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Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: Handbook for Training Field Workers

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PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

HANDBOOK FOR TRAINING FIELD WORKERS

DEVELOPMENT AS IF PEOPLE MATTER....
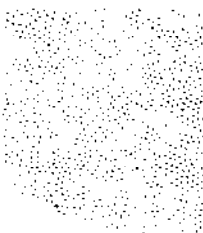
PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

HANDBOOK FOR TRAINING FIELD WORKERS

TEXT AND DIAGRAMS : ALEXANDRA STEPHENS

DESIGN AND DRAWINGS : KEES PUTMAN

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Effects	Result of the use of outputs generated
Evaluation	An assessment, as objective as possible, of how the project is going, how well participants are doing, and what effect it is having on intended beneficiaries.
Impact	Outcome of the results of activities; net effect of activities on economic and social status.
Indicator	Gauge or standard against which change is measured.
Inputs	Resources, human and material, provided to a project in order to achieve planned objectives.
Monitoring	Periodic (time to time) or continuous surveillance by participants, management or donors in a project.
Objectives	Intended achievement; desired results.
Outputs	Goods, products, services or changes generated by project activities, aimed at achieving planned objectives.
Participatory M. and E.	Monitoring and evaluation which is carried out by the project participants primarily for their own use.
System (M & E system)	Parts arranged in order for use in measuring progress, and as a tool for analysing data and using it in decision-making.
Target beneficiaries	Identified group of people intended to benefit/gain from the project.

PREFACE

This booklet is a guide for training fieldworkers to assist village groups who want to develop a monitoring and evaluation system which allows everyone to participate, to benefit from, and to use data collected and generated in the process.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a tool for learning from experience. It helps everyone to learn, and it helps everyone plan better next time, or improve upon existing ways of doing things. It is above all, a system developed primarily for use by those who are also beneficiaries of the project or programme. As part of a self-help management system, it enables the various partners in rural development to learn from experience, from success and from failure, and to do better in future. If the results are worth sharing, group members may wish to prepare some information for use by others, but participatory monitoring and evaluation is first and foremost for the group members themselves; a dual process by which they gather and generate data to monitor and evaluate their progress, and through which they educate themselves and others to increase control over their own destiny.

2

PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

I. INTRODUCTION

If development depends on mobilizing people, then people's participation is an essential element within a process which seeks to bring a better standard of living and quality of life to its people. At the lowest level, participation is symbolized by the presence of token representatives of "the people" at events where decisions are made. Most would agree this does not constitute real participation, but it is amazing how often officials claim to have used participatory methods when this is in fact, the extent of their effort.

At a more dynamic level, and a level which is meaningful in terms of mobilizing people towards development goals, participation involves an active partnership between policy makers, planners and officials, and the target beneficiaries of a programme. This often requires some organization of people into groups which become action-oriented, and eventually take responsibility for their own development.

In its early stages, the focus was on the training of group organizers or group promoters to help with the formation of small, homogeneous farmer groups, around a common economic activity aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty and indebtedness.

In 1979 the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) organized by FAO in Rome gave further impetus to this programme, and a People's Participation Programme (PPP) was born. Collaboration and exchange of experience between those involved in projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America has proved invaluable in strengthening the programme.

Elements of the People's Participation Programme

In 1980 FAO established an umbrella programme known as "People's Participation in Rural Development through Promotion of Self Help Organizations". This programme builds upon earlier SFDP and similar programmes which focus on people's participation and self help. The programme promotes eight major elements, considered basic to alleviation of poverty among the rural poor:
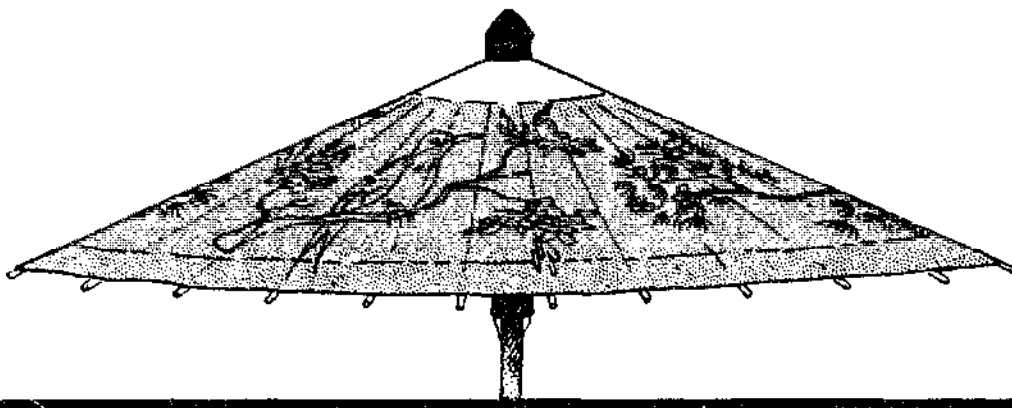
1   Focus on The Rural Poor

PPP Projects are designed to focus on the rural
poor, those individuals living at or below the
subsistence level such as smallholders, tenants,
small fishermen, artisans, tribal minorities,
and include women, men and children.

2   Small Homogeneous Groups

Participation of the rural poor is most effectively
promoted through the formation of small, informal
and homogeneous groups of 6 to 15 members who share
common social and economic levels, and are willing
to organize around a common activity which addresses
a sharedproblem or interest.

3   Self Organization and Self Reliance

For long term effectiveness the principle of self
help organization should be safeguarded by develop-
ing leadership, managerial capability and mobiliza-
tion from within the group. Project partners should
themselves select their members, leaders, office
bearers and functionaries, and decide on their own
rules and activities. Undue dependency on outside
assistance should be progressively eliminated.

4   Generation of Income and Employment

Self-identified income-generating and/or employment
activities will create economic benefits which will
facilitate self-reliance and long term viability.
Group savings and productive investment should be
encouraged, with credit provisions where necessary.

5   <u>Local Group Promoters/Group Organizers</u>

The recruitment and training of suitable Group Promoters/
Group Organizers as catalysts for group formation and
guidance should be seen as a temporary input for about 2
years. GP/GOs should live in the target area under similar
living conditions as the beneficiaries.

6   <u>Involvement of NGOs</u>

Where feasible, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
should be given a primary role in project implementation
in collaboration with key government agencies. Experience
has shown NGOs more operationally flexible, and more able
to adapt quickly to local needs.

7   <u>Participatory Methods</u>

Participation by the beneficiaries in <u>all</u> project activities
is essential. This includes problem identification,planning
(decision-making), implementation, monitoring and evaluation,
and feedback interpretation. The methods used to encourage
participation are not natural - they must be learned, and
training must be provided over suitable periods of time by
qualified personnel.

8   <u>Replicability</u>

Projects should be small in scale with a high potential for
replication. Initial activities should focus on strengthen-
ing the group economically and socially, with the develop-
ment of effective linking mechanisms and preferential
policies for the delivery of inputs and services to project
beneficiaries. The promotion of low-cost initiatives which
are financially sustainable have the highest potential for
replication. Investment-oriented activities may follow
later.

People and Participation

Since the poor are often unable to exercise rights of partici-
pation, special mechanisms can be developed to facilitate this.
One of the most effective is organized, collective action, acknowledged
by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD).
It is a powerful tool for alleviating poverty through a realignment of
political power in favour of the poor, and other disadvantaged groups.
The WCARRD Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action, which
became known as "The Peasant's Charter", reaffirmed the rights of
participation (see box), and resolved to conceptualize and design
policies and programmes, and to create administrative, social and
economic institutions to implement them with a special emphasis on
the disadvantaged strata.

"THE PEASANTS CHARTER"

(an excerpt)

"Participation of the people in the institutions
and systems which govern their lives is a basic
human right and also essential for realignment
of political power in favour of disadvantaged
groups and for social and economic development.
Rural development strategies can realize their
full potential only through the motivation,
active involvement and organization at the
grassroots level of rural people with special
emphasis on the least advantaged strata, in
conceptualizing and designing policies and
programmes and in creating administrative,
social and economic institutions, including
cooperative and other voluntary forms of
organization for implementing and evaluating
them."

(WCARRD Report, 1979)

Similar declarations at other world meetings have been endorsed and ratified by many countries, the most important being Convention 141 adopted by the International Labour Conference of 1975. This deals with the legal recognition of a universal right of rural workers to form (non-governmental) rural organizations of their own choice, and covers smallholders, tenants, labourers, sharecroppers and self-employed home workers. The application of these principles, and the implementation of participatory programmes however lags far behind the ratification of the laws and conventions endorsed at world conferences. Government's role as a facilitator of these rights has not been nearly as active as was hoped and intended by those who drafted the various declarations, intending affirmative action by member States to foster, and not to frustrate the spirit of the law.

While many international human rights have been incorporated into constitutions and legislation of various countries, the obligation of states to respect these rights has been difficult to impose. It is too easy to violate or refuse to recognize human rights, and obligations to do so are sometimes unclear in national laws. There are signs however of increasing democratization in many countries, and along with this comes political consciousness and the demand for recognition of their rights by the people.

II. MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Development is a process which begins with identifying a problem and doing something about it. Monitoring and evaluation is one management tool which can help to improve this process. A monitoring and evaluation (M and E) system answers questions of:
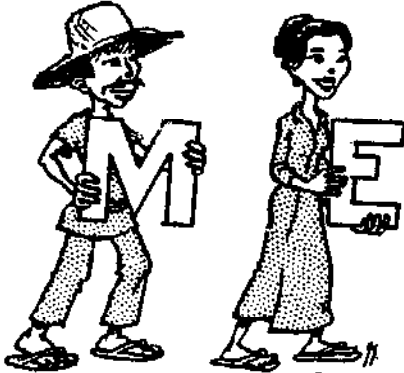
- relevance (does the project address our needs?)
- efficiency (are we using resources wisely?)
- effectiveness (are the desired results achieved?)
- impact (to what extent have project activities brought about changes for the betterment of individuals and/or community?)

As part of a management system, M and E has so far been applied somewhat unevenly in rural development, where the need is less clearly recognized than it is in industry. It is, however, emerging as a critical element in the successful alleviation of rural poverty.

Monitoring is a surveillance system, used by those responsible for a project to see that everything goes as nearly as possible according to plan, and that resources are not wasted. Participatory monitoring involves the beneficiaries of a project in measuring, recording, collecting, processing and communicating information to assist both project management personnel and group members in decision-making (Huizer, 1983). It is continuous feedback system, on-going throughout the life of a project or programme, and involves the overseeing or periodic review of each activity, at every level of implementation to ensure that:

- inputs are ready on time
- work plans are followed as closely as possible
- adjustments can be made, and corrective action taken where necessary
- people who need to know, are kept informed
- constraints and bottlenecks can be foreseen, and timely solutions found
- resources are used efficiently and effectively

Evaluation is not the same. Participatory evaluation is the
systematic analysis by project management and group members to enable
them to adjust, redefine policies or objectives, reorganize institutional
arrangements or redeploy resources as necessary. Data collected while
monitoring provides the basis for evaluation analysis, which concerns
the assessment of the effects of the project on or for the intended
beneficiaries. These may include benefits in the medium term, and in
the case of an evaluation carried out ex-post (long after project
completion), the full impact of the activities and inputs may be assessed.
Negative results are included in evaluation assessments, and these may
include environmental damage, exploitation of labour, or loss of status,
prestige, rights and independence.

