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# Community Participation in Development Projects

The World Bank Experience

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Samuel Paul

The World Bank  
Washington, D.C.

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Samuel Paul

The World Bank  
1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433, U.S.A.

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Samuel Paul is an adviser in the Public Sector Management Unit of the World Bank's Projects Policy Department.

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## Summary

This paper reviews the experience of World Bank Projects with community participation (CP) in the urban housing, health and irrigation sectors. A sample of forty projects with potential for CP and ten successful projects without CP were selected from these sectors for detailed study. The study, based on project documents and interviews, addressed the following questions: What were the objectives, approaches and outcomes of CP in Bank projects? What lessons do they offer? What are their implications for Bank policies?

### A Framework for Analysis

The World Bank project experience with community participation has been analyzed within a conceptual framework that draws attention to the objectives, intensity and instruments of CP and their interrelationships. It is argued that the mix of objectives, intensity and instruments of CP tends to vary depending on the nature of projects and their contexts. The multiplicity of approaches to an interpretation of CP in the literature and the world of practice can be better understood within this analytical framework.

### Objectives of CP

(1) In the context of development, CP refers to an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receive a share of project benefits. For the purposes of this study, the objectives of CP as an active process are: (a) empowerment, (b) building beneficiary capacity, (c) increasing project effectiveness, (d) improving project efficiency, and (e) project cost sharing.

(2) Since the seventies, Bank policies have focussed on equity and access to services for the poor, and CP as the sharing of benefits by the poor. While references to effectiveness, efficiency and cost-sharing as objectives of CP are made in Bank's policy documents, empowerment and capacity building have received much less attention. Furthermore, there are no operational guidelines to help staff translate CP into action.

### Project Experience

(1) Of the five objectives of CP, cost sharing, project efficiency and project effectiveness were dominant in the projects reviewed. CP was introduced in 38% of the projects to increase project effectiveness but only 25% were able to implement it. They had reasonable success in matching services to beneficiary needs, and mobilizing demand which in turn contributed to effectiveness. Although 48% of the projects planned CP for efficiency, only 35% translated it into specific activities. In these cases, efficiency was enhanced through a smoother implementation in sites and services projects and better routing operations in irrigation projects. Cost sharing was the objective of 48% of the projects, 35% attempted to convert plans into actions, but only 10% achieved some measure of success. Cost-sharing was constrained by lack of political support, inadequate information, and insecurity of beneficiaries with respect to land titles and services (See Table 1).

(2) Empowerment and capacity building emerged as relatively less important objectives in Bank projects. Only 3 projects (8%) had empowerment as an objective, the pursuit of which was facilitated in two cases by the active participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Building institutional capacity was the objective of 18% of the projects whose main concern was the maintenance of physical infrastructure.

(3) The primary organizational devices used in Bank projects to elicit CP were user groups, community workers, and field extension workers

Table 1

CP: Objectives and Outcomes

<u>Objective</u>	<u>No. of Projects</u>		<u>Impact</u>	<u>Issues</u>
	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Implemented</u>		
Empowerment	3 (8%)	3 (8%)	Not well documented. Evidence that beneficiaries gained some strength and awareness.	So far not a major objective of Bank projects.
Capacity Building (Direct)	7 (20%)	7 (20%)	Beneficiary groups managed operational responsibilities.	More evident in the post '75 period. Resource limitations and concern for sustainability may direct greater attention to CP in the future.
(Unplanned)	-	5	Beneficiary Groups Played an active role in specific activities.	Capacity building occurred as a consequence of demand mobilization efforts.
Effectiveness	15 (38%)	10 (25%)	New services offered. Positive results in demand generation.	Technology intensive sectors may allot a weaker role for CP in project design. CP not fully effective if not accompanied by extension of



<u>Objective</u>	<u>No. of Projects</u>		<u>Impact</u>	<u>Issues</u>
	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Implemented</u>		
	-	3 (8%) (not planned)		technical assistance or training of beneficiary. Intensity ranges from information sharing to consultation to limited decision making. CP useful for project redesign during implementation.
Efficiency	19 (48%)	14 (35%)	Difficult implementation steps made possible through CP. Smoother progress of projects.  Operations management improved in some functions only.	CP useful for management of project operations.  Reasons for the full impact or potential of CP not being realized: lack of beneficiary training: poor extension or inadequate technology. Other elements in project complement CP.
Cost Sharing	19 (48%)	14 (35%)	Little success with cost recovery. Only two cases of exemplary performance.	Constraints: lack of political support: lack of guarantee of smooth flow of services: insecurity with respect to basic assets like land: inadequate information.

of the implementing agency. User groups were formed mostly in irrigation projects. PHN projects relied primarily on extension workers and grassroots (community) workers. Urban projects made use of all three instruments.

