro experiences, how they relate to the macro, and what the linkages ultimately lead to in terms of a larger development impact.

It was hoped that the meeting would focus first on identifying the key issues involved in linking micro and macro perspectives. Second, that it would find a practical way to identify key researchers and institutions from each country who will produce country studies and an overall timetable for next steps, Mr. Malik said.

In terms of perspective, it is important to look at the issue of framework setting for the overall linkage effort, Mr. Malik said. There must be a connection between the value of social mobilization and a demonstrated influence on poverty reduction, which should be examined through empirical evidence. This can take place in the following two ways. One is through the establishment of institutions that strengthen and provide access to incomes, markets and resources provided by the government. A second
is by increasing access to education and health investment for better participation in the development process by the poor.

Both of the above mentioned frameworks hinge on strengthening social capital, civic engagement, voice and accountability vis-a-vis the corresponding political system.

Another set of issues that needs to be examined refers to constraints; what exactly they are, if they refer to the ambivalent or indifferent role of the state, and if it is because often the state does not function properly that communities take on that vacuum.

A further concern that needs to be addressed, according to Mr. Malik, in the SAPAP context is that of actual experience. Have the efforts led to improved development outcomes in terms of reduced poverty or better human development indicators?

Specific questions must be considered such as the role of SAPAP if the state were to function well, and if it is SAPAP’s role to strengthen the state or to reinforce community mobilization. The corresponding challenge then is in determining how community organizations can assist the poor to access resources. Great steps can be made provided the process is done correctly, but if it is not, a series of negative dynamics take place, resulting in a reduction of social capital instead of the reverse.

The question of market accessibility also needs to be scrutinized. Has the essence of community mobilization been crippled by SAPAP’s focus on providing credit? Important in assessing sustainability is to examine how it will enhance the involvement of the poor in the productive system. Issues that strengthen the poor, such as medical insurance and social security, must be addressed in order to include them in the productive process.

Another question, according to Mr. Malik, is whether social infrastructure work should be included in SAPAP or left to the state. If the economy of the rural society is severely burdened, there might be more innovative ways to get the state to perform better at the social infrastructure development level.

In order to strengthen social capital and improve the political economy of rural society, new institutions that have a strong social embeddedness, strong links to society, and that provide the poor with greater means of participation in the productive sector, need to be formed.

There is a tension between local elites and new institutions and new opposition groups that is enshrined in these new perspectives, and this must be addressed at the start. Furthermore, Mr. Malik highlighted that there is an interest in focusing on participation, more as a process than as an outcome. It is important to examine improved outcomes and progress in rural societies.

Mr. Malik concluded by stating that he looked forward to a dialogue on the concepts, views and approaches presented in the papers prepared for the meeting, with the hope that they were grounded in practical reality and practical performance. He noted that unless the theory and practice are brought together, the meeting would not move forward.

Dr. Hafiz Pasha, Director of the Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific, commented on the status of SAPAP. He stated that the macro micro issue is seen as a tension between downstream and upstream. There is a tension in how this dichotomy is perceived and the perceptions of project initiatives such as SAPAP that are downstream yet also have an upstream impact. Because of this, the direct development impact SAPAP has in the communities in which it works should be examined. Alternatively, it could be viewed in a broader sense as a demonstration exercise that gets up-scaled and replicated by government buy-ins, which then becomes a changed implementation methodology.
Social mobilization is incorporated into government programs, which as a result multiplies the overall impact. The question is whether one looks at the direct or the demonstrative aspect, which can be the upstream of the macro-level aspect.

A further issue that must be focussed on in terms of SAPAP is what the implications of micro-level work on macro-level policy or outcome are.

There is recognition that SAPAP has resulted in a certain level of success. The question now is how to go macro - how should the SAPAP experience be built upon and taken to the next step?

Lastly, Mr. Henning Karcher, Principal Programme Resident Representative for SAPAP, presented the fourth and final part of the introduction to the meeting by providing an overview of SAPAP and by examining its current status. In particular, Mr. Karcher highlighted the issue of the development outcomes of SAPAP. He stated that there is evidence that poverty has been reduced, and that according to self-assessments done by the poor, there is a clear upward trend of households defined as non-poor. There has also been an increase in enrollment rates of both boys and girls, a reduction in dropout rates, and improvement in health, as documented through child nutrition data, and an improvement in sanitation. In addition, the communities have tackled broader and more complex social issues, such as child labor, child marriage, and contraceptive acceptance.

Mr. Karcher highlighted the benefits that social mobilization brings. It helps the poor increase their overall social situation and also plays an important role in democracy and decentralization. Through social mobilization, the poor become aware of their power and have the opportunity to take advantage of it by voting in public elections. Furthermore, evidence has shown that social mobilization has contributed to a significant reduction of conflict in rural areas.

Within the SAPAP programme, upscaling has been given a high priority, according to Mr. Karcher. One of the most successful examples has been in Nepal, where the government has made social mobilization and decentralization the center of the national poverty reduction strategy. In terms of policy, SAPAP has focussed on creating an enabling environment for upscaling. For example, in Nepal and Pakistan, support was given to the establishment of poverty alleviation funds in order to channel resources from the center to the communities for social mobilization.

In terms of monitoring, SAPAP has given priority to participatory monitoring and also to the documentation of poverty monitoring in the SAPAP countries.

SAPAP is presently working on a poverty profile for SAARC countries that will be presented to a SAARC ministerial meeting in the middle of the year.

Social mobilization does not provide the answer to all poverty-related issues, Mr. Karcher said. However, SAPAP has shown that the poor have tremendous potential. Through organization, they can have a strong impact on development and make a positive change in many ways. "Most importantly," he said, "social mobilization represents an attack against the mindset of being helpless. It brings the poor to center stage and shows that they don’t need charity but access to resources at a level playing field."
Session I: Critical Issues for Developing Macro-Micro Linkages

Presentation by Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Chair, Department of Internal Relations, Dhaka University, Bangladesh
(See full paper in Annex II)

Moderator: Dr. Neera Burra, Assistant Resident Representative, India

Discussion

Key issues/questions from the presentation:

- *Does the relationship between the macro and micro necessarily have to be seen only within a linear perspective?* Is the micro so conditioned by the macro that there is no space for the micro to evolve?

- *Do NGOs always have to be in opposition to the state?* Are there no South Asian experiences to the contrary? Is the relationship of governments and NGOs limited to competition for scarce resources?

- *Are all government agendas donor driven with no autonomy in what is agenda, who defines the problem and who controls the agenda?*

- *Engendering of the macro-micro policy environment is often limited to focussing on women.* What does this mean in terms of macro-micro linkages?

- *Dr. Burra raised two additional critical issues.* Firstly, that issues of freedom and equality do not get measured and are not included in the macro-micro debate. Secondly, that there are key issues at the micro and macro levels, such as the impact of globalization on the poor, especially on women.

- *Budget allocation not high in social sector.* From both the macro and micro perspectives, the health sector is important, however, according to the budgets of some countries, the macro side does not do enough in this regard. Furthermore, many countries’ budgets do not provide for inequality, redistribution and employment.

- *Conflict between macro and micro.* This is the case for example, with agricultural policies affecting groundnut farmers in the Anandpur District of Andhra Pradesh and laws that do not allow communities to access forest produce.

- *There has been no action on higher levels to remove anti-poor laws, a legacy from the colonial period.*

- *Micro-credit is not viable for the poorest of the poor.*

- *In the context of globalization, macro policies and their impact at the micro level must be examined more closely.* The impacts on the different sectors might vary. How should this be considered when looking at macro-micro linkages?

- *There must be an understanding of the macro level political economy when looking at the macro and the impact on micro level interventions.* State government’s priorities at the macro level influence micro level decisions, such as budgetary allocations.
- **Macro and micro linkages refer to power relations between the powerful and the less powered.** It is important to examine the interaction between governments and NGOs. Experience shows that most NGOs do not practice what they preach. Their professionalism and aspiration for civil society requires critical analysis. There must be a convergence between the macro and micro when discussing upward linkages.

- **Macro-micro linkages is very broad issue.** It is important to define the scope of the discussion, as macro can mean a number of things. On a general level, it is an aggregate set of policies, but may also refer to public policies that relate only to the social sectors. For economists, macro refers to macro economic policies, such as public expenditures and interest rates, for example. Macro can also refer to political structure and structural issues. In some instances it might be useful to look at the macro-micro from a multi-disciplinary perspective to have a clearer understanding of the dialectical relationship between the macro and the micro.

- **The macro is seen as the “villain of peace”**. The common belief is that problems will be solved if the macro is dissolved and deregulated. However, there is a need to scale up. Issues such as scope, and availability of information are not always available at the micro level. Uncertainties and unpredictibilities, such as ensuring efficiency and equity, can only be dealt with at government levels. The role of the macro must be conflict resolution, which should be implemented in order to maximize resources and ensure equity. The conflict resolution paradigm must have representation. The role of the micro level is to give a voice to the people within the macro resolution process.

- **A pro-poor macro economic policy framework is necessary to engender macro-micro linkages.** To some extent, the engendering approach has dealt with structural policies rather than with macro economic policies. There is a need to de-masculize society in order to empower women and create a space.

- **Governments in South Asia do not incorporate the lessons learned from the many success stories into their macro policy.** When discussing macro-micro linkages, it is important to analyze the question of political commitment. What type of a government is it and whose interest will it serve?

- **National budgets constitute a large pool of resources, as donor funding in many countries is modest, therefore, issues of accountability and transparency among others, need to be addressed.**

- **Social mobilization issues:**
  
  (a) Social mobilization at the micro level is strong in Nepal. However, often the full benefit of social mobilization is not realized, as traditional approaches dominate actions. Awareness at the grassroots level is high, but disproportionately lower at the mezzo and central levels. For long-term sustainability, issues pertaining to social mobilization could be incorporated in graduate and Ph.D. curriculums as well as being a part of the civil service examination and public education policy in general.

  (b) Both the rural and urban are important when discussing social mobilization.

  (c) Time needs to be given to local communities for understanding. Experience shows that it takes 3-4 years to gain an understanding of governance processes at the national level, the impacts of global changes, etc.
(d) The question of equating war and poverty reduction with social policies is a mistaken one. Economic policies in agriculture, industries and the environment have at least as much of an impact as do other policies.

(e) The macro must mean global and corporate because the decisions taken by corporate or by supra-national bodies have an equal amount of influence, as do national policies.

(f) Countries must have income or social transfer policies in order to pay for their social policies.

- **There is a possible conflict between process and outcome.** Outcome can be managed if approached from a macro perspective. The micro is about process. In order to strengthen the micro, there must be a willingness to let the outcome be determined by the process and not necessarily treated as the outcome. Conflict then arises because it is difficult to envision a participatory process if outcomes are predetermined.