In village development, it is usual to monitor and evaluate the
process of operations, the performance of those involved, the progress
or results they achieve, resources used, and the overall impact on the
lives of the participant families. Increasingly, qualitative social
aspects are also monitored. These include levels or degree of people's
participation, questions of equity and distribution of benefits, gender
differentials, and changing attitudes and values. At higher levels
however, policy makers and planners may need additional or different
information. These may include productivity and yields, surpluses
for sale and/or export, local utilization of external resources, levels
of technology, and access to information and advisory services. It is
often therefore desirable when developing a participatory monitoring and
evaluation system, to develop a two-level system which provides the
information needed by the respective parties concerned.

This manual focuses on village level participatory monitoring
and evaluation, because that is the level least often developed in
projects and programmes designed to address problems of rural poverty.
Other publications address more general issues of participatory monitoring
and evaluation - see bibliography, page 51.

PME for Small Farmer Development

Participatory monitoring and evaluation serves a dual purpose.
It is management tool which enables people to improve their efficiency
and effectiveness. It is also an educational process in which participants
increase awareness and understanding of the various factors which affect
them, thereby increasing their control over the development process.
PME is part and parcel of the whole development cycle shown in
figure 1. It is a process within a system which allows the beneficiaries
to continuously share in assessing their own progress, and periodically
evaluate .hemselves to learn from past mistakes.

<u>Figure 1</u>   A development cycle
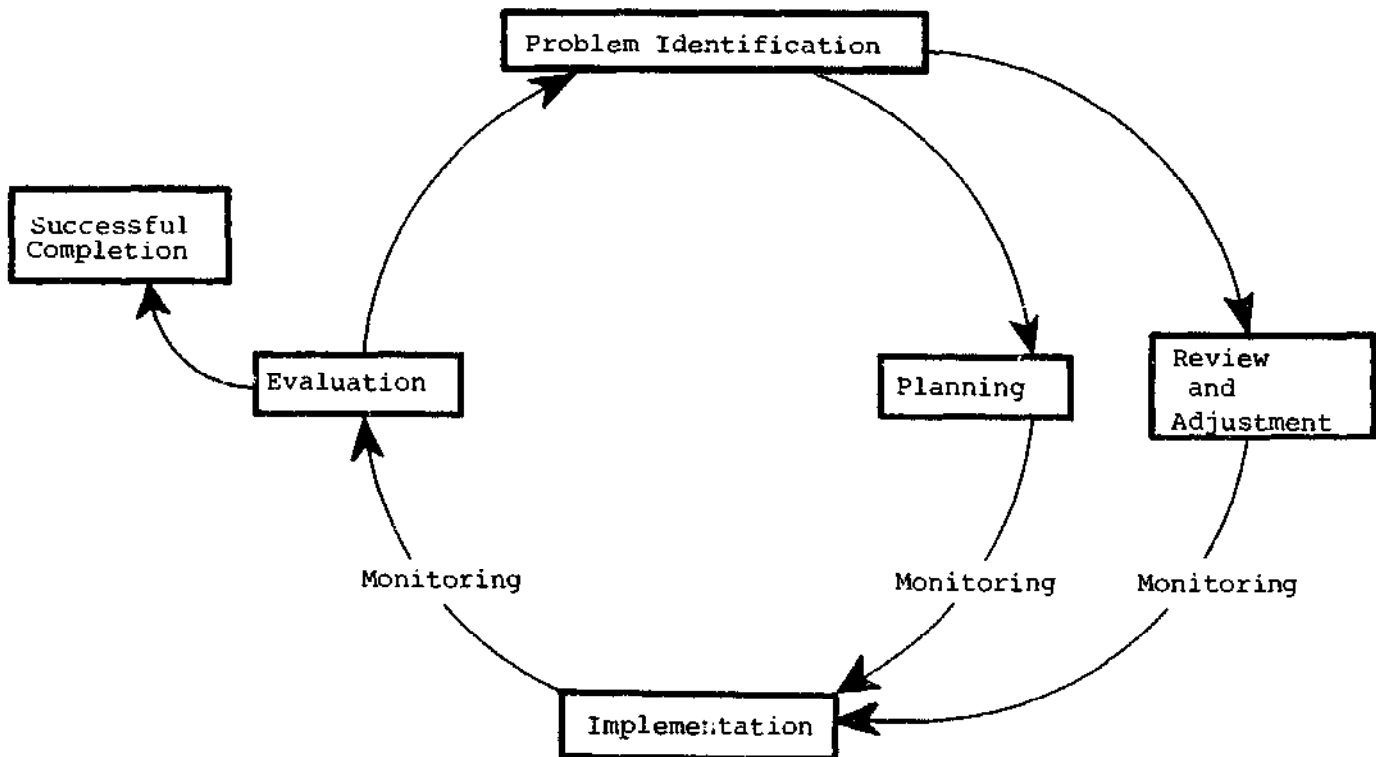
PME has been found especially valuable for small farmer development, where people's participation is promoted in all aspects of agricultural and rural development. This means participation by the target beneficiaries in decision-making and planning, in the entire implementation process, in sharing the benefits, and in monitoring and evaluation.

participation in :
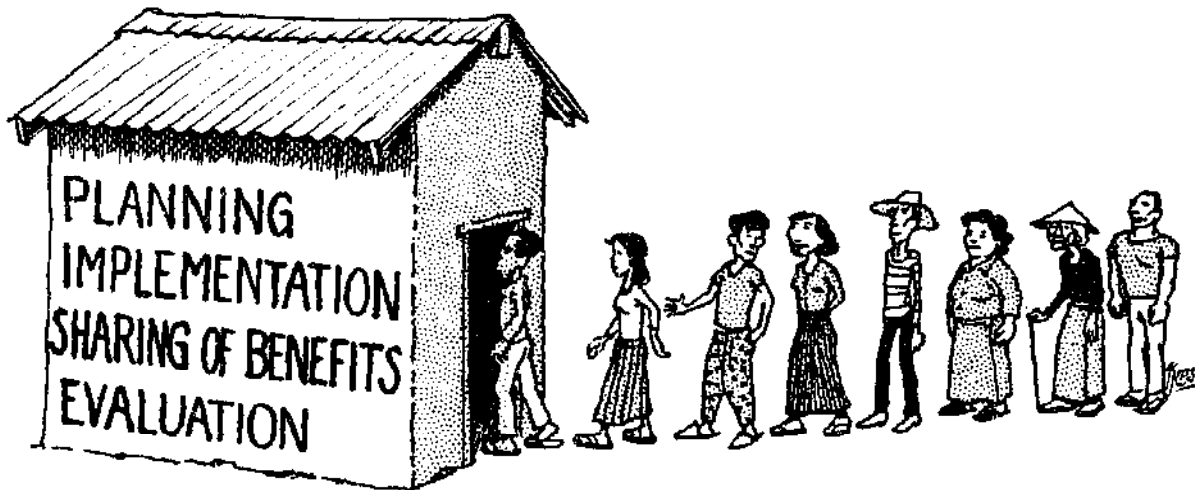
Whereas traditional monitoring and evaluation are initiated from the top, carried out for the people, and the results used by higher level academics and officials, PME belongs to the people the project is designed to help. It is self-help oriented, and an effective means of increasing self-reliance while increasing people's control over their own destiny. PME requires the involvement of people in:

        a) deciding what areas to monitor and evaluate

        b) selecting indicators for M and E

        c) designing data collection systems

        d) collating and tabulating data

        e) analysing the results

        f) using PME information for their own purposes.

Participatory Methods in PME

The use of participatory methods in extension programmes creates a natural atmosphere for the introduction of PME. Where participatory research has been used to conscientize group members, self help action frequently follows, and PME then forms part of the management strategy employed to help reach goals in development. Participatory research can initiate the first steps toward group action by using collective data collection and generation of information within a small group of others like themselves, and whom they trust. The group collects data on key elements in their lives and environment. Participatory research helps poor people become aware of the forces which oppress them. This also provides the baseline against which change can be measured, and assessment can be made to establish a PME system.

Participatory research differs from conventional research in that the object of the study, the target beneficiaries, actually take part in all aspects of the study of their own situation.

CONVENTIONAL RESEARCH

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

As researchers, they are themselves the primary objects of the research, and the data collected or generated is mainly for their own use. Some differences in research methods are shown in figure 2.

Figure 2   Methods of Research and Results

Type and Method	Objectives	Output/Result
Empirical Data Collection (village survey)	Information collected on target population and/or their resources, systems etc.	Information collected by researcher for own or institutional use
Action Research	Information gathered for planning and determining methods of action.	Improved planning and methods to increase effectiveness.
Participatory research	Researcher participates with individuals who are part of the study, and shares findings for con-scientizing and motivating people.	Participation, collaboration of people in data collection and analysis for planning and action. A process of conscientization also takes place.

Participation is not a natural process. Think of a young baby - it shows no inclination towards participatory approaches. He or she is egocentric, acquisitive, even greedy until learning through socialization takes place. Sooner or later an infant learns that sharing pays off - that some things in life are even nicer when shared, and that collective action can achieve things she or he cannot do alone. So it is with adults.

We have to learn participatory methods for development. Some activities which encourage·participation in research, monitoring and evaluation include the following:

- democratic group dynamics and leadership
- creating a village or community map
- preparing a family or group resource matrix
- participatory monitoring wall charts
- use of active learning by group participants
- educational games and role play in groups
-. practical group exercises
⊥ use of stories, drama to present findings
- group field visits and study tours
- use of real cases studies
- group presentation of meaningful data
- group analysis of research reports

Methods which involve the active participation of everyone concerned, create an atmosphere of enthusiasm, commitment and collaboration which is not seen in many village level projects. PME therefore is a part of a whole participatory development approach.