- **Macro policies generally tend to focus more on economic reforms and liberalization, however human development is not necessarily about income poverty only.**
Session II: SAPAP: Macro-Micro Perspectives
Presentation by Mr. Subrahmanyam Ponthagunta, SAPAP Regional Programme Coordinator, Nepal
(See full paper in Annex III)

Moderator: Mr. Asoka Kasturiarachchi Assistant Resident Representative, Sri Lanka

Discussion

Key issues/questions from the presentation:

- *If scaling-up is not linked to social mobilization then there is a danger of deterioration in quality.*

- *It is important to assess how much the impact of SAPAP programmes is due to SAPAP or to other growth factors in the society.*

- *High growth rates in many countries have not reduced poverty or increased employment.*

- *How do national policies affect implementation of micro policies?* There is a discrepancy in what official documents state, and what is actually implemented. Sensitizing and pressurizing the bureaucracy is a critical role of the development process in order to advance micro projects. There is a dichotomy between what is publicly pronounced in policy documents and what actually happens on the field level. People who are willing to take the first steps forward must be identified and supported.

- *Capacity building of the poor is important for social mobilization.* Issues such as existing power structures, intense competition, and the impact of the dominant ideology, that keep the poor demobilized, need to be addressed.

- *UNDP should shift its focus from policy alone to policy implementation in order to contribute to poverty reduction.* SAPAP demonstrates in every country that if the model is followed, people will become empowered and will be able to overcome poverty. UNDP can make a difference in reducing poverty by focussing on government implementation of policies that result in poverty alleviation and not on policy alone.

- *Policy and implementation must go hand in hand.* If this does not happen, what would be the incentive for governments to seriously consider policy dialogue? Implementation without policy is risking the issue of micro success and macro failure.

- *In pursuing liberal policies, relying on markets and conducting structural reform, India has experienced the greatest amount of poverty reduction now than in all previous decades combined.*

- *Policy dialogue is important to confront structural factors that contribute to an unequal power dynamic at the community level.* If there is not a measure of balance at the community level, outcomes will be unequal, regardless of the resources available. If structural factors like planned reform is not addressed, there will be striking differences. It is not solely an issue of scaling-up, as micro-perspectives might differ greatly from macro perspectives. Structural factors that need to be adjusted and addressed must be identified in order to empower the poor.

- *India has high growth states with low human development indicators.* The issue of heterogeneity of the poor needs to be examined. In the highly stratified societies of South Asia, it is frequently
assumed that gender equality issues and intra household disparities do not arise. These issues, in relation to representative versus participatory democracy, need to be closely examined.

- **Linkages need to be viewed with a multi-faceted approach.** Identification of linkages in terms of their causalities, directions, magnitudes and differences in content must be clearly identified. Additionally, distinctions need to be made between market-mediated linkages and direct linkages. In reference to the presentation, looking at linkage one, it is missing public expenditure, which is a significant aspect of macro economic policy. The major issue pertaining to linkage two is that of sustainability. Linkage three incorporates various issues such as the high growth and high poverty incidence issue. While high growth is necessary, the nature of growth is equally consequential. In the late 1990’s Bangladesh experienced high rates of labor intensive growth, yet poverty alleviation was not as strong as expected.

- **It is important to mainstream the poor into the market.** The poor must be incorporated into the labor, the commodity, the capital and the global markets (not just the national or local markets), as social mobilization and policy making are mutually reinforcing.

- **Social mobilization provides a strong foundation for creating linkages that provide the poor with market access.** In Sri Lanka, the poor have produced income-generating items and have used the market to overcome some difficulties. Once communities were mobilized, the private sector recognized the strength in linkages.

- **UNDP should meditate social risk management for the poor.** This means developing appropriate ways in which to reduce the vulnerabilities which the poorest and the most marginalized are exposed to.
Session III (part 1): Dialogues on Impacts and Assessments
Presentation by Mr. David Ellerman, Senior Economic Advisor, World Bank
(See full paper in Annex IV)

Moderator: Mr. Henning Karcher, Principal Programme Resident Representative for SAPAP

Discussion

Key issues/questions from the presentation:

- **If the role of the facilitator is to present different options to the poor, who should then decide which they should follow?**

  The idea of a facilitator presenting the options is a good one, especially if s/he can help the poor see the options themselves. In this case however, the person is much more than a facilitator or organizer in that s/he tells the people that they will only receive the necessary resources provided they do what the facilitator says. This in turn falsifies the entire process. The poor might attempt to comply in order to get the resources, however existing structures will not change.

- **Once assistance has proven disadvantageous, how does one draw the line?**  For example, “help” must be defined when dealing with the ultra poor and the moderate poor.

  Here, “unhelpful” refers to a situation when people’s ability to help themselves has not increased. There are many ways to provide people with resources. People in disaster areas require resources, however they are not being helped to help themselves. Therefore, disaster relief, which in many ways is a charity operation, must be stopped at one point, and a more sustainable type of help should be implemented. This might be difficult however, as agencies are often empowered by their ability to deliver resources for disaster relief.

- **The concept of social investment funds has been a very problematic and controversial development at the World Bank.**  These are often loans made by the World Bank in hard currency, with very lenient terms, and are regarded as free money by the recipient central government. A social fund, controlled by the central government, is established to provide grants to local communities for small infrastructure projects. The fund, however, becomes a tool for central government to provide services that should, in reality, be managed by central ministries, regional and local governments, which may be corrupt or unresponsive. The idea is that an honest technocratic agency will bypass corruption and directly deliver services in order to gain support for the ruling party, using World Bank money that does not have to be repaid for many years. The World Bank supports this because it mobilizes resources; governments favor it because it buys support; however, sustainable community change is not being created in the process. It merely takes pressure off local governments who now receive new infrastructure directly from the central government, but are corrupt and end up not supporting the project because it wasn't theirs to begin with. Social funds are billed as community empowerment, demand-driven, and bottom-up, but in fact they are a gift of the government (not demand-driven), controlled by the government (not bottom-up) and are not sustainable (no community empowerment).

- **Self-knowledge in a community can be shared and does not only apply to the individual.**

  The metaphors used in the presentation are in reference to individual learning, social learning and organizational learning because they are able to transmit the main message. The question is always about ownership; was the knowledge a result of one’s own experience or the experience of the
organization? This is the idea of the Socratic method in which one person is helped by another in a learning way.

- **If the helper tries to resolve a conflict or potential conflict, how would this be solved within this model? Would the group embark upon it, or would outside help be required?**

The empowerment process must be embedded within given social structures and power relations. Often, semi-feudal relations and powerful elite threaten organizations not to continue the empowerment process. Taking different power relations into account, how can one continue the process despite strong opposition from the elite in the villages?

Experience from the civil rights movement shows that once the bottom up movement progressed, the top level passed civil rights laws, and commissioned federal marshals for protection until the bottom gained enough power to change local governments. Bottom-up change must be coupled with support from above that can protect bottom-up changes. Real social change take place once the two are combined.

- **One might infer, when looking at the agency-client relationship in the second model, that the agency has no agenda and is not selective in its approaches and interventions when requested not to disseminate, but to help.** In reality however, change can be made through a dynamic learning process.
Session III (part 2): Future Directions

Discussion

- **Without an organized community, change will not take place.** Social mobilization is based on the assumption that people are willing to do things for themselves and that they have the potential to do so. In reality, however, they are unable to do so on an individual basis and need social mobilization in order to organize. Social capital plays an important role in this. Evidence suggests that in places where the social mobilization process was adopted correctly, it has been successful.

- **Strong macro-micro linkages are vital to assist the ultra-poor.** Many agencies are sympathetic to the plight of the ultra-poor but are not sensitized as to what to do, which is to provide the ultra poor access to resources and to follow the equity principle.

- **The "ultra poor" present particular challenges to those seeking to aid them.** The ultra poor face a significant structural obstacle of lack of access to natural resources (land, forests, water), from which they derive their living working tending crops or raising livestock. For the ultra poor, the key is to have strong macro-micro linkages, because it was found in Nepal that many government agencies were sympathetic to their issues but unsure how to help. The proper way for them to help is to allow the ultra poor access to resources based on the equity principle. Another issue regarding impact studies is that community members may provide a subjective evaluation and assessment, which might seem accurate, but data cannot easily be aggregated at higher levels because of its subjectivity. Therefore, impact assessment should be followed through a clear methodology that takes into account the types of information that are required.

- **SAPAP impact assessments must examine whether the process has enabled communities to build their own organizations or not.** As SAPAP’s scope is limited to organizing communities, fostering leadership between communities and social capital, assessments must question whether members are participating actively and directly and whether they are able to take decisions on all poverty related issues. Impact assessments must examine whether the communities have come out of poverty, whether they have built their own organizations, and whether the members are actively engaged. SAPAP in Andhra Pradesh has enabled the poor to come together, to build their own organizations, and to directly participate in and own issues related to poverty.

  Poverty alleviation is a long-term process. In terms of impact assessments, indicators must be limited and other elements, such as the type of influence that has been made on the external environment, must be examined. For instance, to what extent has SAPAP dealt with micro level issues such as anti-poor laws?

  Attribution, within initiatives such as SAPAP, is important when considering evaluation and assessing macro-micro linkages.

- **When designing an impact assessment in the SAPAP context, it is important to recognize that SAPAP does not encompass a multi-pronged approach.** The core component of the programme is primarily organizing the poor, promoting social capital and facilitating participation. Impact assessment therefore needs to be designed according this framework in order to determine whether or not change can take place in a relatively short time span.
Indeed, change in terms of the totality of life under the SAPAP programme must be examined. SAPAP was not designed to lift people out of poverty, but rather to provide strength to communities. It is important to assess what is needed to affect such changes for future directions. Additionally, in terms of resourcing, the programme must be able to show forth achievements such as ownership, institutionalization of capacities, localization of processes, sustainability and up-scaling to financial supporters for increased financial support and accountability.

- **Within macro-micro linkages, there is a strong devolution of power to local bodies.** The entire processes get delayed when organized grassroots communities make strong demands for various services and the government does not respond promptly. Therefore, the issue of devolution of powers to local bodies and linking these representative bodies to participatory bodies becomes crucial.

- **In designing impact assessments, more favorable macro policy environments and greater government involvement in NGO sponsored programmes must be taken into account.**

- **Some macro policy issues can impede poverty alleviation.** In the Andhra Pradesh context, where there is a lot of pressure to reform, changes in health, education, and childcare are likely to have an adverse impact on the poor. Women are especially burdened in regard to related issues such as health financing.

- **In which way is SAPAP unique?** Similar NGO experiences, their outcomes and key factors that make them more important or have better lessons must be flagged.

- **There are poverty generating forces operating within the poverty alleviation framework.** Weight must be placed on the extent to which policy induced measures are increasing the poverty levels of the poor. Often, as attempts are made to reduce poverty, poverty is also being created.

- **When an evaluation for a programme such as SAPAP is designed, it must be related to interventions already implemented on the ground.**

- **When designing a SAPAP evaluation, it is important to assess whether SAPAP has helped in reducing various forms of poverty within the community such as social discrimination, debt bondage, untouchability and migration.**
Session IV: Priority Setting

Issues raised by Mr. Khalid Malik, Director of the Evaluation Office, based on discussions of the previous sessions.