III. INDICATORS AND MEASUREMENT

An indicator is something against which to measure changes. For example the temperature of the air around us is an indicator of how cold or hot it is. Without a thermometer we may not be able to measure this very accurately, but our own skin sensitivity will allow us to judge whether it is a cold, cool, warm or a hot day. This is sufficient if we need only make a decision about what to wear. When more accurate data is needed, we will use a thermometer to measure precise temperatures. Most of us monitor and evaluate the weather every day for various reasons, either roughly by skin reaction, or more accurately on a thermometer.
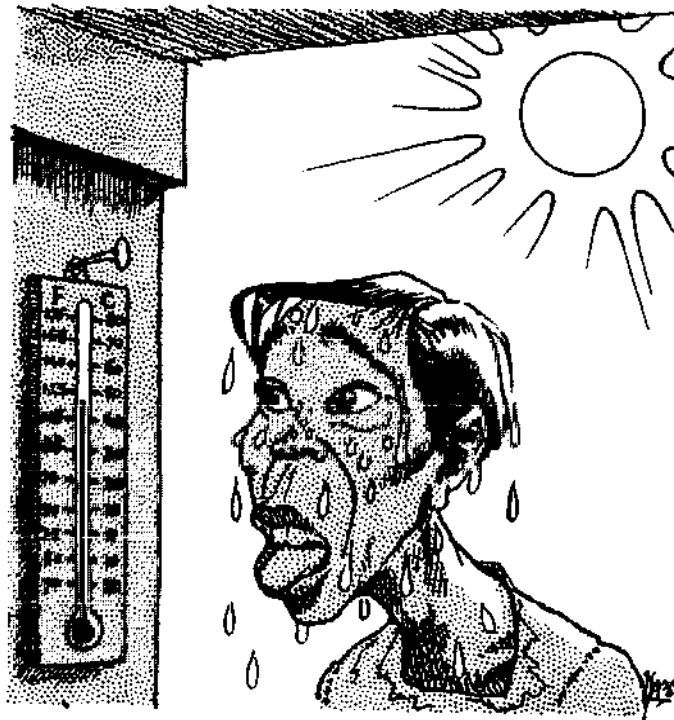
In a development project, indicators are those variables which are used as tools for monitoring and evaluating how we are doing. They are objective measures of change or results brought about by an activity, or an output from an activity. Indicators provide a standard against which to measure, assess or show progress.

As stated earlier, change is not always positive. Negative results
may show up against some indicators, and these also provide useful manage-
ment information. In all cases indicators should be used to measure
progress against planned objectives. The nature of the objectives will
determine what sort of indicator is best suited to measure progress.
If the major objective is increased household income, then the main
indicator will be actual monthly or annual household income levels.
This is an economic indicator, used to measure economic growth.
Some examples of indicators used by SFDP groups to measure change are
shown below:

Measurement	Indicator examples
Production	Yields per hectare; production per unit
Output productivity	Number or quantity produced per day
Income	Individual/group/village average income
Ownership of assets	Number of buffaloes; land holdings
Poverty	Number above/below poverty line
Mechanization	Number of tractors; means of transport
Timely inputs	Dates of fertilizer delivery against targets
Economic improvement	Change in income levels (cash and subsistence)

The social impact also needs to be monitored, so that social change
can also be assessed. Valid social indicators are therefore needed to
measure such change. Social factors are sometimes not as readily
quantifiable as economic factors, and so indicators must be chosen very
carefully. Some examples are given below. The actual selection of
indicators depends on what the group wishes to accord attention, and
how they want to measure change. The indicator selected must allow valid
measurements.

Measurement	Indicator examples
Nutritional status	Weight for age, weight for height, height for age.
Health	Infant mortality rate, major causes of death.
Education	Literacy rate, average years formal schooling.
Gender equality	Proportion women in formal education. Male-female wage differentials. Percentage female members in agric. cooperatives.
Rural poverty	Landlessness, rural unemployment rate, seasonal migration.
Disease control	Specific disease eradication; immunization coverage.
Standard of living	Access to potable water; type of roof; household sanitation.
Environment	Area of land too saline to grow rice; area of destruction of natural forest.

A third category of measurement which may be required relates to political development. Leadership, law and order, power, and control over resources may undergo significant change in the process of development. These can generally be monitored and evaluations made using political indicators as illustrated below.

Measurement	Indicator examples
Access to capital	Control over water resources, land tenure.
Leadership	Number of local leaders
Decision-making	Representation in political bodies
Social control	Extent local mechanizms supported
Equity	Distribution of benefits
Gender responsibilities	Division of labour by gender
Family benefits	Intra-household distribution

The selection of appropriate indicators for monitoring and evaluation is partly a matter of common sense, but there are certain rules which must be followed if they are to be useful. The best indicators are:

VALID

RELIABLE

RELEVANT

SENSITIVE

SPECIFIC

COST-EFFECTIVE

TIMELY
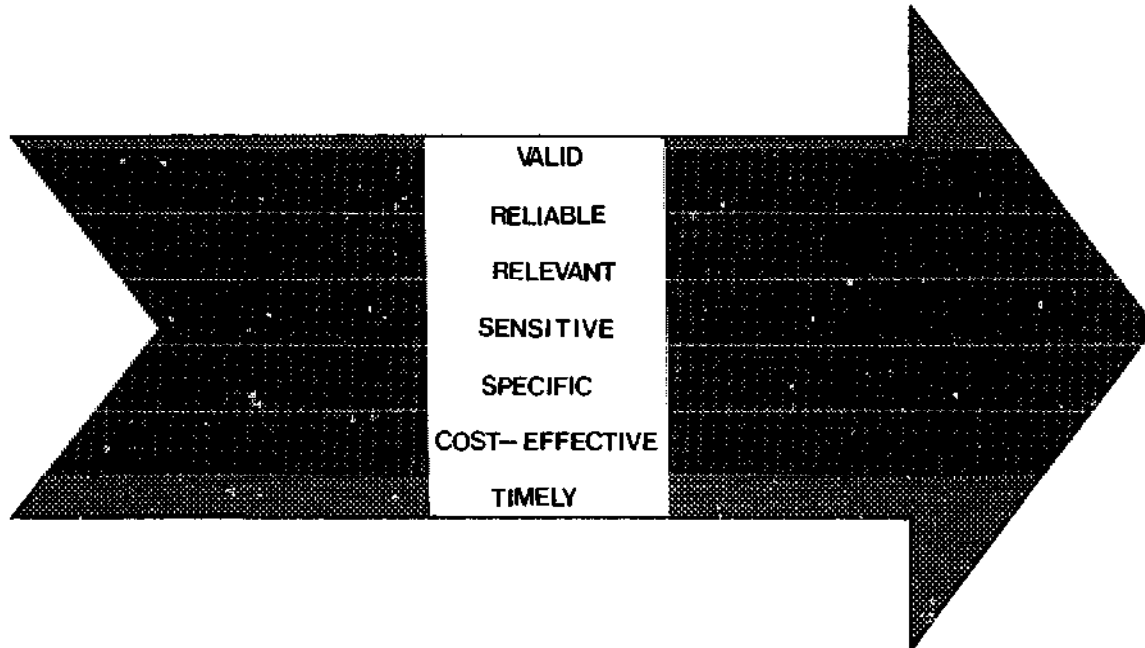
If they cannot fulfill all these criteria, they should at least indicate general trends and impacts. The choice requires both experience and skill, and for this reason the help of a trained field worker is usually needed at first. Further, not all concepts can be easily monitored, and there may be some cases where a suitable indicator is difficult to find. Participation is one example. How can participation be measured - against what specific criteria? First, it would have to be made very clear exactly what is meant by participation, before a suitable indicator could be selected. Even then, accurate measurement may not be possible.

It is important that a consensus is reached within the group, on the selection of indicators, so that everyone is monitoring and evaluating the same thing, by the same standards. This requires in-depth discussion with all members of a group, and even when group consensus is achieved, another group measuring the same thing with different criteria and standards can not compare their results with the others.

Some groups begin indicator selection by brainstorming - listing all possible indicators on a chalkboard, and then deleting those found unsuitable, or impossible to use. Remember, indicators must be valid, reliable, relevant, sensitive, specific, cost-effective and timely.

IV.   PME IN ACTION

Traditional monitoring and evaluation systems are initiated from the top, carried out for the people, and the results are used by professional researchers, policy makers and planners, or institutions outside the village. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the people the project is meant to help. It is the people's management tool, and their teacher. With the help of a suitable facilitator, PME provides the data to help people analyse and interpret their own progress. After a suitable period of time, group facilitators should be in a position to phase out their support, so that the people fully implement and further develop the system themselves.

The use of data collected or generated in the M and E process is in turn used by a group to help identify and anticipate problems, and to plan their own steps to avoid or solve these problems. It also comprises a learning process in which data is used to analyse, assess and draw conclusions from activities concerning development. In this way a tremendous amount of understanding of the activities, processes, systems, human behaviour and group dynamics is promoted, so that the final conclusion is likely to be constructive, realistic and action-oriented. The results provide the information needed for good decision-making, which leads to good programme planning and implementation at the grassroots level.

At the same time, a participatory M and E system can provide some data from the grassroots for use by development agencies, planners, policy-makers and donors at higher levels. Their needs however should not override the needs of the group members themselves when developing a participatory monitoring and evaluation system.

Encouraging Participation

The essential element of participation requires that everyone under-stands, supports and is willing to join actively in the process. This requires much teaching and learning to be effective. There are many ways to increase participation in a project, and some of whose which are most useful to develop a participatory M and E system follow:

1. Use active rather than passive, and practical rather than theoretical methods. Involve everyone - assign tasks which ensure everyone is involved or has a chance.

INVOLVE EVERYONE IN ACTIVE LEARNING
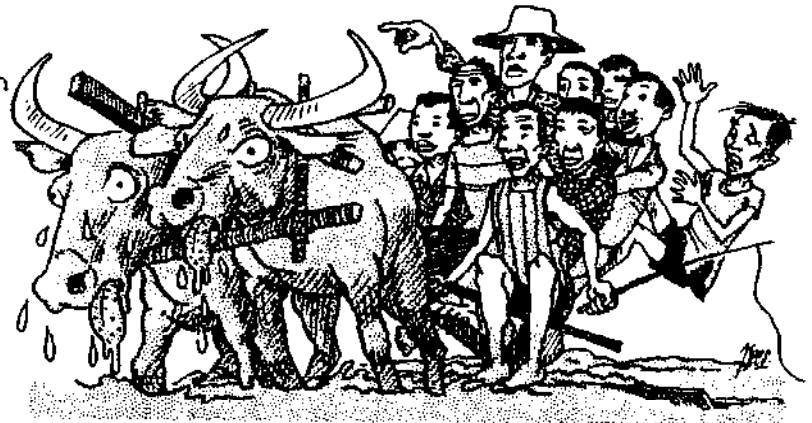
OF INTEREST TO ALL
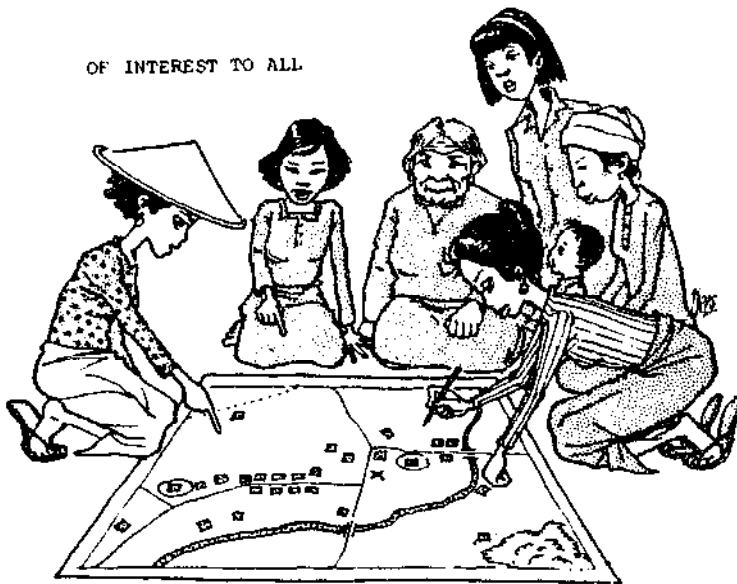
2. Begin with an activity which is of interest to all. Building a community map is a good start. Provide a simple outline. Each member can then put his or her house on the map. Other resources and landmarks can be added as required.

22

SMALL GROUPS

3. Use small groups. A large group
   intimidates the less bold, makes
   consensus more difficult, and
   inhibits spontaneity. Small,
   homogeneous groups where
   there is mutual trust and
   concern are more cooperative
   and supportive, at least
   initially.

MEANINGFUL
AND
SIMPLE
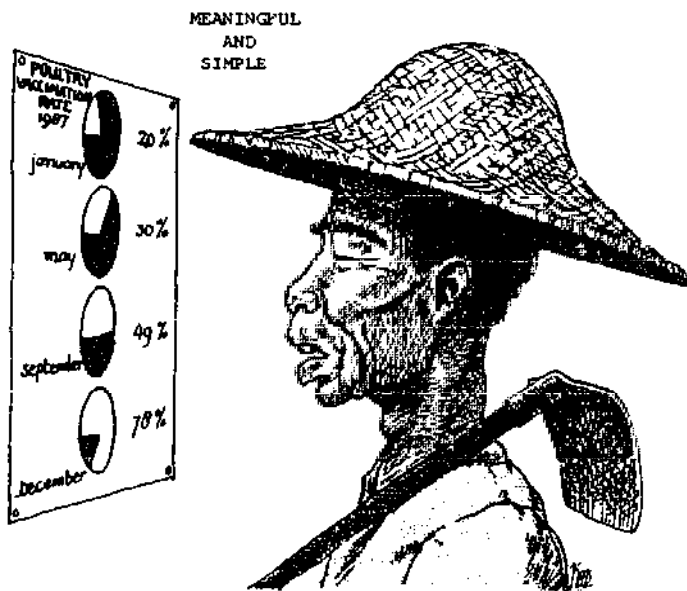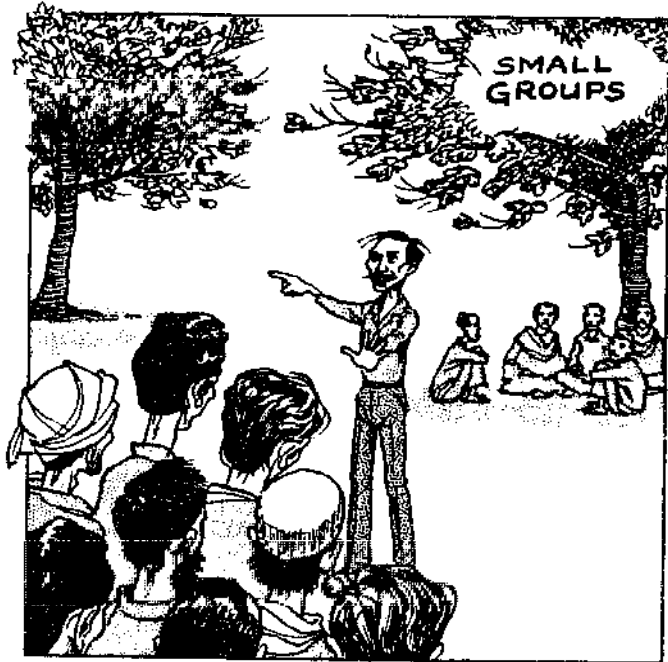
4. Provide meaningful data and
   information. For those with
   no or little education, sta-
   tistics and academic informa-
   tion can not be interpreted.
   Simple graphics, models,
   numbers and charts should be
   used.

GATHERING INFORMATION

5. Facilitate access to more
   information. Take the group
   to a library, a government
   office, school or on field
   trips where they can
   increase their knowledge
   base and learn where to
   go for information in the
   future.
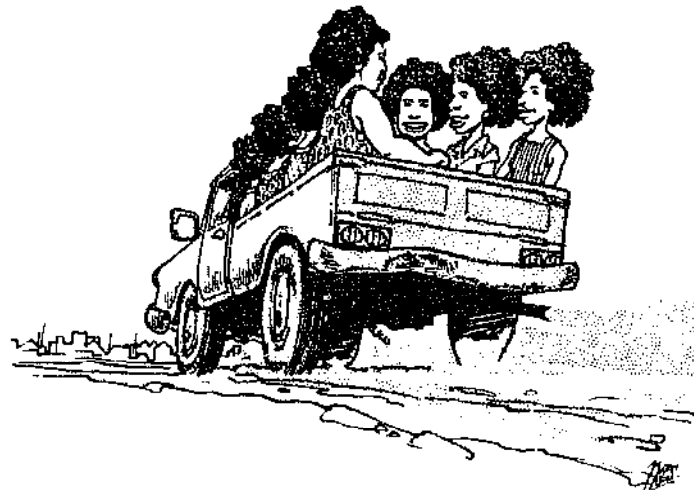
AWARENESS

6.

Conscientize the group! Only when political awareness has been raised, are people willing and mentally able to help themselves. Thus creation of awareness of the forces that oppress them is one of the most powerful forces for action, and collective action is necessary to achieve progress against oppression. Participation is the way to collective action.

In the end, the levels and effectiveness of people's participation depend largely on individual group organizers, leaders, teachers and facilitators. Not everyone is temperamentally suited to working with people in a participatory way, and not all can learn the skills which facilitate participation. Careful selection and effective training are both needed for people's participation to become a reality in rural development.

NOT EVERYONE IS TEMPERAMENTALLY SUITED.....

How it works

A participatory monitoring and evaluation system is something which may not be possible to implement with a new group, still coming to grips with internal and structural problems. Instead, participation itself may need to be built up first. When the time comes to begin monitoring and evaluation, some elements of the system may be initiated by introducing the group to the idea. A good start may be a Task Monitoring Sheet, as shown in Figure 3. This includes specific tasks and deadlines for the group to maintain. After discussing each task assigned within a project, a chart is made with space to record progress. Variations can be developed with a little imagination to suit literacy levels, numeracy skills and the needs for a particular group.

Figure 3   Task monitoring chart (reduced from wall chart size). Colours may indicate progress or otherwise, if these are available.

TASK   MONITORING   SHEET

GROUP : Meija Groundnut Group   PROJECT : Agric. Prodn.   YEAR : 1988

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Cut fence posts.	Erect fence and treat posts with E. oil	Weeding	Weeding	Harvest	Repay loan to bank
		Watering	Watering	Dry gr. nuts	Distribute profits to group
Dig holes for posts	Plough and form mounds	Check and repair fence and gate	Check and repair fence and gate	Negotiate selling price and check local market price	Meet to decide on new work plan
Order wire staples, wire strainer	Purchase fertilizer	Pest control	Apply fertilizer.		
Plough the land	Apply pre-planting fertilizer	Pile earth on mounds	Pest control		
Dig drains	Plant ground nut seed		Pile earth on mounds		
Cut palms for shade.	Collect bank loan		Purchase packaging for harvest		
Apply for bank loan			Check market		
Accounts & Records	Accounts & Records	Accounts & Records	Accts & records	Accounts & Records	Accounts and Records

Another simple system of monitoring progress is shown in figures 4 and 5. These charts monitor progress made by a group in various aspects of a small community forestry project. The chart shown under figure 4 is generally used each month for groups unused to assigning a numerical value to their achievements. After a few months, one chart as in figure 5 may be made for several months.

Figure 4   One month chart for monitoring progress in a community forestry project.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY MONITORING CHART Month June				NURSERY	TREE PLANTING	FERTILIZER	EXTENSION SUPPORT	GROUP MEETINGS	LOAN REPAYMENTS	FUELWOOD	FODDER	FRUITS	SOIL IMPROVEMENT	VISITORS
		5	😀			✓	✓	✓						
		4	🙂	✓										✓
		3	😐							✓	✓		✓	
		2	😟									✓		
		1	😠		✓				✓					

Figure 5   Six months chart for those more used to using a rating scale.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY MONITORING CHART			NURSERY	TREE PLANTING	FERTILIZER	EXTENSION SUPPORT	GROUP MEETINGS	LOAN REPAYMENTS	FUELWOOD	FODDER	FRUITS	SOIL IMPROVEMENT	VISITORS
😀	5	January	3	3	4	5	4	2	2	3	4	3	1
🙂	4	February	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	2
😐	3	March	4	4	3	5	5	3	3	4	4	3	3
😟	2	April											
😠	1	May											
		June											

For monitoring population changes, charts such as that shown in figure 6 may be used. This is suitable for people, for livestock or fish, or even adapted, for produce and yields. Each time there is a newborn, a death, inward or outward migration, a dot or mark of some kind may be added. Monthly or annual totals can be indicated as shown at the bottom of the chart. For evaluation purpose:, he total change over a period of time provides necessary data to moni population increases, a decrease, changes in gender balance, mortality ¹ migration rates. Overall trends may be presented from the d. obtained on this chart.