There are two views on SAPAP:
1. **We must identify and draw from the real practitioners in order to learn.**
2. **What are the opportunity costs of this? Are we spending too much money on SAPAP instead of investing it in education?**

Next steps after the macro-micro linkages meeting:

- **A compilation of country studies.** The goal is to consolidate various perspectives based on existing knowledge and existing studies. These country studies must include a macro-micro filter and will not be an evaluation of SAPAP, but rather an analysis of SAPAP experience and lessons learned through the macro micro linkages filter. A reference group, comprising participants at the Delhi meeting and/or other colleagues from the region, will be established to facilitate this process.

- **Identification of relevant researchers and institutions.**

- **Synthesis of country papers and identification of distinguished South Asian development thinkers.** These experts will consolidate the country reports and in the process identify other ways for future interaction with the participants at the Delhi meeting.

- **Must establish clarity on macro-micro definition.**

Key Issues:

1. **While SAPAP is the primary focus, it is also important to look at related issues.** SAPAP’s goal of enhancing social mobilization is intimately related to capacity building and development issues, both necessary conditions for effective development of the poor.

2. **There must be a conceptual framework in order to enhance SAPAP’s effectiveness.** This framework must deal with the following two issues: strengthening the capability of the poor to access resources, and mainstreaming them into the market economy. Once these issues are resolved, the amount of social mobilization achieved will be discernable.

3. **It is important to look at the intermediate and final outcomes of an intervention.** This makes it easier to identify strategies, partnerships and additional experimentation. In the poverty reduction context, it is important to assess how social mobilization leads to poverty reduction. Experiences in other countries as well as identification of the different forms of poverty must be assessed. It is also crucial to look at structural issues when examining outcomes, as the performance of social mobilization will vary, depending on the context. Additional debate should focus on structural issues such as how power relations are organized in a given institutional context.

4. **Why has the SAPAP model not been replicated in other district administrations of the same state or country?** Links in terms of sensitizing policymaking, sensitizing on the role of social mobilization and capacity building gain importance in this context. Outcomes must be credible, change must be visible and sustainability must be foreseeable.
When assessing impact and development performance, it is important to recognize what has worked, why it has worked, and how it can be used in dialogue to change policies and structural conditions in favor of making the poor more productive members of the economy.

The above mentioned items must be acknowledged when comparing country experiences. There is a lot of lessons learning, which can be up-scaled to unite policy, practice and dialogue for sustainable future endeavors.

**Discussion**

**Key Questions and Issues:**

- **Who will benefit from the findings of the study?**
  
  There has been ongoing debate in UNDP as to whether the work and the activities have contributed to real influence and change. It is important is to scrutinize how micro interventions can be linked to macro work and how UNDP can become a fund to pilot innovation. At the same time, once UNDP learns and understands itself better, it can shape the assistance it provides in the future. This is the essence of evaluation; to learn lessons from the past, to collect them and to inform organizational policies.

- **If this is a capacity-building project, how long will this intervention continue? Is there an exit policy?**

- **The impact assessments of SAPAP depend on clear project objectives, processes and outcomes.**

- **It is too risky to mainstream the poor by putting them in the market.**

- **The relationship of the poor to the non-poor must be discussed.** The non-poor within the macro-micro context must be considered, particularly in reference to spatial planning.

- **It is important to examine what is being done and for which purpose.** In supporting the poor, at what stage should capacity be built and what are the next steps? If the purpose is to establish a benchmark, it must be clear where we stand. If however, the purpose is to phase out the project, then the concern should be on the role of other actors as well.

- **There is debate that when SAPAP was originally conceived it did not look at the fundamental or root causes of poverty.** A rights-based development approach must be taken when examining root causes of poverty. Factors such as access and control over resources, women’s rights issues, and structural causes of poverty including wage inequity on the community level should be assessed.

- **A recommendation made by the Independent South Asia Poverty Alleviation Commission highlights the need to foster an independent sensitive support mechanism for the poor.** The kind of sensitive support mechanisms implemented by the SAPAP programme must be looked at. The nature of these mechanisms, how they interface with the community, what their processes and nuances are, their capacities and replication implications need to be assessed. Important to consider also is how the nature of the support from this independent support mechanism changes over time and the extent to which it can gear itself for new demands made by the poor. Governments must recognize the need to foster such sensitive support mechanisms.
• How does SAPAP distinguish itself from other micro credit and poverty alleviation programmes in South Asia? Have macro-micro linkages been impediments or have they contributed to poverty alleviation? The SAPAP model must be revisited in order to understand how macro-micro linkages were conceived, how they should be implemented and if they have been successful in other similar circumstances. Country case studies should also be examined in order to see how SAPAP differs from other interventions.

• It is difficult to pinpoint SAPAP’s success, as the reality is not fragmented but total. It is difficult to identify whether an achievement is attributable to SAPAP. Rather than highlighting what SAPAP has contributed, it should be noted whether SAPAP-initiated and funded projects have created new obstacles that limit future initiatives. If not, then SAPAP has been effective.

• Resources either at the community level or at the government level need to be accessed. Frequently, government resources are not used to benefit the poor, which contributes to the assumption that the government is not doing its job well enough.

• Mainstreaming the poor into the market does not mean only implementing micro finance schemes. It also requires strengthening capacity, such as health and education. The question is how to muster enough support to have the poor direct various marketing processes.

• The structure of the country studies should be a combination and comparison of various key issues. The country papers will look at the totality of the SAPAP effort and examine the extent to which it relates to key poverty outcomes in the SAPAP countries. The studies will provide a potential road map to take the effort to the next step.

• A new way of looking at things. Historically, development interventions have been fundamentally micro in nature, with two main schools of thought. One represents the finance ministers who raise funds and distribute them on various expenditure policies, and the other is the development community.

To conclude the macro-micro linkages meeting, Mr. Malik stated that a new issue, a new perspective and a new way of looking at development had been the key thrust throughout the sessions. Historically, he said, development interventions had been fundamentally micro in nature, with two main schools of thought. One school represented the finance ministers who raised funds to distribute on various expenditure policies, and the other school encompassed the development community. The meeting however, was an attempt to unite and link the macro with micro issues in development for further dialogue on lessons learning and assessments.

Mr. Khalid Malik thanked the participants for the time, effort and thought they had put into the meeting. He finished by stating that the Evaluation Office would be in touch with key individuals regarding the proposed regional evaluation exercise.
## Annex I: Participant List

<table>
<thead>
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Annex II: Critical Issues for Developing Macro-Micro Linkages - Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed presentation

Macro-Micro Linkages

Critical Issues

Imtiaz Ahmed*

If one goes by the commitment of the SAARC Summit in Dhaka in 1993, poverty should have been eradicated from all the countries of South Asia this year! But painful as it may sound, not only have the respective countries failed in the task, there is also more importantly no one to accept the responsibility for making such an outlandish, if not under the circumstances impossible, commitment. It almost suggested that there was no link between the policymakers of poverty eradication and those requiring policing out of poverty. Such a linkage has always been problematic, indeed, for reasons that are rooted in history, politics, socio-economics (or, as it is more recently christened, culturnomics), psycho-geography, including the sociology of knowledge. The issue of macro-micro linkages, insofar it is a link between the state economic policies and those requiring policing primarily for economic benefits and upliftment, also ought to be viewed within the fold of the said problematic. A brief but closer exposition will make this clear.

A macro-micro linkage presupposes independent or at least distinctive existence of both macro and micro. Otherwise, why contemplate or plan or police a ‘linkage’ between the two? Three issues may be raised in this context. Firstly, the linkage has always been linear, with the macro policing the micro. Yunusonomics and the like are somewhat of an exception, almost standing out as alternative quests for reorienting the linkage, but these are also not free from the linearity suggested above.

Secondly, and it is somewhat of a variation of the first, the macro is always present within the micro as an overpowered, overdeveloped structure, with little space for the micro to organize itself freely on its own and therefore must remain influenced and mostly distorted by the power of the macro. The pervasiveness of the power of Sarkar, politically as well as culturally, can hardly be denied. It is, in fact, revered and feared, albeit in different degrees, both nationally and locally, at times with contexts related more to culture than politics or even management or administration.

Thirdly, the micro, both as psycho-geographical and politico-economic categories, remains within the minds and practices of those planning and policing the macro. Ministers and policymakers in charge of transport and communication have literally bent roads and highways, at times to a considerable degree and that again without any macro economic justification, mainly for making them pass through their hometown or village for boosting their ego and political and social constituencies. The pervasiveness
of micro-politics (indeed, of the corrupt and distorted variant’) at the highest level of the country is something that cannot be wished away very easily.

The above sets of issues, of course, are a part of a more entrenched and long-term processes, something about which we are becoming familiar only now following major (possibly paradigmatic) shifts in our methodological pursuits.\textsuperscript{vi} I have no intention to get into a discussion on methodology, but will reflect on one or two things underscoring the change of perspective, needless to say those having a direct bearing on the macro-micro linkages. Let me first take up the issue of governing poverty.

Governing poverty in this part of the region is a late twentieth-century phenomenon, resulting mainly from a process of delinking and linking of the privileged with the poor. In Europe itself only with the economic crises of eighteenth-century do we find the ‘eroding of the efficiency of traditional policies of assistance,’ the latter based mainly on ‘charity and on the incarceration of the poor together with the mad and the sick.’\textsuperscript{vii} In fact, for the first time, illness and poverty began to be distinguished, with the mad and the sick having being isolated and placed within the walls of the hôpital général (houses that Louis IV had built a century earlier for the poor and the mendicants), while the latter, that is, the poor, ending up as free labour in the burgeoning capitalist market. Not all of this transformation proved beneficial to the poor; indeed, two centuries later this resulted in making poverty and the poor a part of governance and state policies.

In this context, the South Asian experience was different more in form than in substance. A combination of both charity and incarceration made the poor a part of the lowest caste, with little or no state-run facilities for the mad and the sick. Colonial modernity brought the hospital (the Calcutta Medical College being established only in 1835)\textsuperscript{viii} to house mainly the privileged sick as well as a politics to free the poor from the caste-based incarceration and making them a part of the free labor. Post-Gandhian and more importantly post-independence politics brought fresh interests to the issue of poverty and the poor, but the latter actually became a serious governing issue when quick replication of the West (capitalist as well as the so-called socialist models) did not materialize.

Governing poverty also became a disciplinary quest, with economics and political economy becoming hegemonic and framing the task of policing the state and the poor people out of poverty. This had serious implications insofar as the macro-micro linkage for poverty alleviation/reduction/eradication was concerned. This is because by narrowing down the issue of linkage to the field of economics or political economy, not only did the macro fail to link itself with the micro and vice versa, it also created a milieu where the reality of both macro and micro remained ill-exposed or even under-explored for initiating and materializing diverse and dispersed linkages. Critics refer to disciplinary shortcomings and there are good reasons for this. Let me explain.
Oxford University Press (Delhi) in the back cover of Amartya Sen’s Development as Freedom (1999) introduced the author (I believe, quite inadvertently but not necessarily senselessly) by stating, “He is the winner of the 1998 Nobel Memorial Prize for Economic Science” (emphasis mine). This is indeed ironic when Sen himself is in the record of critiquing the transformation of economics into an engineering approach or ‘science’ devoid of ethics. vi I guess this was bound to come about from the moment economics began to distinguish itself from social science and conform to its own (albeit willfully and narrowly constructed) disciplinary boundaries. There was much hope that the discipline of political economy would salvage the grounds lost by the engineering approach to economics. But that too did not come about, although for totally different reasons.

I have always considered the practitioner of political economy, that is, a political economist – part-time economist, part-time politician. This has become more critical and pervasive and at times also perverse in the light of the rupture between ethics and economics that Sen refers to, which again with the coinage of ‘economic science’ signified a rupture between social science and economics. Put differently, political economy has been less organically linked and holistically organized than is commonly presumed, and the conflict between politics and economics continues to rage on with little or no effort to creatively combine the both. Within and beyond South Asia this has come about in an interesting way, indeed, with the economists blaming politics and the politicians and the politicians blaming economics and the economists for all the wrongs and slumps in local, national and global economies.

Columnist-economist Robert J. Samuelson, for instance, while contributing to the ‘economics’ page of the Newsweek, very recently wrote: “...the origins of (the global) slumps lie not in economics but very much in local traditions, values and politics.” He then, following his coinage of the term ‘culturnomics,’ went on to say,

> Economic markets everywhere conform to the peculiarities of local history, social structure, psychology, religion and politics. These forces influence the desire to work, consume, invest, save and take risks. Human nature may be constant, but it is always chiseled by culture.... [It] is an illusion to think that economic weakness stems only from economic causes and can be cured quickly by economic remedies.x

More at home, economist Rehman Sobhan, in a recent public lecture, stressed the need for “political structural adjustment” for the economic development of Bangladesh.xi

The reverse trend - politicians blaming economics and even the economists - is well known. How on earth would they be able to justify their claim to power while failing to deliver time and again, almost on a Sisyphean style and scale, the promised economic and non-economic goods? Definitely, the politicians would shower blame on the state of economics and the ill-conceived theories of the economists! At times, it reaches a level where all the ills of the country, including pollution and
deforestation, even minority bashing and the sale of gas, are explained by finger pointing at the forces of globalization, including the World Bank and the IMF. Although intriguing is the cycle of blame and counter-blame, my interest lies more on the milieu reproducing it and the things resulting from it.

The cultural context cannot be denied and the sector which is most stigmatized is the civil society, creating, as we shall soon see, short- and long-term complications for the macro-micro linkages. For reasons of colonialism and over-powered state structures, South Asia is devoid of a civil society with civilizing and consenting roles. It is mostly polarized and violent, leading to competition and conflict in almost all spheres of life and living, often with disastrous consequences. Earlier in the context of donor-sponsored policy prescriptions, I have outlined four areas where competition and conflict in the state and society have influenced, distorted and impeded the realization of such policy prescriptions. A quick look at the four areas will definitely add to our understanding of the problems involved in initiating and reproducing the linkages.

The first is the GO-NGO clash over the use of donor funds. This has lately been resolved, not so much by creative effort as by pushing for greater GO-NGO cooperation; that is, governmentalizing the NGOs! At the same time, the GO-NGO clash over donor funds is bound to produce two sets of reports on the policy prescriptions and in the process distort and even impede their realizations.

The second area relates to the partisan approach to any donor-sponsored activity. To give an example, if the Awami League takes over the task of implementing a donor-led policy, it will be opposed by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and vice versa for no other reason than the sake of opposition. In the process, many a policy, even when well intended, has failed to materialize simply because the political opposition, when gaining power, has downgraded or abandoned it lest it be taken as the success story of its rival. Nothing can be more pathetic than this.

The third area is well known but seldom admitted: inter-ministerial, inter-NGO, and even inter-think tank rivalry and competition over donor funds. In recent times, this has attained a critical dimension, with NGOs and research centers even ceasing to share information on donor projects unless the said project is fully completed and published. This has not only led to the proliferation of almost identical data collection but data suppression. In a situation like this, the donor-sponsored policies, even when researched, evaluated and implemented, is bound to get distorted and suffer.

The last area is hardly brought into the public discussion but is present everywhere: intra-ministerial, intra-NGO, and intra-think tank – if not individual - competition over donor funds. So intense is the rivalry in this area that the nature of group/personal relationships often are dictated by the amount of access or success one group/individual has in dealing with the donors. In a way this reflects the very nature of a polarized society, including the latter’s obsession with secrecy.
This is further compounded by the fact that often the ‘foreign’ and ‘international’ donors are
grouped together to create yet another layer of conflict within the society, one that is best depicted in the
categorization of the indigenous (the latter advocating national self-reliance) and the external (the latter
forming an organic part of the imperial or neo-colonial forces). Proponents of the said categorization
remain delusive of the fact that the category of ‘international,’ while counterposed to the national, is
inclusive of both internal and external. Bangladesh membership in UN bodies is a good example in this
context. But whatever may be the intellectual and empirical basis of this position the critic is no less
powerful; it does contribute to the suspicion and mistrust of the international bodies on the part of the
locals, jeopardizing further the developmental initiatives of the former.

What can one hope from a situation like this? What macro-micro linkage can one contemplate
when self-seeking competition and rivalry are so pervasive and entrenched in the society? If this can be
referred to as the structural basis of poverty, what newer structures do we need to alleviate or eradicate
poverty? I am reminded here of Rabindranath Tagore who long before poverty alleviation became a
household word and a full-time vocation for some had said,

> Poverty springs from disunity and wealth from co-operation. From all
> points of view this is the fundamental truth of human civilization.xiv

Can we then initiate structures for cooperation solely with the purpose of alleviating poverty? Or, does it
have to be a part of a broader process? Before venturing on these issues let me quickly reflect on two or
more things that tend to complicate the macro-micro linkages.

In fact, the civil society is further constrained by the fact that it is informed by the Western notion
of the term with its strong emphasis on urbanity.xv An urbanized civil society, however, tends to
reproduce a city-centrism catering mainly to the power of the macro. In the absence of social and civil
activities of a significant nature in the rural areas this cannot be helped. But more interesting is the fact
that even those who are engaged in micro level activities, providing credit to poor rural people, tend to
build their headquarters in cities. Both BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) and
Grameen, even with rural nomenclatures, ended up having massive headquarters in the city and that
again, in the capital city of Dhaka! So long macro-micro linkage subsumes city-rural linkage it must
desist from being city-centric. In this context, ‘who defines the problem – who controls the agenda?’
becomes critical.

Added to this is the factor of governmentality,xvi which too limits creative effort on the part of the
locals, particularly community organizations and the like. Although its basis is longer and socially more
ingrained in South Asia, there is always the tendency of reproducing the power of the government when
the latter is involved in the process. More fundamentally, the non-governmental agencies in the wake of
its interaction with the government and that again, on issues at the micro level, often end up
governmentalizing itself, killing thereby the very purpose of initiating activities at the micro level with disempowered poor people.

Finally, the issue of *gendering* the macro-micro linkages remains critical, although it is true that the bulk of the activities under such linkages for alleviating poverty have mainly concentrated on women. The cultural context is critical here, particularly for sustaining the things arising out of the linkages. Let me give an example.

The market is inclusive of both psycho-geographical and politico-economic categories. It is a good area to judge the newfound capacity of the women as well as the success of the macro-micro linkages. But as Sen once pointed out, “The overall achievements of the market are deeply contingent on political and social arrangements.” xvii In fact, the interactions that take place in the market need not be gender-neutral. On the contrary, in South Asia it is highly gendered, particularly in the sense of it being thoroughly masculinized. This is best captured not by the occidental term ‘market’ but by the oriental term ‘bazaar,’ where women’s access to it and women accessing it remain equally problematic; indeed, to an extent that at times even the empowered women resist going to the market more as a sign of empowerment!xviii

What must be done then to foster and deepen the macro-micro linkages? Several things but let me highlight very briefly four. Firstly, there is a need to democratize the senses. GO listening to NGOs and civil society actors could be a good beginning, but I have something more fundamental than this. National and University curricula have not served us well, save over-glorifying the power of the government and governmental actors. In this respect, a schooled person is already governmentalized and is less in the position of appreciating things related to micro level issues. Muhammad Yunus once lamented that the economics curriculum at the University level does not orient or school a person befitting for micro level issues. A thorough institutionalized reading of the latter could in fact sensitize those engaged in macro policymaking.

Secondly, democratizing developmentality. That there is no one clear path to development is now clear, but then we still preach and practice development in the light of our disciplinary pride and prejudices. In this respect, not only diverse and pluralist understanding and practices of development are to be welcomed but also space needs to be created for advocating and practicing alternative development scenarios. Gandhian economics, Yunusonomics and the like need to be explored further and brought into mainstream discussion.

Thirdly, decentralizing representation. There is a real need to decentralize the centralized parliament simply for demographic if not for any other reason. xix In the case of Bangladesh I am in favour of introducing divisional parliaments, with one federal parliament with lesser powers. But in the context of the linkage, I believe that there a need to rethink the role of formally elected bodies (*Union Parishods*,...
for instance) and those which are informally elected/selected, like village organizations or community organizations. How this can be done is a matter of both politics and creative input.

Finally, degovernmentalizing governmental power. Decentralization has thus far taken place not by reducing but by extending the power of the government. This is best exemplified by the fact that with decentralization the power and machinery of the centralized police got further institutionalized at the local level. And it is this contradictory structure of decentralization and recentralization contributing to the ‘risk of the abuse of power at a decentralized level.’ A critical task here would be to degovernmentalize the police with local bodies recruiting and enforcing the power of policing. Trust, security, including the task of policing the poor out of poverty, for that matter, must be bottom up and not top

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ii Yunusonomics stands for the economics and developmental practices of Muhammad Yunus. The term was coined by the author. See Imtiaz Ahmed, “Governance and the International Development Community: Making Sense of the Bangladesh Experience,” Contemporary South Asia, Oxford (UK), Vol. 8, No. 3 November 1999. See also, Imtiaz Ahmed and Binayak Sen, “Development and the State of Insecurity: The Case of Bangladesh,” in Aditi Chowdhury, ed., Victims of Development in Asia, Volume II (Hongkong: ARENA, 2002) (in press). One may also include Gandhian economics or even Tagore’s contribution to rural development in this order.

iii Understood here in the sense of both government and governmentality. For a closer exposition of the latter, see, Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in Graham Burchell, et.al., eds., The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1991).


v This is to distinguish the power of micro-politics in other more creative settings. Feminist movement, gay rights movement, eco-movement, etc. will definitely fall into the category of the latter.


viii For a closer exposition on this issue, see, Gyan Prakash, Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999). The colonial modernist construction of the hospital did not go unchallenged in India. Mahatma Gandhi once wrote: “Hospitals are institutions for propagating sin.” Cited in Prakash, ibid., p.124.


xii For a closer exposition, see Imtiaz Ahmed, *The Efficacy of the Nation State in South Asia: A Post Nationalist Critique* (Colombo: ICES, 1998).


xvi The ‘mentality’ of relying on the government to reproduce things. For a critical exposition of the concept, see, Foucault, *op.cit.*, 1991. For an interesting description of the relationship between science, governmentality and the state in India, see, Prakash, *op.cit.*


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Assessing Linkages between Micro-Macro Level Issues with reference to SAPAP

1.0 Introduction

South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP) is the UNDP’s response to 1993 Dhaka Declaration of SAARC Summit. The programme was started in Syangja district in Nepal and Kishoregunj Sadar Thana in Bangladesh in 1994; in three districts of Andhra Pradesh (India) and in three divisions of Nuwara-Eliya in Sri Lanka in 1995; in one Atoll in Maldives in 1996, and in six Union Councils of Lachi Tehsil in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan in 1997.