Figure 6   Population information chart

POPULATION MONITORING SHEET

NET GAIN/LOSS: |+2| |-3|
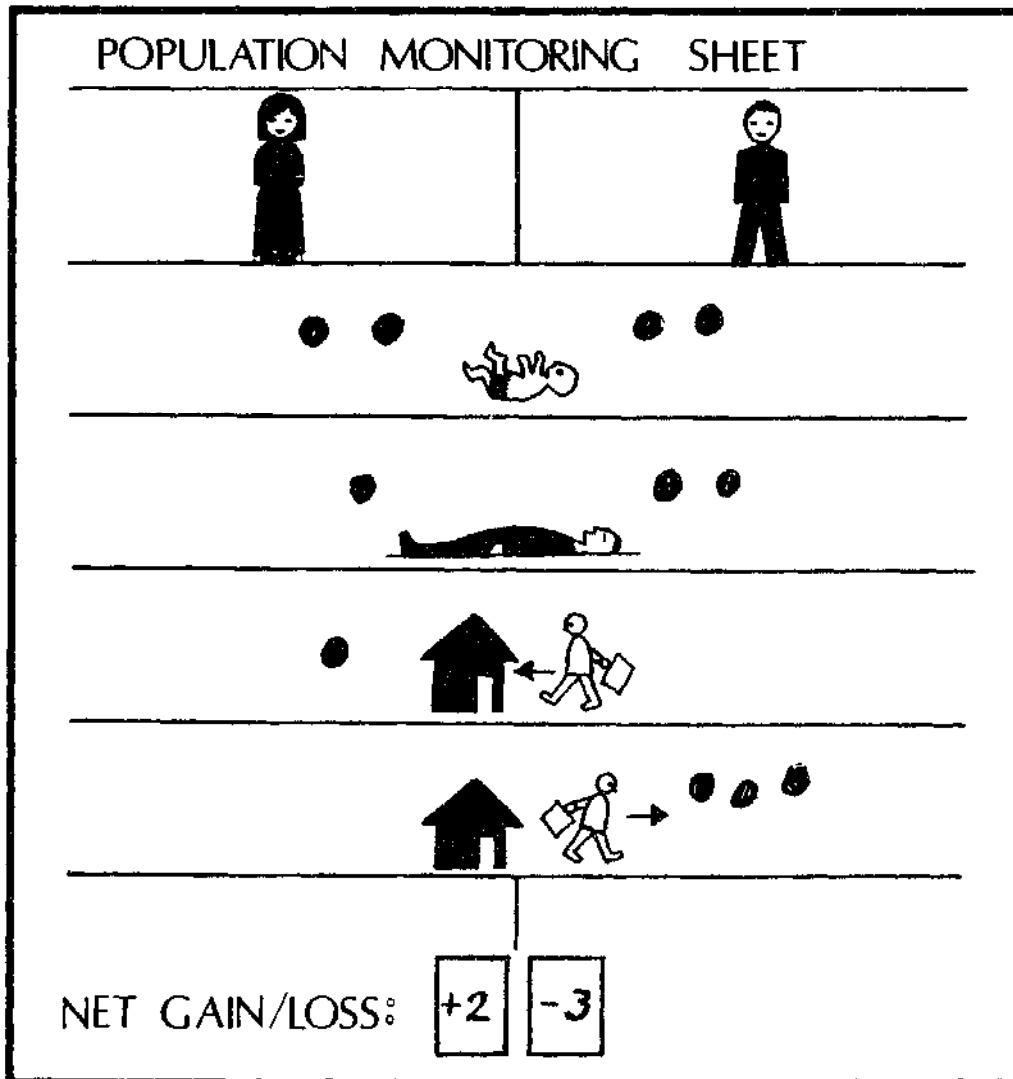
Population data may be recorded regularly e.g. monthly, or a census can be taken, say annually, to monitor change and trends. The chart in figure 6 may therefore be adapted to suit a group's needs, but generally changes in birth, deaths, inward migration and outward migration are recorded. Once data is analysed, findings may be presented in a variety of ways for group discussion - see figure 12 on page 34.

Monitoring change which lends itself less readily to quantification presents some challenge. The group process for example, or peoples' participation in development is often difficult to quantify. Figure 7 shows how various small farmer groups monitor attendance at their meetings. Various levels of precision are achieved, but since accuracy is more important than precision, these methods are usually adequate.

Figure 7. Various ways of monitoring "attendance" at meetings.

Recorded Data/symbol	Meaning
● ⬤ ●	Two short, one full length meeting attended during the month.
7 6 6 7 /6.5	Attendance at four meetings was 7,6,7 and 6 - an average of 6.5 for the month.
OK	Group considers attendance rates are satisfactory.
▨▨▨▨▨▨	Group considers attendance is quite good. (colour normally used rather than shading)
✓ ✓ X ✓	Group considers attendance at 3 out of 4 meetings was satisfactory/good.
90%	Ninety per cent average attendance for the month.
$\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{8}{8}$	Of 8 group members, weekly meetings were attended by 7,6,7 and 8 respectively.
5 4	On 1-5 scale, attendance was rated excellent (5) and good (4) for the 2 meetings held.
☺ ☺ ☺	Attendance at 3 meetings held was excellent on 2 occasions, good on one occasion.

Participation in meetings or project activities is more difficult to monitor and evaluate, since each person may define participation differently. Further, criteria, standards and expectations may vary considerably. Labour participation is not difficult in terms of time input, but skills are less easily measured except in terms of concrete outputs. Participation in decision making is extremely difficult to monitor accurately.

Among some of the small farmer groups, the example in figure 8 has been found useful to increase awareness of the relevance of participation, and the part it plays in promoting cooperation and self reliance among members.

Figure 8. Participation monitoring chart

MAEIO DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Adult population 1/1/88 __436__   Adult population 31/12/88 _____

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of members		54	57	62									
Per cent of total		12.6	13.4	14.5									
Average attendance at meetings		44.1	49	52.4									
Labour contribution (person/days)		475	1320	842									
Participation in training (number and person/days)	♂	60	20	95									
	♀	15	—	3									
Leadership and participation (5-1)		3	4	3									

Another aspect of participation which should be monitored is equity - the distribution of benefits of a project. Figure 9 shows one method used to record the distribution of the benefits of a poultry project.

Figure 9   Participation in sharing the benefits of a project

MAEJO POULTRY GROUP							
DISTRIBUTION OF EGGS AND CASH PROFITS		January	February	March	April	May	June
Monthly production		1,295	1,341	1,348			
Monthly sales		1,065	1,065	1,093			
Jonati	00	60	60	60			
	$	$2.60	$3.60	$3.60			
Elimo	00	24	36	36			
	$	$4.04	$4.56	$4.56			
Mari	00	48	60	48			
	$	$3.08	$2.60	$4.08			
Tinat	00	60	60	60			
	$	$2.60	$3.60	$3.60			
Niaema	00	24	36	24			
	$	$4.04	$4.56	$5.04			
Lanlo	00	12	24	24			
	$	$4.52	$5.04	$5.04			
Total eggs consumed		223	276	252			
Total net income		$42.60	42.60	43.72			
Broken, damaged eggs		2	—	3			

Responsibility for initiating a participatory M and E system is usually with a trained field worker, but eventually the system must be managed by the group carrying out the project. They therefore need to participate in the development of the various parts, and in the system itself. The group organizer or field worker's responsibility is to exchange ideas and information with group members about:

- the elements of the M and E system
- how this can be done
- who should be responsible for each part
- to whom data might be available
- how the data will be used
- where the system will be physically based
- when to begin and to end the process

In addition to monitoring group progress, the group members may also wish to monitor the provision of services from agencies and institutions set up to serve them. Figure 10 shows one such chart used to monitor technical support. A small dot indicates a brief visit by a technical officer. A large dot indicates a substantive technical support visit.

Figure 10   Chart for monitoring technical support services

TECHNICAL SUPPORT MONITORING CHART 1988												
VILLAGE Marjo DISTRICT Namanou CIRCUIT NUMBER 865												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
GROUP ORGANIZER	•●•••	••••	●•●									
CREDIT OFFICER	•	•	•									
VETERINAR-IAN		●										
HOME ECONOMIST	••	●••	••									

Whatever methods are used, a participatory M and E system must provide data regularly and systematically, so that it may be consistently applied to the management of project activities. For this, the help of a trained facilitator will probably be needed initially, but one of the goals in developing the system should be to work towards management by the group members as quickly as possible so that the participatory monitoring and evaluation system becomes their tool for management of their own self help activities.
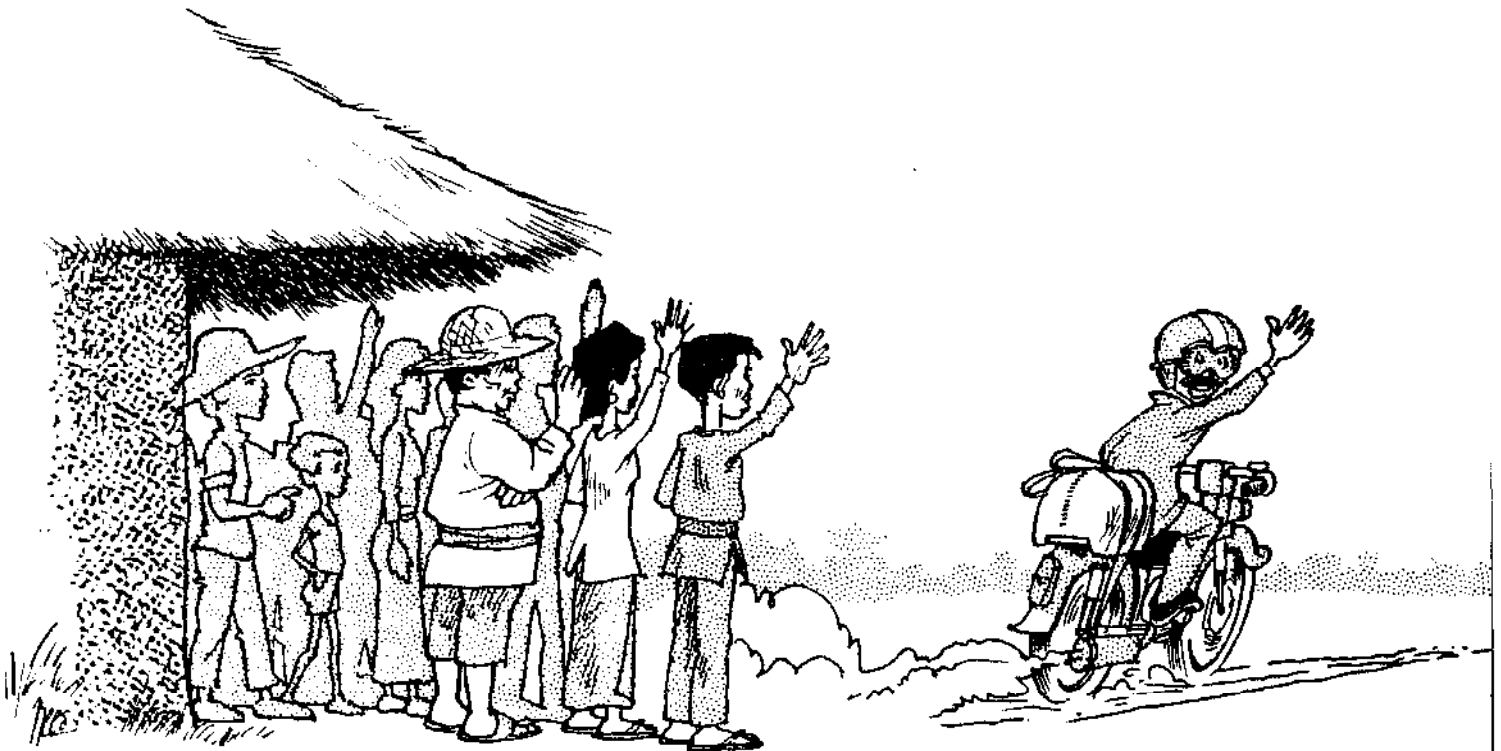

.....home goes the fieldworker

V. REPORTING AND USING PME DATA

Traditional M and E systems which are based on judgements from the
top to the bottom regarding people's participation projects and performance
rarely provide useful information to project beneficiaries. Since parti-
cipatory M and E has as its primary aim, the provision of information to
the beneficiaries for their own use, monitoring and evaluating the relevance,
efficiency, effectiveness and impact of their inputs and activities must
be done by them. A participatory M and E system can also meet some needs
at the higher levels, but experience warns against focussing on any but
the group's needs until they are strong enough to withstand or accomodate
the demands from academics and bureaucrats eager for early collaboration.
It is generally best to begin a PME system only to meet a small group's
specific needs.