1.1 The objectives of the programme: i) Enhance national capacities for integration of growth and poverty alleviation policies; ii) Demonstrate the feasibility of functioning social mobilization mechanism in each of the participating countries; iii) Enhance national capacities for participatory poverty monitoring.

1.2 Social Mobilization

Social mobilization philosophy and strategy looks at poverty reduction from different perspectives. Firstly, the attack against poverty is an attack against the mind-set of the stakeholders. After all, social mobilization is a process of engaging the local communities to identify and harness their latent power. Through this process the poor people are enabled to dream and perceive possibilities of change, and to reject the ‘culture of contentment’. Secondly, poverty reduction is not a matter of service delivery, nor is poverty a sectoral issue. Poverty reduction is not like a dairy factory distributing milk bottles to its customers. Given the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, it should go beyond the frontiers of economics. Social mobilization brings the poor to the center of the stage. Thirdly, self-reliance and self-development are embedded in social mobilization philosophy. Social mobilization believes that poor people do not require charity, but they need access to resources and a level playing field. The livelihood systems of local communities and their interaction with various institutions under social mobilization model are presented in Fig – 1.

This paper is divided into three sections. Section – I deals with macro-micro linkages for poverty reduction. Section – II examines how social mobilization could be used to influence the other two components of the programme: pro-poor policies and participatory monitoring. Section –III presents some reflections on social mobilization and decentralization.

2.0 Macro-Micro Linkages

- Firstly, how the national policies could affect the implementation of small-scale projects.
- Secondly, how to incorporate the lessons from small-scale projects into national policies.
- Thirdly, the linkages between micro level targeted intervention and macro level policy framework.
- Fourthly, micro-macro linkages of replication or scaling up.
Livelihood Systems and the Institutional Interaction of Local Communities under Social Mobilization: A Schematic Presentation

Source: Adapted from Amartya Sen (1985, 1997, 1999); Bebbington (1999)
2.1 How do the national policies affect the implementation of micro projects

When the micro projects are well managed, they create opportunities for the local people to break the bonds of poverty. If badly managed, they add to impoverishment and deprivation of the poor. The implementation outcomes depend largely on the policy options of the government, awareness of the community members, support from civil society institutions, donors and other development partners.

- **Political will and redistribution policy**: Given the high degree of concentration of poverty in the rural economy and given the inverse relationship between assetlessness and incidence of poverty in South Asia, securing and restoring rights to productive resources are fundamental to poverty reduction. Therefore, within the political feasibility, a clear-cut policy of the government on ensuring secure rights to land, water as well as natural resources for poor is essential. The depth of such redistributive policies is a reflection of government’s pro-poor policies and its ‘political will and commitment’ to eradicate poverty.

- **Management of Agricultural Input Policy**: The full benefits of land redistribution and agrarian reforms would be realized when complementary support services are provided either by the market, which often fails to reach the poor or the government whose services are often appropriated by large farmers. Therefore, a clear-cut policy on delivery of inputs such as irrigation, fertilizer and credit is crucial in raising the productivity of the farming community.

- **Labour-intensive growth policy for employment generation**: Since the landless labourers derive most of their income by using their physical labour power, if government pursues a pro-poor labour-intensive growth policy, then it would be possible for micro projects to convert the labour power into income entitlement by:
  - Providing employment opportunities in public works such as building community assets, rural infrastructure, social forestry, etc.
  - Providing self-employment through asset or income distribution, including micro finance for establishing micro-enterprise activities.
  - Increasing the real wage by raising the productivity of the labour through vocational training, skill upgradation, capacity building, etc.
  - Improving the terms of trade for their products and services by providing access to market, technology, infrastructure, information, market intelligence, buy-back arrangements, etc.

2.2 How to incorporate successful small-scale projects into macro policies

The small-scale projects are usually formulated to solve the problems faced by the locals. Some typical successful projects have participation of the target groups, involvement of NGOs, and the support of line agencies of the government. To illustrate this point, let us take the social mobilization programme implemented in Andhra Pradesh (India). This programme largely focused on the targeted poor women to improve their lot. The field visits and programme evaluation and assessment convinced the officials of the state government to adopt social mobilization approach as the cornerstone of poverty reduction strategy. They have established an autonomous society named ‘Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty’ (SERP) and appointed the National Programme Coordinator of the SAPAP as CEO of SERP. When the World Bank wanted to start the District Poverty Initiative Programme, the State government has shown its willingness and commitment to implement the follow up programme of the World Bank on the SAPAP model.
Evaluation studies, seminars, workshops, study tours, orientation training, etc. are useful to know about such best practices. If the elements of a given project are considered suitable for incorporation, then it could be designed and incorporated into a macro policy work.

2.3 Linkages between Micro projects and macro level policy framework

Though there are a number of successful micro projects, they do not seem to be creating any impact at macro level – both in terms of poverty reduction and also policy making. Therefore, an integration of macroeconomic growth process with poverty alleviation framework offers a promising field for poverty reduction and sustainable development. But the coincidence of high growth rates with high incidence of poverty is South Asia, as shown in Table-1, could mean that the growth was taking place in such areas and sectors where the poor were not reaping the benefits. So when the economic growth bypasses the poor, the poor remain unaffected or worse off. According to UNDP 1998 ‘Overcoming Human Poverty’ report that where the poverty is a mass affliction, a pro-poor macro policy works best rather than individual targeted interventions. Because the mass poverty situation is such that the individual projects simply unable to make any dent on the poverty situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAPAP Countries</th>
<th>GDP growth rate, population growth rate, and poverty levels in South Asia.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Gross Domestic Product</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average Annual Growth (%) 1990-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>n.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>4.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Years in parenthesis refer to Survey year.

Providing an enabling environment of economic growth is fundamental to widen the income earning opportunities of the poor. If economic growth were considered as one of the important levers of poverty reduction strategy, then it follows that many policies, which are not targeted at the poor, would become important policy interventions because they raise the growth rate of the economy. Mobilization of saving, creating a congenial business climate for investment, promotion of exports, infrastructure building, modernization of industries, application of information and communication technology, etc are customarily not considered as poverty reduction strategies because they are not targeted at the poor. But when a ‘pro-poor’ policy framework drives the growth process, it will increase employment and income-earning opportunities for unskilled and landless labour. When the income of people increases, it increases the demand for additional labour from which the unskilled and landless labour can benefit. Equally important component of a pro-poor policy is to ensure that there is no high inflation because it hurts the poor more than the overall growth of the economy. Helen Keller Institute’s research study in Bangladesh on nutrition concluded that the low price of rice enhanced not only the food availability but also increased the nutrition due to income and substitution effects. It means if inflation is under control, then poor tend to gain more from the market.
Another macro issue is the impact of globalization on rural poor. The recent financial crisis in Southeast Asian countries became a coiled spring of calamities: from financial crisis to economic crisis turned social crisis and ultimately political crisis in countries such as Indonesia. The research carried out by IFAD (1999) revealed that its impact on rural poor was transmitted in terms of:

- Falling employment in urban areas, forcing people to go back to rural areas. It was a sort of reverse migration.
- Weakening the flow of remittances to rural areas.
- Soaring prices of all essential goods and services.
- Drying up the credit flows, including micro credit for the poor people.
- Cutting down the public spending for vital and basic social services.

Similarly, as the DFID’s (2000) White Paper on Globalization points out, the influence of the transnational corporations is growing enormously. They now ‘account for a third of world output and two-thirds of world trade. Around a third of world trade takes place within the transnationals, between subsidiaries of the same corporation based in different countries’. As the same report reminds us that most ‘domestic’ policies such as taxation have international aspects, and most ‘international’ policies such as trade have domestic dimensions. If the countries do not have proper macro policy framework, the gains made through micro interventions using social mobilization could be weakened or even lost.

2.4 Micro-macro linkages of replication or scaling up

Scaling up of any small-scale project is widening the options for people. However, scaling up is not duplication; it involves adaptation and learning. Scaling up can be horizontal and vertical. In horizontal scaling up, we cover more geographic area, more groups and more communities. Vertical scaling up is moving higher up the ladder. It involves institutions and other stakeholders. This process of expansion gives us an opportunity to forge micro-macro linkages from the level of grassroots organizations to supporting agencies, policy makers, donors and other development partners.

Scaling up also entails huge risks. Normally, scaling up is associated with ‘political interference’ and ‘power’ dimensions attached to it. Projects bring change, and change disturbs the status quo. And this generates protagonists and antagonists. Those groups that profit from the existing system would oppose such changes. Some times even the intended beneficiaries may also oppose changes either due to ignorance or due to their perceived potential risk and vulnerability that the new changes might bring about. Another risk is the quality of implementation. On a limited scale, things appear to be under control. When it is scaled up, suddenly things tend to go out of hand. These issues need to be steered carefully so that scaling up would not produce frustrating results. One alternative to this sort of huge scaling up is to implement the successful elements of micro projects through the local network organizations. This would be feasible where there are a large number of good NGOs committed to rural development and poverty alleviation.