The question of access to the information generated and gathered
by a participatory M and E system also needs consideration by members of
the group. Questions of confidence and trust must not be threatened by
misuse or abuse of information. The primary recipients of the data, the
group members themselves, are the rightful owners and anyone else should
have access only with the consent of the group. In all cases, the pur-
pose for which the information is to be used must be made explicit, and
its use by beneficiaries maximised. Where information is fed through
reports to agencies, organizations or individuals who control inputs,
the implications must be made clear to group members. For the same
reasons that they may wish to withhold information on income from the
tax collector, so they may wish to retain other information.
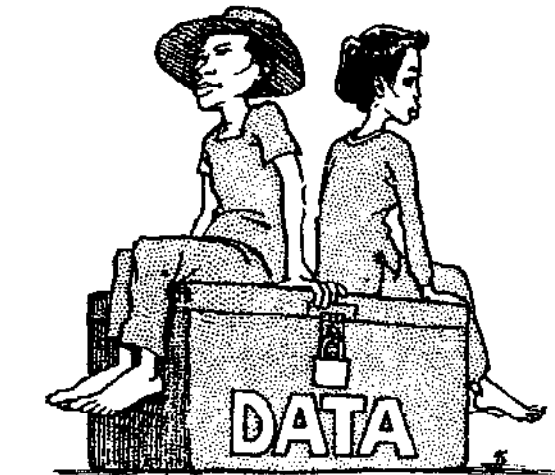
Reporting from a participatory M and E system thus may be a highly controversial matter, with economic, political and social implications. The amount, type, form and frequency of reports prepared from the system is a matter for much in-depth discussion.

Finally, the presentation of information is also important. The format, the level of language used, and the interpretation often skew the facts, and analysis will reflect these biases. If the group members are responsible for the preparation of reports therefore, they may need help at first. Report writing and graphic presentations are skills which few acquire naturally. The type of presentation will depend on intended users, but when this is mainly for the group itself, simple tables and schematic representations may be the most useful. Discussions on analysis, interpretation and applications will only be fully participatory if the presented information is meaningful to all members. Figures 11 and 12 show some examples.

Figure 11   Charts showing a thirty per cent vaccination rate by pie chart, line graph and bar graphs.

PIE CHART
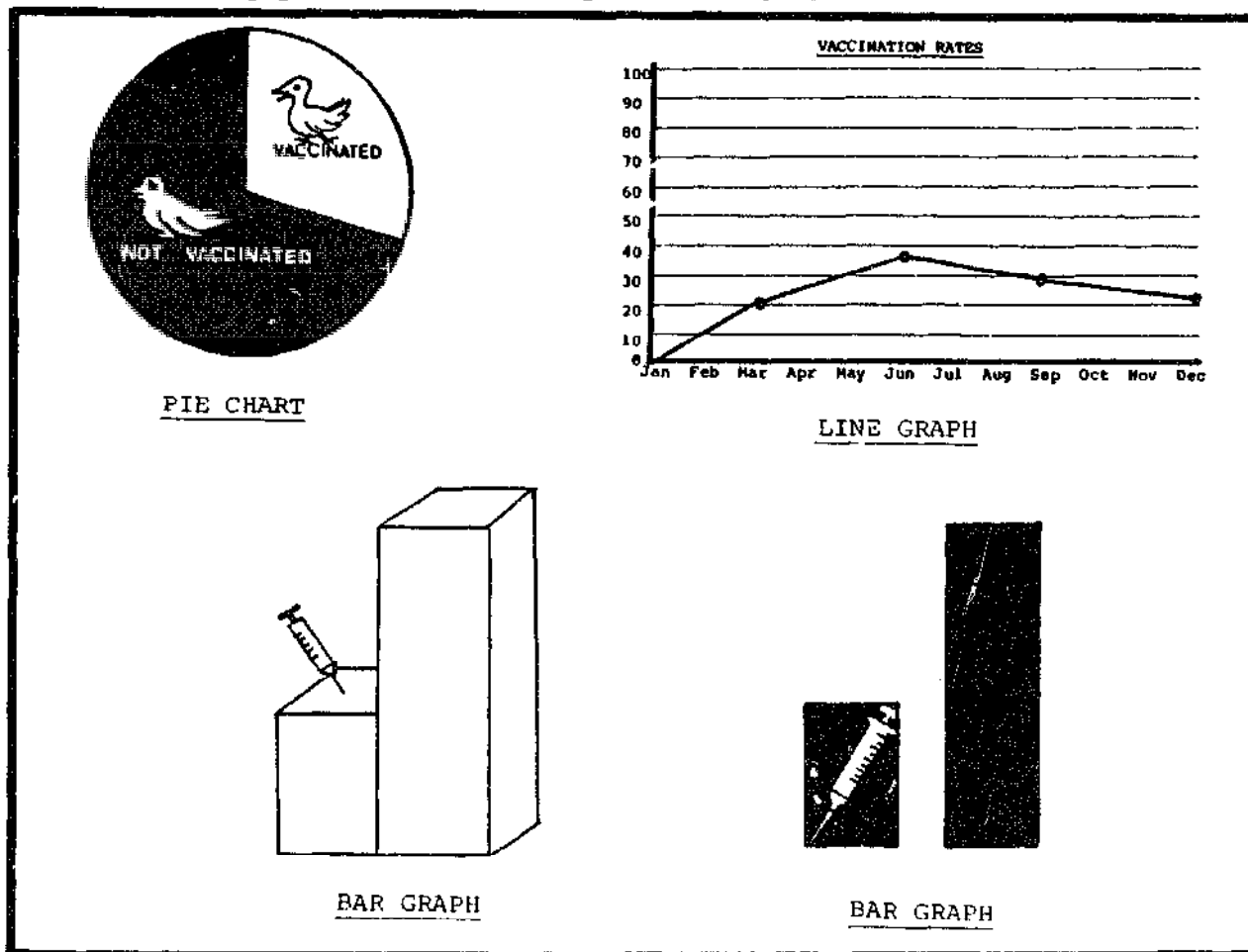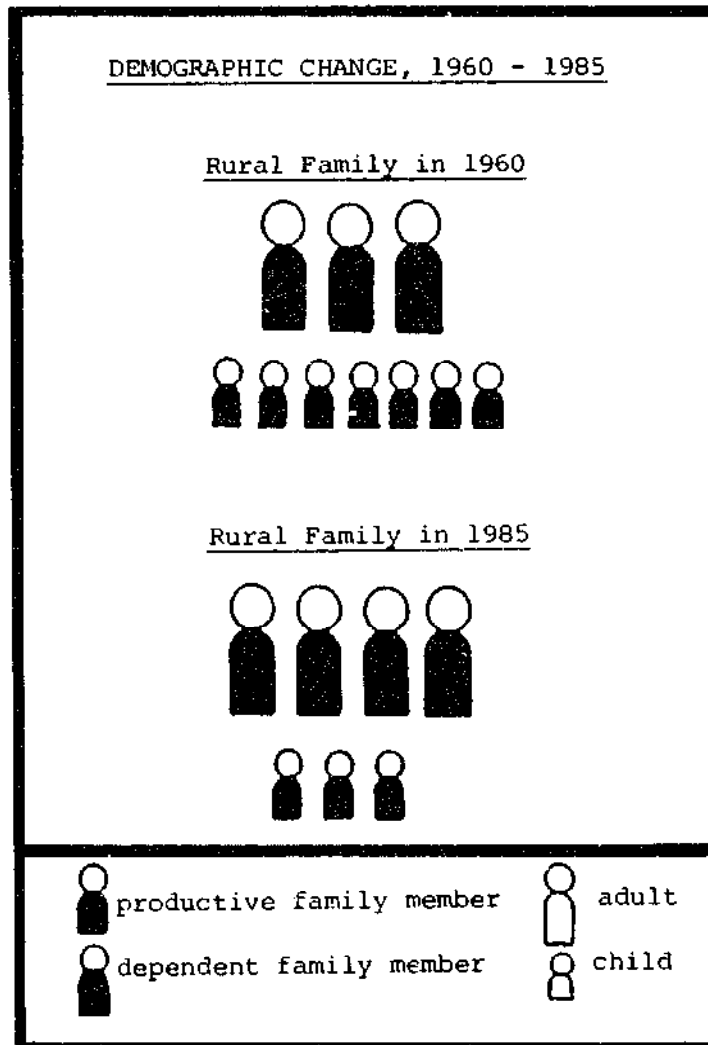
LINE GRAPH

BAR GRAPH

BAR GRAPH

Figure 12   Chart showing demographic change in rural area over 25 years.

There are literally hundreds of such charts used in the popular press, magazines and journals. An imaginative fieldworker can help groups develop their own graphic representations.

More specific report forms showing financial information are easy to develop. Figure 13 is one such example.

Figure 13   Loan repayment report

LOAN REPAYMENT REPORT 1988

GROUP *Poultry*   VILLAGE *Maejo*   G.O. *Salleh*

Name of borrower	Amount of Loan	Amount Repaid	Balance Owing
Salome	2200	2150	50
Tevita	3100	2440	660
Noi	1500	1500	—
Tem	3000	2000	1000
Charoen	1000	900	100
Aruna	3100	2000	1100
Kalasina	1500	900	600

Reporting or presenting people's attitudes is sometimes difficult, but it can be done by pictorial means as shown in figure 14 using faces as on the left, or simpler "rubber stamp" faces shown on the right. Numbers of people in each category can be entered alongside, and if an even simpler grouping is needed, 3 faces may be used instead of 5. These may be accorded ratings as in a 5-point or 3-point rating scale so that the most positive ranks the highest number, and the most negative the lowest number. Such systems may also be used in data collection, especially when data on attitudes, values, standards and opinions are needed.

Figure 14   5 point attitude indicator showing number (or per cent)
             in each category.
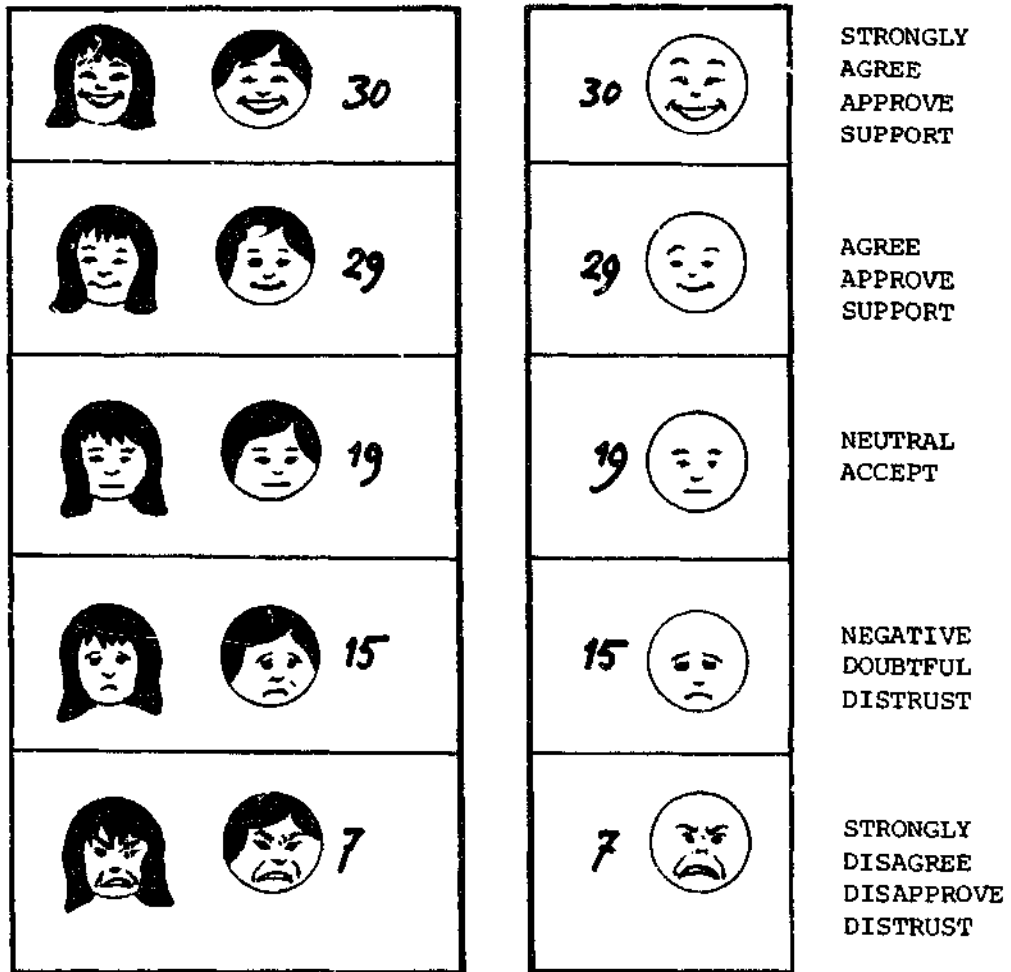
A three point scale may be preferred by groups which find five point scales difficult to apply. A similar rating card may be used for group progress reports shown in figure 15.

Figure 15   Group progress report (for one month)
                   using three point scale

	😀	😐	🙁
GROUP PROGRESS REPORT FOR MONTH OF _June 1988_			
Tasks Done			
Supplies Purchased			
Meetings Held			
M and E Operating			
Accounts Maintained			
GO/GP Visits			

To show trends over time, a series of charts, graphs, numbers or
pictures may be needed. Figure 16 shows four pie charts, indicating
an increase in poultry vaccination rates from 20, to 78 per cent over
a one year period. Such charts help people see the relevance of numbers,
and make statistics meaningful. Progress can be seen at a glance, and
people feel proud of their visible achievements. Even where progress
is unsatisfactory, a progress chart helps stimulate discussion based
on the facts, thereby helping to identify where remedial action is needed.
More routine charts showing production and accounts are illustrated in
Figures 17 and 18, while Figure 19 shows an annual summary of group process.

Figure 16   Chart showing increasing vaccination rates over a year.

MAEJO POULTRY GROUP — VACCINATION RATE 1987

January   May   September   December

20%   30%   49%   78%

Figure 17   Annual egg production report

MAEJO POULTRY PROJECT - EGG PRODUCTION REPORT													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Production													
No. consumed													
Number sold													
Income													
Monthly costs													
Profit													

Figure 18   Project accounting summary

MAEJO PROJECT ACCOUNTING SUMMARY

Month: _____   Year: _____   Reporter: _____

Item	Debit	Credit	Balance
Brought Forward			

Comments:

Date _____   Signed _____   Checked _____

Figure 19   Group process monitoring chart

MAEJO GROUP PROCESS MONITORING CHART - 1988

Process	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Meetings held												
Attendance												
Leadership												
Participation												
Consensus												
Tasks Done on Time												
Minutes and Records												
Accounts Maintained												

A group has no primary responsibility to develop a PME system
to meet the needs of others. They may choose to provide certain data
to outsiders - to donors and others providing assistance - but the PME
system should not centre around external needs. Reports required by
others may best be accomodated by a separate M and E system which draws
on data from both the group PME system and/or other sources. The
important point is that at no time should the group's aims and objectives
in developing their own participatory system be compromised by demands
for additional reporting from outside.
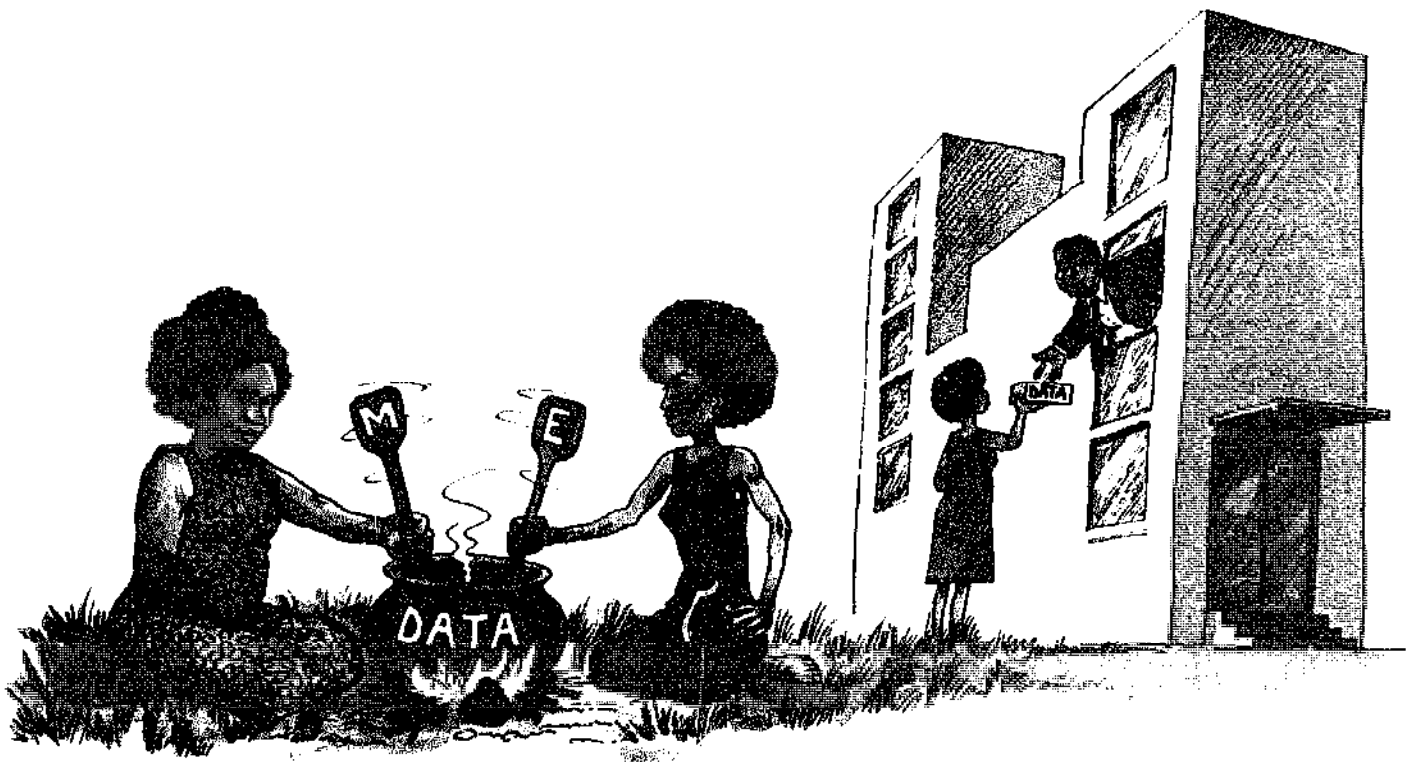
The group can choose to provide certain data from
the grassroots to outsiders at higher levels
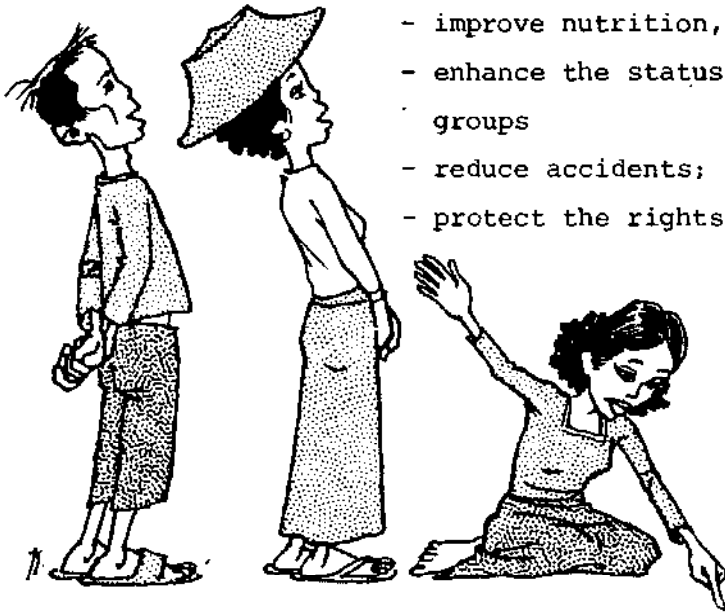
VI.   APPLICATIONS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is not easy to establish a useful and effective M and E system, but the rewards when this is well done make the effort very worthwhile. A monitoring and evaluation system as a management tool helps people make wise decisions about their deployment and use of resources to optimise outputs or results. A participatory approach empowers people to manage their resources, thereby increasing control over their lives as well. A participatory monitoring and evaluation system therefore helps achieve optimal results while increasing people's understanding and ability to solve their own problems.