Section – II

3.0 How Can Social Mobilization be used to have greater influence on Poverty Reduction Policy at all levels?

SAPAP activities were focused on a number of areas aimed at impacting policy processes and outcomes in individual countries and on a regional basis. Conducted in partnership with government, NGOs, these activities have been influential in increasing awareness of policy-makers about the importance of social mobilization for poverty reduction and have led to specific policy changes, replication in different countries, and increased donor interest.
i) **Identification of key policy Lessons Emerging from Social Mobilization:** Based on the country level studies, SAPAP has engaged Professor Rehman Sobhan of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka, to prepare a regional report. His report has captured major nuances of policy issues emerging from social mobilization.

ii) **Improved understanding of social mobilization issues in poverty reduction at the highest levels of government:** In May 2001, SAPAP organized a Ministerial Meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal involving Prime Minister from Nepal, and other Ministers from Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The meeting had focused on the key issues of macro-micro linkages in pro-poor governance and policy actions. It also highlighted the urgency in bringing about the policy level changes. There was a common understanding that the social mobilization led to empowerment of people, and helped unleash their latent potential.

iii) **Cross-fertilization of experience and replication:** SAPAP placed a heavy emphasis on linking decision-makers in different countries for information sharing and understanding principles and practices of social mobilization. Study tours-cum-workshops was organized for senior government officials such as joint secretaries and deputy secretaries, national programme coordinators. The exchange of cross-country experiences has enabled the participating countries to learn from the best practices of the region and introduce suitable modifications to their programs to serve the interests of the poor. For example, Bhutan’s exposure visit to India convinced them about the feasibility of launching the social mobilization programme in their country.

iv) **Improved capacity for policy formulation in several countries at State/District Level:**

   The Senior Advisor on Social Mobilization, SAPAP visited Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bhutan and provided the following advisory services:
   
   - Advisory support to national action to mainstream social mobilization into poverty reduction strategies and programmes (Nepal and Pakistan); establishment of **poverty alleviation fund** (Pakistan and Nepal); coping with second generation issues of social mobilization, such as linking the organized groups to higher level of commercial activities, technology and markets, institutional linkages with bankers and tackling capital stagnation due to limitation of portfolio of opportunities, etc. (Sri Lanka and India).
   - Interaction with government officials at State level and district level for increased allocation of resources to pro-poor initiatives (India and Sri Lanka). He has also engaged in consultations with district officials in Pakistan to help identify areas for increased resource allocation to strengthen micro-credit institutions.
   - Two **Social Mobilization Experimentation and Learning Centres (SMELC)** have been set up in Nepal and Andhra Pradesh (India). These aim to help bridge micro-macro linkages and facilitate incorporation of lessons learned from SAPAP activities into national strategies for poverty reduction. This opens up a window of opportunity to link up micro level pilot experiences to the higher echelons of decision-making bodies at macro level through action research, training and documentation and strategic communication. In addition, a **South Asia Social Mobilization Network (SASMoN)** has been set up involving six countries. Besides acting as policy advocacy forum, this regional network would help promote communication systems through emailing, video conferencing, etc. This will serve, as is a networking forum for pro-poor policy dialogue and strategic planning, policy research, advocacy, documentation and dissemination of best practices in SAARC countries. Through these activities it is aimed to influence the policy makers and senior bureaucrats so that the perceptions and priorities of the government would become pro-poor and more progressive.
Thus, the influence of SAPAP in changing the policy orientation, through its micro-intervention, is very significant. Going by the replication and expansion of SAPAP model in India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, it is clear that SAPAP has exerted a reasonable degree of influence on the policy framework in replication, expansion and sustainability of the model for poverty alleviation.

### 3.1 Improved capacity for Poverty Monitoring

In line with SAPAP objectives, it wants to assist governments to monitor progress in meeting their commitment to reduce human poverty. Towards this end, SAPAP has promoted a two-pronged approach in achieving this. One is the Poverty Monitor Initiative and the other is introduction of Poverty Monitoring System (PMS) at Project level.

- **Poverty Monitor Initiative**: Under this initiative, the country reports from India and Pakistan have been published. With regard to the regional report of South Asia Poverty Monitor, the draft report is already prepared.

- **Poverty Monitoring System**: It has been implemented successfully in Syangja district of Nepal. The successor programmes such as Participatory District Development Programme (PDDP), Local Governance Programme (LGP), have picked up this model.

- Improvement of draft guidelines for the participatory poverty monitoring system.

- Conduct of a study on poverty audits in Rajasthan, India – a system of open review of public expenditure, pioneered by the Mazdoor Kisan Sanghatan Samithi (MKSS).

- Conduct of ultra poor study in Nepal

### 4.0 Social Mobilization and Decentralization: Some Reflections

Social mobilization would, among others, tend to empower organized groups to exercise their ‘voice’ and ‘exit’ options. The power of social mobilization should culminate in the empowerment of poor. But there are structural, legal, social, economic and other barriers to such a transformation. Decentralization could facilitate the process of institutionalizing such a change by transferring power to the people. There are some innovative examples of decentralization. For instance, the City Hall of Porto Alegre in Brazil created participatory decision-making structure to prepare the Municipal Council’s Budget. This process results in the investment plan for that Municipal Council. There is something to learn from this participatory decentralized budget preparation. Similarly, other innovative cases of accountability are the MKSS’ right to livelihood struggle, which has led to right to information in Rajasthan, and the Public Affairs Centre in Bangalore, which conducts research to produce ‘report cards’ on local governments performance in the delivery of services. In Figure-2, we present a model of social mobilization and decentralization: a framework for good governance.

### 4.1 Explanation of the Model

In our model, at a broader level, we have four actors. The community, the government, the civil society organizations and the political parties/organizations. Each would promote its own goals and further its own interests. The interests may be in harmony with others or may in conflict.

**Community**: It has local knowledge and indigenous skills. Its involvement and participation in any programme are central to ownership and sustainability.
**Government**: It provides material, financial and policy support. Provides information, education, training and capacity building and an enabling environment.

**Civil Society Organizations**: CSO, which include non-governmental organizations, as a third sector, could act as a countervailing response to the failures of the market and the state. The CSOs are known for working with poor through social mobilization, advocacy for participatory approaches, networking, and challenging the gender inequities.

**Political Parties/Organizations**: In all democratic polities, the political parties play a central role in mobilizing electoral support to their respective parties to form their own government. At all levels, including village level, the influence of political parties cannot be underestimated.

Given this broad framework, we must look at the village level institutions. In a given village, there may be a number of *grassroots organizations* such as community-based organizations, self-help groups, peoples’ organizations, and voluntary social, cultural, religious groups. They are flexible and autonomous. Government has not established them. They demand transparency and accountability of the government and administration.

**Local self-government**: Whether Gram Panchayats (India), Union Parishads (Bangladesh), all the south Asian countries have their own elected local self-government. Being closer to the community, the local self-government represents accountability and legitimacy.

**Project sponsored committees**: Whenever there is a new project, whether it is in the field of education, health, water, sanitation, HIV/AIDS, etc. there will be respective committee. The rationale behind such committees is to enforce and ensure accountability and transparency of the project managers and their actions to the clientele groups.

**Fight against corruption**: All the actors publicly pronounce that they want to root out corruption.

### 4.2 Cooperation or conflict

Though there is a need for greater collaboration among these actors, there is a ‘tense balance’, which is not uncommon in most of the circumstances. Sometimes the elected representatives feel that the community organizations or project committees are going beyond their brief, and therefore, there is no need to collaborate with them. They do not furnish any information on public works, not to speak of inviting the NGOs or CBO to their general body meetings. The same thing can be said about the NGOs/CBOs. Lack of communication and resultant mistrust between NGO/CBOs and the village elected bodies is quite common. The presence of project-sponsored committees adds another dimension to the ‘tense balance’. These committees are ‘rich’ because of project money. They also get support from the various line departments of the government and consultants and experts from donor agencies. This gives them a sense of superiority complex within the given social set up. Whenever there is an actual or alleged misuse of funds by any of these bodies or any other contentious item, it gives sufficient ignition to spark off a conflict.

It is in this context that we should tackle the allegation that social mobilization undermines the elected leadership. By organizing the poor into self-help groups or village organizations, social mobilization strategy really creates participatory bodies. The participatory bodies are meant not to substitute the representative bodies (elected leaders) but to supplement local level efforts to improve quality of life. The presence of participatory bodies could inform the representative bodies on the most relevant issues affecting the local communities. It is also interesting to note that some of the line departments in India and Nepal felt that it was so easy for them to deal with the organized groups formed under social mobilization while delivering their services.
4.3 The Way Forward

- **Capacity building and empowerment of the Poor:** Poverty reduction should be seen essentially as an empowering process through capacity building. It is very important because a constraint in one area not only restricts the opportunities for improvement in the other areas, but also reinforces the constraints in other areas. It makes much harder for the poor to seek improvements either through market or through political pressures.

- **Sensitization of bureaucracy:** It is very important because in all the South Asian countries, the government plays a lead role in poverty reduction. It means that the bureaucrats would, to a greater extent, design and implement the poverty reduction programmes. Hence, the urgency to facilitate changing the ‘mind-set’ through training, exposure visit, study tours, workshops, seminars and sensitization campaigns.

- **GO-NGO Collaboration in Social Mobilization:** Governments should do away with rules and regulations that restrict the operation of NGOs and CSOs. Government bureaucrats should study, learn and replicate the participatory initiatives that provide space to the poor. The government and the NGOs could together organize ‘reality check’ workshops where the poor or their organizations could participate. NGOs could also conduct ‘village immersion’ programmes for the policy makers. Yet another way of collaboration is to arrange to have face-to-face contact with the poor and policy makers.

- **Coalition building of the poor:** The key determinant of the distribution of income and welfare in a society is government. Typically the poor are not represented in the government structures adequately. That is why their voice is hardly heard in the corridors of power. This is unlikely to change unless there is a ‘power shift’ in favour of poor people to claim, assert and defend their rights and access to resources and opportunities in order to enhance their livelihood capabilities. Therefore, it is necessary to promote, organize and build institutions of the poor. This means enlarged space for the poor people in terms of participation and decision-making through the newly created institutions. It would also entail reforming the old ones in order to transform the existing ‘dominant-dependent’ relations based on equality and partnership. There is a need for identification of those persons, institutions, NGOs, CBOs, research institutions and other civil society organizations that are working with and for the poor. The organizations of the poor should be encouraged to network with them and build coalition of the poor to fight against poverty.

4.4 The Potential Risks of Decentralization

In the absence of any reform for the re-distribution of power, the danger of local elite capturing the levers of power to retain their hegemony puts the issue of equity in jeopardy. The ‘unequal exchange’ perpetuates the rule of ‘dominant coalition’ even under the so-called democratic framework.

5.0 Conclusion

The paper has identified four strands of micro-macro linkages. i) Linkage between the impact of national policies on the implementation of micro projects. ii) Integration of lessons learned from the micro projects into macro policies. iii) Linkages between micro projects and macro policy framework. iv) Micro-macro linkages of replication or scaling up. It has also presented how the social mobilization work is influencing the macro policy and poverty monitoring components of the programme. Finally, reflections on social mobilization and decentralization model throws up some pointers to poverty reduction strategy.
Fig. 2. Social Mobilization and Decentralization: A Framework for Good Governance

- Fight Against Corruption
- Community
- Voice and Exit
- Legitimacy
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Participation
- Project Committees
- Civil Society Organizations
- Government
- SHGs CBOs NGOs
- Political Parties Organizations
- Local Self Government
Introduction
Today, development agencies are actively rethinking the effectiveness of development assistance. There have been many small or local successes but the goal of sustainable scaling-up has been more illusive. What are the linkages that can be changed by policy-makers that will help scale up micro-successes to have an impact at the macro level? And what is the role of evaluation in promoting a scaling-up strategy? To begin by establishing some concepts and terminology: the macro-micro linkage in development assistance is analysed as a relationship between those offering assistance in some form, the helper or helpers, and those receiving the assistance, the doer or doers. The helpers could be individuals, NGOs, or official bilateral or multilateral development agencies, and the doers could be individuals, organizations or various levels of government in the developing countries. The relationship is the helper-doer relationship [see Ellerman 2002a].

The Failure of the Social Engineering Approach
Social engineering approaches to development assistance have not been successful. If one sees the doers as trying to find their way through a maze, then the social-engineering helpers see themselves as helicoptering over the maze giving out directions (disseminating knowledge) as well as incentives (providing motivation) to go in one direction rather than another.