Applications

The various applications and uses of the system depend on the group, its social, economic and political levels, plus the physical, socio-cultural, and political environment in which they live. These also depend on the extent to which the group has access and is willing to break traditions of subservience and docility. Opportunities are only grasped by those who recognize them. For the poorest, opportunities are more likely to be seen as a risk or a threat to be avoided. Hence the need for group organizer/ group promotors initially. Group organizers should establish themselves as someone on the side of the poor, helping to break the cycles of oppression.

In the first case, participatory M and E provides records of progress to which group members may refer for proof, for justifications and as a visible show of achievements. It also provides data as a basis for constructive discussion, planning, review and revision, and acts as a catalyst to give added impetus, motivation and support to the action. It is a basis for accountability in relation to inputs and outputs, action strategies and assessment of achievement. It signals a need for change and indicates timeliness of inputs. When applied to its logical conclusion a participatory M and E system equips group members to make good management decisions which will enable them to:

- utilize resources wisely
- increase productivity
- decrease waste and conserve resources
- protect the environment and ensure sustainability
- reduce drudgery and boredom
- enlist cooperation and collaboration
- share responsibility, risks and benefits
- adopt strategies of self help, and thereby
  contribute to self esteem and human dignity
- make the meaningless meaningful through
  group learning in an educational partnership
- improve nutrition, health and family well-being
- enhance the status of women and other disadvantaged
  groups
- reduce accidents; increase safety in operations
- protect the rights of the powerless and disadvantaged

Special Considerations

There are some areas which are often left out of M and E systems, and we need to pay special attention to ensure they are not overlooked, since they are important to sustainable rural development. In order to monitor and evaluate people's participation, the status of women, and changes in the environment, we may need to look for innovative methods of data collection and generation. The usual quantitative data may need to be supplemented with in-depth case studies, participant observation, regular site visits with discussion and dialogue about the issues, and so on.

These more qualitative M and E techniques are a valid part of a participatory M and E system, and form an integral part of it, especially in social impact analysis. Participation itself can be measured in dozens of different ways, depending on the concepts and purposes people have of people's participation.

Monitoring Participation
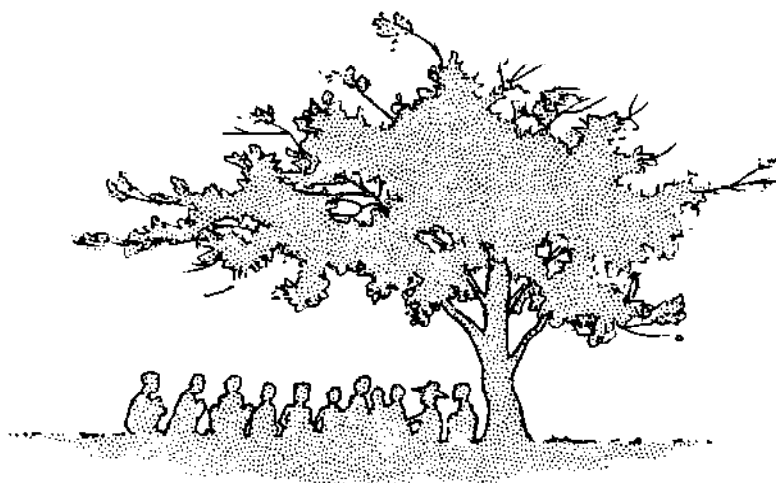
Since people's participation is both a means and an end in the development process, it is important that it be included in the M and E system. As a process which emerges and develops as the project progresses, it may itself undergo significant change. It therefore requires continuous assessment rather than a one-off or "snapshot" exercise. It is difficult to quantify participation, but the following ⊗ provide some examples of quantitative indicators of people's participation:

1.   Organization indicators

    * percentage of people who belong to small
      farmer groups

    * frequency of attendance at meetings

    * changing size of membership during
      the project

    * percentage of villagers who know
      about (have heard about) SF groups

⊗ Adapted from the United Nations (1984) Guiding Principles for the Design and
  Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Rural Development Projects and Programmes
  Rome: UN ACC Task Force on Rural Development.

2.   Small farmer group participation indicators

   * number of SF groups formed

   * number and percentage of eligible
     villagers who become members

   * socio-economic composition of groups

   * number and attendance rates at meetings,
     and change over time.

   * number of person/days of labour
     contributed to project activities

   * number and percentage of members
     taking office-bearing responsibilities

   Other and sometimes more important aspects of participation are
not readily quantifiable, but they may still be assessed by methods such
as participant observation, case studies, group discussion and analysis,
in-depth studies and information-gathering by group members. The list
below gives some of those aspects which can be thus monitored:

   * leadership development

   * interpersonal skills development

   * group strength and dynamism

   * social support mechanisms

   * attitudes and behaviour change

   * collaboration and cooperation

   * communication skills

   * initiatives and innovations

   In many cases a strong, cohesive, functioning group will use
open discussion as their main forum for interpretation of qualitative
information, and they may decide to develop and use charts to monitor
progress. Charts illustrated in figures 3-19 are examples selected
from among many used by small farmer groups in Asia and the Pacific.
Creative group organizers and members of small farmer groups can adapt
and develop many more to suit their own special needs.

Women in Development

The monitoring and evaluation of women in rural development remains problematic for many small farmer groups. Their participation as a frequently disadvantaged group is not always easily differentiated, and quantitative data needs to be disaggregated by sex where possible. Institutionalized discrimination against women is not easily recognized by those whose own customs and prejudices reinforce it by attributing discrimination to biological differences and therefore "in the natural order of things". Monitoring and evaluation of women in development therefore can be a very enlightening process for both women and men who accept as "natural", centuries of discrimination which constrain their productivity. It is in the interests of all therefore to try to break down such prejudice with the data from the M and E system. The following are some indicators used to gather data:

1. General items

   * percentage of funds earmarked for women

   * percentage of funds spent on women

   * number and percentage of households headed by women

2. Project inputs and outputs

   * percentage of women members receiving direct benefits

   * percentage of women receiving credit

   * percentage of recipients of inputs who are women

   * percentage of women with access to extension services

   * percentage of trainees who are women

3.   Impact

  * income, expenditure, savings

  * health and nutrition

  * access to land and other production resources

  * employment and remuneration

  * time allocation

  * participation in rural organizations

  * participation in decision-making

Environmental Factors

The environment is always an integral part of rural development, and is affected by the changes development brings. For development to be sustained therefore, the way in which natural resources are used, and inputs applied must be monitored for environmental impact. At the village level, environmental sanitation, the hygienic disposal of waste and pollutants is a first step in monitoring the environment. The way in which the natural resource base is exploited is also extremely important, so that an early assessment of natural resources is needed.

Both the physical and socio-economic aspects need to be assessed.
Some of the indicators relevant to environmental issues include:

* soil loss or degradation

* loss or degradation of forests

* pollution of water resources

* loss of wildlife

* incidence of environment-related diseases, disasters, accidents

* destruction of fragile or unique flora/fauna environment

* treatment and disposal of wastes, residues and by-products

These items may be developed for purposes of monitoring and evaluation
in the context of group activities. However they must be identified as
early as possible in the life of the project, partly as a consciousness-
raising activity and partly to prevent avoidable, negative consequences
of group actions.

Environmental issues are often controversial, and there will be
those who feel that some environmental costs are legitimate in the pursuit
of other social and economic objectives. At least by identifying, monitoring
and evaluating selected issues the group can choose which actions to follow
so as to minimize damage to the natural resource base and their physical
environment, and can take positive steps to replenish, conserve and regenerate
renewable resources. A growing awareness of environmental issues through a
participatory M and E process can lead to changes in priorities and actions
which will have a positive effect on the sustainability of development
efforts.

Health and Nutrition

In the end, all self-help
development projects aim to enhance
the well-being of one or more
sectors of the population. Moni-
toring and evaluation of the
health and well-being of the
target beneficiaries of a project
is often overlooked unless these
are spelled out as specific
objectives in the planning of
the project. At the very least,
development M and E systems should
include some regular assessment of
improvement or otherwise in nutri-
tion and health of the benefi-
ciaries. For this purpose, the
most commonly used indicators are:
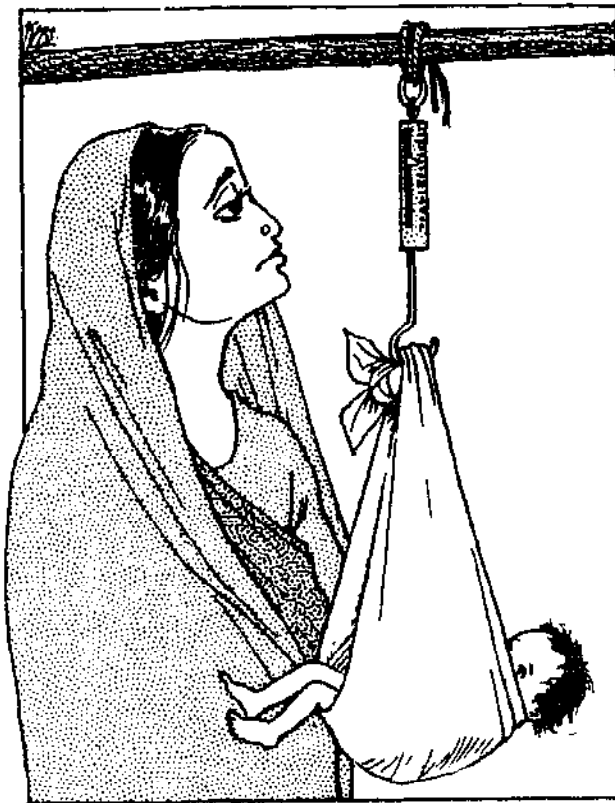
1.   Nutrition

* Weight for age
* Height for age
* Weight for height
* Percentage of underweight newborns
* Food consumption

2.   Health and wellbeing

* Incidence of selected diseases
* Infant mortality rates
* Access to potable water
* Access to medical services
* Social support services

CONCLUSION

Since many projects for self help small scale rural development require initial support from external resources, some reporting of effects and impact will be needed to provide the justifications of expenditure. While the primary purpose of a participatory monitoring and evaluation system is for the participants' own use, it is usually possible to compile the necessary reports for outsiders from the quantitative and qualitative data collected against the above indicators. However in some cases the need for additional indicators for this purpose may be proposed, and the group may agree to incorporate these in their established system. The primary purpose will however remain that decided by the group for their own use.

50

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