* The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this paper are entirely those of the author and should not be attributed in any manner to the World Bank, to its affiliated organizations, or to the members of its Board of Directors or the countries they represent.

1 Doing includes thinking; “doer” is not juxtaposed to “thinker.” Instead, the "doers of development" (Wolfensohn, 1999) actively undertaking tasks are juxtaposed to the passive recipients of aid, teaching or technical assistance.
In the end, this strategy of assistance fails because both the motivation and the knowledge are external to the doers. If actions are undertaken by the doers simply to receive aid (external incentives), then the actions will be poorly implemented (e.g., gamed to just get the aid) and most likely will not be sustained when the incentives are removed. And "knowledge" acquired from outside experts is likely to be ill-adapted to local conditions, loaded with unshared value assumptions, devoid of the tacit skills, and, above all, only a borrowed opinion rather than the owned knowledge which could be the basis for determined policies.

These problems in the social engineering approach are endemic. Sustainable transformation towards developmental ends needs to be based on motives that come out of the doers' own internal values and knowledge needs to be grounded on the doers' own learning experiences.

**Autonomous Development**

Development, at best, should be autonomous development. But then we immediately reach the contradiction in the engineering approach: autonomous action cannot be externally motivated and one's own cognitive judgment cannot be simply based on external authority. Indeed, there is a fundamental conundrum in the notion of assistance to autonomous development, i.e., in the notion of "helping people help themselves." If the helpers are having an important impact on the doers, then how can the doers be "helping themselves"? And if the doers are genuinely helping themselves, then what is the role of external helpers? To really improve development effectiveness, we must wrestle continuously with this basic conundrum.

Our task here is to try to rethink the macro-micro linkages that might catalyze community development and social mobilisation on a broad scale. Although my discussion will be on an abstract level, the South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP) is a case at hand.

**The Broader Context of Evaluation**

One place to start rethinking is to reconsider the whole purpose of evaluation in development assistance. Evaluation is usually thought of as part of a rational-technical approach that can be considered as a cycle: make a plan to reach one's goals, implement the plan, evaluate the outcomes and learn the lessons, and then revise the plan and repeat the plan-do-evaluate-learn cycle. But there are a number of reasons why it is difficult to apply this rational-technical model to development. Donald Schön [1971, 1983] summarizes the reasons as novel complexity, genuine uncertainty, conflict of values, unique circumstances, and structural instabilities that take us "beyond the stable state." How can we rethink evaluation in this context?

The key to this rethinking is to focus on the overall purpose of the cycle which is learning. In view of the low effectiveness of many development strategies, there is always the call for "better evaluation" when in fact the problems tend to lie not so much in the evaluations but in the low capability for organizational learning in the helping agencies and the doer organizations. The problems of objective and timely evaluations of subtle social change programs are swamped by the problems in the agencies and organizations "taking on board" the lessons that can be readily discerned. Schön calls this "dynamic conservatism" [1971, 48], the ability of organizations to continually adjust so as not to really change. Thus the problems of development evaluation should be reconceived more broadly in the context of the problems of organisational and social learning.

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3 See for instance Senge [1990].
Organisational and Social Learning
The problems of learning must be approached from both the sides of the helpers (e.g., the multilateral and bilateral development agencies) and the doers (e.g., various levels of government, the organizations of civil society, and business firms in the developing countries). While it is an important means for the development agencies to become learning organizations, the real goal is for the developing countries to learn how to learn, i.e., to become learning societies (e.g., the East Asian "tigers"). Perhaps we should start with that goal and then "back out" a supporting or catalyzing role for the development agencies.

The problems in the social engineering approach fostering social change are reproduced in the relationship between the central government (the center or central at the macro level) and the other levels of government, civil society, and the private sector (the periphery at the micro level). The center proposes social policies and provides funds to implement those policies. The periphery disposes and dissimulates. Schön describes the strategies used by the periphery in the game:

Propose what central wants to hear, but do what you want to do.
Develop a rhetoric compatible with central policy.
Play funding agencies off against each other.
Seek minimum federal control over the use of money.
Take advantage of a surplus of information about what is going on at the local level, and the high cost of finding out for central.
Bring pressure to bear on the funding agency, exploiting political insecurities.
Attempt to gain central's commitment over time, so that it develops a heavy investment in the local venture and finds it difficult to back out. [Schön 1971, 154]

In this hub and spokes model [e.g., Rogers 1983] of implementing social policy, the central hub does the evaluations of its implemented policies in the periphery and then tries to draw lessons and revise plans.

[The standard approach] treats government as center, the rest of society as periphery. Central has responsibility for the formation of new policy and for its imposition on localities at the periphery. Central attempts to 'train' agencies at the periphery. In spite of the language of experimentation, government-initiated learning tends to be confined to efforts to induce localities to behave in conformity with central policy. Localities learn to beat the system. Government tends to bury failure or learn from it only in the sense of veering away from it. Evaluation, then, tends to be limited to the role of establishing and monitoring the extent of peripheral conformity with central policy. [Schön 1971, 177]

What is the alternative? The alternative is a decentralized social learning model. Experimentation is encouraged in the periphery. The center tries to recognize successes and then to foster horizontal learning within the periphery. Instead of using resources to "buy" implementation of centrally determined policies, the center uses resources to help those who are trying to solve a certain problem to learn from others who seem to have attacked the problem successfully.

Government cannot play the role of 'experimenter for the nation', seeking first to identify the correct solution, then to train society at large in its adaptation. The opportunity for learning is primarily in discovered systems at the periphery, not in the nexus of official policies at the center. Central's role is to detect significant shifts at the periphery, to pay explicit attention to the emergence of ideas in good currency, and to derive themes of policy by induction. The movement of learning is as much from periphery to periphery, or periphery to center, as from center to periphery. Central comes to function as facilitator of society's learning, rather than as society's trainer. [Schön 1971, 177-8]
Perhaps the best example of centrally sponsored system of decentralized innovation and diffusion in a developing country is in China over the last quarter of a century. Contrary to the classical model of reforms being established in the center and disseminated to the periphery, the Chinese recognized local reform models which could be in a region, county, commune, or even brigade. The local model could be in any sector or area such as administration, health, education, or industry, and could be visited by groups from all over China who want to make a similar reform in their locality.

The diffusion of innovations in China is distinctive in that it is (1) more horizontal in nature, (2) less dependent upon scientific and technical expertise, and (3) more flexible in allowing re-invention of the innovation as it is implemented by local units. These aspects of decentralized diffusion are facilitated by China's use of such diffusion strategies as models and on-the-spot conferences. The "learning from others" approach to decentralized diffusion in China was adopted officially as a national policy in the national constitution in 1978. [Rogers 1983, 340-1]

Thus China learned how to learn from its own successes and how to foster scaling up of those successes across China.

One role of the external helping agency is the capacity-building job of helping a country set up this type of decentralized social learning process. There is often resistance at both the agency and country levels. Indeed, there is a self-reinforcing lock-in between developing countries that want “The Answer” and development agencies that have “The Answer.”

(Policy-makers) will be supplied with a great many ideas, suggestions, plans, and ideologies, frequently of foreign origin or based on foreign experience…. Genuine learning about the problem will sometimes be prevented not only by the local policymakers’ eagerness to jump to a ready-made solution, but also by the insistent offer of help and advice on the part of powerful outsiders…. (S)uch practices (will) tend to cut short that “long confrontation between man and a situation” (Camus) so fruitful for the achievement of genuine progress in problem-solving. [Hirschman, 1973, 239-40].

**Knowledge Brokering Strategies**

An external helping agency can not only foster horizontal learning within a country, it can foster cross-learning between countries. This horizontal learning can take the form of visits, secondments, twinning arrangements, or consulting contracts between an organization in one country undertaking a difficult reform and a group in another country which has carried out the reform with some success. The countries should not be too far apart in culture or economic level so that the experience and lessons will be comparable. This is "peer to peer" or "South to South" technical cooperation.

But, it will be asked, what about the expertise of the helping agencies? The helping agency can, it is argued, "scan the world" and learn what works and what doesn't. When they feel confident that they "have the answer," shouldn't they "disseminate" the answer to the doers, and perhaps make its adoption a condition for receiving aid? This is perhaps a subtle point of pedagogy but the answer is "No!"; instead the helping agency should by brokering doer-doer relationships or convening meetings of doers make it possible for the relevant doers to learn "on their own" what works and what doesn't. Otherwise the "knowledge" will only an opinion borrowed from or imposed by experts and will not be the sort of learned lessons that can be the foundation for implementing difficult policies.

In Western thought, this approach to pedagogy dates back to Socrates. Instead of claiming that the “answers” should be disseminated from expert-helper to counterpart-doer, Socrates displayed the humility
of knowing that he did not know. He did not put learners in a passive role to receive wisdom, but helped
them to try actively to answer questions or resolve problems.

That real education aims at imparting knowledge rather than opinion, that knowledge
cannot be handed over ready-made but has to be appropriated by the knower, that
appropriation is possible only through one's own search, and that to make him aware of
his ignorance is to start a man on the search for knowledge—these are the considerations
that govern and determine the Socratic method of teaching [Versényi, 1963, 117].

Indeed, the key to this more indirect approach is for the helper as midwife to facilitate the doer taking the
active role. In a slogan: “Stop the teaching so that the learning can begin!” As George Bernard Shaw put
it: “If you teach a man anything he will never learn it” [1962, 174]. Or as management theorist Douglas
McGregor said: “Fundamentally the staff man…must create a situation in which members of management
can learn, rather than one in which they are taught…” [1966 161]. José Ortega y Gasset suggested: “He
who wants to teach a truth should place us in the position to discover it ourselves” [1961, 67]. Or as
Myles Horton, founder of the Highlander Folk School, maintained: “You don't just tell people something;
you find a way to use situations to educate them so that they can learn to figure things out themselves”
[1998,122].

Thus we arrive at the strategy of knowledge brokering rather than "knowledge dissemination."

Two Strategies for Learning and Scaling Up Knowledge

In addition to the "Socratic" reasons for not using a dissemination model, there are large problems in the
assumption that the helping agency has "learned" the answer in order to disseminate it. One problem is
the difference between local and general knowledge. If the helping agency tries to "broadcast" the answer
rather than help the doers learn it on their own, then the broadcast answer will not be adapted to the local
conditions of the doers. The "narrow-cast" of peer-to-peer learning may be more suitable for local
adaptation. Secondly there is the distinction between codified explicit knowledge (which the agency
could in theory retransmit) and the tacit know-how that needs to transmitted by secondments, twinning,
and consulting from doers to doers. Thirdly there is the Rashomon effect where different people or
groups may draw rather different lessons from the same story of success or failure [see Schön 1971, 210].
Consider, for example, the different "readings" of the East Asian success stories or the tragedy of the
Russian reforms. Some mis-readings are very much theory-based on the part of helpers—helpers who
were so "scientific" that they would rather doers die by the right cure than recognize doers being saved by
the wrong one. And last but hardly least, there may be strong ideological pressures on the helping
agencies to broadcast certain messages and not others regardless of the messages emerging from the success/failure stories.

For all these reasons, it seems best to use the knowledge brokering strategy of scaling up knowledge of what works and what doesn't through supporting or facilitating peer to peer learning as well as own learning. A variation on the brokering strategy is for the helping agency to use its convening power to facilitate meetings of doers with similar problems and experiences. Then some doers may have found solutions to certain problems while other doers will have resolved other problems. Thus the horizontal learning is two-way between the doers. Thus "convening" is a more complex form of brokering doer-to-doer learning.

There is a necessary caveat. This does not mean that the alternative approach will never work. There will always be a few cases where some externally supplied bit of knowledge will make "all the difference" to the doers even though the knowledge was not the result of any real learning process and thus was not "owned" by the doers. Those inclined to social engineering will flood their minds with such cases as if they were the typical case rather than a limited special case.

To summarize our results so far, the problem is that of the macro-micro linkages to scale up successes. We began by looking at the problem from the viewpoint of knowledge. In a stable situation appropriate for rational planning, we could implement a project or program, evaluate the outcomes, and then use the knowledge gleaned from the evaluation to redesign and improve it. But in the context of the complexities and instabilities of development, it seems better have many small experiments, use evaluation to see what works, and then the helping agency at the "macro" level can broker the doer-doer relationships at the "micro" level to scale up the successes.

**Scaling Up Motivation**

All human action has both a cognitive side and a motivational side. So far I have focused on scaling up the cognitive side of development successes—the knowledge of what works and what doesn't. But there must also be a motivational side to scaling up. Returning to the maze analogy, the social engineer helicoptering over the maze not only tried to disseminate the knowledge of how to get out of the maze but also tried to provide the motivation to turn one way rather than another. On the knowledge side, I argued against the vertical dissemination of answers in favor of brokering horizontal learning between doers—some doers in search of answers and other doers with relatively successful experience.

I will make the analogous argument on the motivational side. The best macro-micro linkage between the helping agency at the macro level and the doers at the micro level is not for the agency to try to "vertically" supply extrinsic or exogenous motivation for the doers, e.g., carrots and sticks contained in loan or aid conditionalities. Helpers need to find where positive change is afoot on its own perhaps only on a small scale. And embedded in any society are linkages and pressures that could be thought of as the endogenous transmitters of motives for action. The best role for the helping agency is to try to catalyze those endogenous linkages that will amplify and spread any discovered developmental successes.

The idea is to foster transformation not by imposing motivations from the outside but by catalyzing the motivational mechanisms already endogenous in a society.

**Revisiting Hirschman**

None of this is particularly new. It is a rendition of Albert Hirschman's notion of "unbalanced growth" [1961] which he juxtaposed to the social engineering vision of integrated big-push "balanced growth"
programs. The helper starts by searching for the successes, perhaps hidden successes, which can then spawn more transformation.

I began to look for elements and processes...that did work, perhaps in roundabout and unappreciated fashion. [T]his search for possible hidden rationalities was to give an underlying unity to my work. ...[T]he hidden rationalities I was after were precisely and principally processes of growth and change already under way in the societies I studied, processes that were often unnoticed by the actors immediately involved, as well as by foreign experts and advisors." [Hirschman, 1984, 91-3]

Hirschman at one point refers to the principle of unbalanced growth as "the idea of maximizing induced decisionmaking" [1994, 278]. The problem-solving pressures induced by "change already under way" will call forth otherwise unused resources and enlist otherwise untapped energies. As reform efforts move from one bottleneck and crisis to another (in comparison with the smooth planned allocation of resources in a project), then "resources and abilities that are hidden, scattered, or badly utilized" [1961, 5] will be mobilized. Reform programs need to awaken and enlist local energies and knowledge for trial-and-error problem solving. But each problem solved brings to the foreground other problems and opportunities (forward and backward linkages). Change unfolds because "one thing leads to another"—not because a given rational plan is being implemented step by step.

As these social processes develop largely on the basis of their own released energies, new demands will be made on the center or government to reform institutions, to provide infrastructure, and to clear away impediments, and that in turn will spur further progress on the ground.

There are many well-known public or semipublic goods of this sort, from power, transportation, and irrigation to education and public health. Often designated as "infrastructure," as though they were preconditions for the more directly productive activities, these goods have more usually been provided in response to urgent demands emanating from such activities and from their need for consolidation, greater profitability, and further expansion. [Hirschman 1981, 80-1]

These induced demands for reforms are quite different from the externally imposed conditionalities that stipulate certain reforms. In psychological terms, the domestic induced demands for reforms supplies the government with a more "intrinsic" motivation for reform in contrast to the "tough performance-based" carrots and sticks imposed by external development agencies and donors. Thus the external helping agency, instead of trying to buy reforms with conditional aid, should find where virtue is afoot on its own in the small and use resources to catalyze and grow that virtue, using the linkages to induce larger demands for reforms on the government.

There is again a necessary caveat. This does not mean that the alternative approach will never work. There may always be the cases where the helper can supplied external motivation to start things off (where "virtue" can be planted instead of being found) and then the project "takes off" and scales up on its own. All helping agencies "dream" of such propitious interventions but unfortunately they are rare special cases.

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5 Hirschman quotes approvingly a consulting engineer who suggests a road surface that would better elicit pressure for maintenance on the public works authorities. "We assumed that, with the increasing truck and bus industry in Columbia, local pressure would be applied to the Ministry of Public Works to repair the deep holes which will develop in cheap bituminous pavements if maintenance and retreatment is delayed, and that such pressure would be greater than if a gravel and stone road is allow to deteriorate." [1961, 143] This strategy might be compared in effectiveness to a "conditionality" toward the same end.
Two Strategies for Motivating Scaling Up

The Common Theme: Autonomy-Respecting Macro-Micro Linkages
Now we can begin to draw out the common theme in the treatments of knowledge-based and aid-based connections between the macro and micro level. In the knowledge case, the juxtaposition between the two strategies is based on whether the knowledge comes to the doers from the expert-helpers or arises out of the doers' own learning processes including interactions with other similar doers and which is facilitated by Socratic-helpers. In the second case, where the doers do not have the relevant knowledge, then the Socratic-helper would encourage the doers to search, experiment, and study other doers (and would refrain from disseminating what the helper took to be the answers). Once working answers were found by some doers, the helper would promote peer-to-peer learning to spread, to readapt, and to scale up the knowledge to other doers. The knowledge thus arises out the doers' own learning processes (experimentation, selection, and cross-learning) so it is owned knowledge.

In contrast, the engineering-oriented helping agency has answers from whatever source and transmits or disseminates them to the doers based on its "authority" and one-sided arguments delivered in public-relations-style reform campaigns. Since the helping agency has, in the fullness of its knowledge and expertise, already decided on the answers, there is no need to "overload" the doers with the arguments for the alternatives. Thus the doers are not confused and are saved the "trouble" of going through "that long confrontation between man and a situation' (Camus) so fruitful for the achievement of genuine progress in problem-solving." The knowledge, however, is then only the borrowed opinion of experts, may be ill-adapted to the doers' circumstances, would be devoid of the tacit know-how components of knowledge, and may be heavily laden with theory or ideology or both.

The assistance of the helping agency in the first case does not respect the cognitive autonomy of the doers; the doers are being "fed" knowledge by the helpers. In the second case, the Socratic-helper provides assistance in a way that is enabling rather than controlling—that respects rather than overrides the cognitive autonomy of the doers.

The same themes play out regarding motivation. In the engineering model, where the helper is "controlling," the helper provides the motivation externally in the form of conditions on loans or aid. Since the motivation of the doers is, by assumption, to get the aid rather than to undertake the reform (as an end in itself), the situation is ripe for all sorts of games as is clear to anyone who has observed the "aid business" during the last 50 years. Moreover, since the reform-like behavior is motivated by the aid, even that behavior is likely to stop when the aid stops.
The alternative to the helper supplying motivation is where the helper finds virtue afoot on its own. "In these situations, the donor would set himself the task of rewarding virtue (or rather, what he considers as such) where virtue appears of its own accord." [Hirschman 1971, 204] The helper would try to catalyze linkages, maximize demonstration effects, and in others ways to amplify the found small beginnings of positive change. Since the initial efforts and the transmitting linkages are endogenous to the system, these reforms might be catalyzed and strengthen by the helper but are not dependent on the helpers for the continuance of the reforms. Moreover, the reforms are more likely to be genuine rather than "make-believe" due to the internal motivation. Since the helpers are trying to strengthen or amplify the doers' actions taken on the basis of own motivation rather than override those incentives, the helpers are providing autonomy-respecting assistance.

I have argued that autonomy-respecting assistance both in the cognitive and volitional dimensions is the sort of macro-micro linkage that will best support not only genuine reforms but the scaling up of those reforms.
Annex: Volitional and Cognitive Aspects of Five Helper-Doer Themes
Elsewhere I have developed five themes that describe an autonomy-respecting helper-doer relationship [see Ellerman 2002a, b]:

- "First Do": Helper should start from where the doers are (not from a *tabula rasa* or from where the helper is);
- "Second Do": Helper should see the world through the doer's eyes;
- "First Don't": Helper should not impose will upon the doer;
- "Second Don't": Helper should not made doer object of benevolent charity; and
- "Third Do": Overall, respect the autonomy of the doer.

The volitional and cognitive sides of the five themes are summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Theme in Helper-Doer Relation</th>
<th>Volitional Side</th>
<th>Cognitive Side</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Do: Helper starting from doer's position</td>
<td>Help in actions that start from the doer's present situation in the world.</td>
<td>Help that starts with the learner's present knowledge, not from a <em>tabula rasa</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Do: Helper seeing through doer's eyes</td>
<td>Help with actions guided by doer's own perceptions of the present situation.</td>
<td>Help with learning that starts with how the learner sees the world, e.g., helper &quot;giving reason&quot; to learner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Don't: Distortionary assistance</td>
<td>Conditional aid to induce a certain action by doer.</td>
<td>Giving biased information and one-sided arguments to induce a certain belief by learner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Don't (restated positively): Non-Distortionary Enabling Assistance</td>
<td>Giving lump-sum aid to enable own-motivated doer action.</td>
<td>Giving unbiased information, both sides of arguments (e.g., through Socratic dialogue), and neutral knowledge tools to learner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Don't: Giving results to doer as a gift.</td>
<td>Doing action for the &quot;doer&quot; so results are a gift.</td>
<td>Giving the answers to the &quot;learner&quot; so beliefs are at best borrowed opinions, not knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Do: Autonomous activity of doers.</td>
<td>Own-motivated action resulting in owned product of one's autonomous action.</td>
<td>Self-directed learning resulting in owned knowledge (able to give reasons, arguments, and evidence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Do (restated negatively): Externally determined actions/beliefs</td>
<td>Making choices according to externally supplied incentives—like a marionette.</td>
<td>Adopting externally supplied &quot;opinions&quot; on the basis on conformity to authority or fashion.</td>
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Bibliography