(4) The intensity of CP in Bank projects ranged from the low level of information sharing to the moderate level of decision making in selected operational aspects of projects. Intensity was highest where empowerment was the dominant goal.

(5) The full potential of CP could not be realized in some Bank projects due to the absence of other critical elements (inputs) manifested in factors such as technological gaps, poor extension and supervision, lack of an integrated set of services and inability to implement policies critical to the project.

(6) In respect of the initiative for incorporating CP into project strategies, the role of Bank staff, by and large, has been reactive rather than proactive. The initiative usually came from the government or a local agency in the borrowing country. Once such local initiatives became apparent, the responsiveness of Bank staff was commendable.

#### Lessons

(1) The experience of Bank projects shows that CP is appropriate when one or more of the following conditions are present: (a) the objective of the project is empowerment of the people and capacity building, (b) the design of the project services calls for interaction among beneficiaries as a basis for identifying their needs and preferences, (c) the implementation of the project demands frequent dialogue and negotiation among beneficiaries, and (d) users rather than a weak bureaucracy are better able to manage a part of the project operations.

(2) It is difficult to incorporate CP into project strategies and enthruse beneficiaries to be active in CP when one or more of the following conditions prevails: (a) the country/sector does not have a social tradition supportive of CP, (b) inadequate technology inhibits the delivery of project services, (c) the market/government is perceived by the beneficiaries as a satisfactory medium for project implementation, and (d) project authorities (national) are reluctant to build CP into project design.

(3) The indiscriminate use of CP in all types of projects is unwarranted. However, in projects which deal with vast masses of beneficiaries for service delivery (people-oriented), there is considerable potential for the use of CP. When the conditions described in the preceding paragraph prevail, or Bank staff do not have the skills or incentives to create conditions favorable to CP, the full potential of CP is unlikely to be exploited.

## Implications for Policy

(1) In the context of poverty eradication, the policies of many developing country governments and donors have rightly emphasized the importance of increasing the access of the poor to development services. It is necessary to reinforce this concern by highlighting the role that community organizations can play in improving the access to services for the weaker segments of the population. Organizations of the poor may effectively mobilize the demand for services, provide efficient feedback and lead to a more equitable sharing of benefits, thus complementing the efforts of governments and donors on the supply side to improve accessibility. Policies also need to be more explicit on the important role of projects in building beneficiary capacity. Sustainability of projects, and in a larger sense, of development, cannot be achieved without the capacity of the beneficiaries and their institutions being strengthened in the process. That sustainability provides a rationale for CP in a variety of project situations, needs to be explained and effectively communicated to donor staff as well as borrowers.

(2) Governments and donors need to pay special attention to the growing experience in many countries in respect of community participation. Innovative experiments are under way at the micro level in many regions, either at the initiative of local communities or NGOs who act as catalysts in the process. The lessons learned from these endeavors deserve to be disseminated widely and the scope for scaling up or adapting the underlying strategies examined.

(3) Even if governments and donors are persuaded that CP is appropriate to their projects, they are unlikely to incorporate CP in project design as long as they have no guidance in terms of the relevant methodologies. It will be a mistake to infer from this that standard guidelines on CP must be prescribed for all to follow. The approaches and methods for operationalizing CP may vary by sector and sub-sector. There is a need, therefore, to develop and disseminate sector-related guidelines or at least advice on the use of CP in projects relevant to specific country contexts.

(4) Training can be a powerful instrument in the dissemination process referred to above. Governments have an important resource in their networks of training institutions which could be used not only to disseminate the lessons learned and methodologies or guidelines but also to encourage public servants to play a proactive role in CP. Government training strategies could thus complement the training efforts of NGOs and other micro level organizations at the grassroots.



## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

### The World Bank Experience

This paper reviews the World Bank's experience with community participation (CP) in a sample of its projects selected from three different sectors; urban housing, population, health and nutrition (PHN), and irrigation. The sample was chosen on a judgmental basis and consisted of forty projects which were known to have the potential for the use of CP or incorporated it in their strategies, and ten successful projects from the same sectors which did not make use of CP. The choice of the sectors was governed by both the need to keep the scope of the study within reasonable limits, and an apriori assessment that these sectors were more likely to use community participation than some other sectors with which the Bank is concerned. The focus of the paper is on the approaches to participation employed by the first set of projects and the lessons to be learned from their experience. An analysis of the second set of projects sheds light on the reasons why community participation was neglected by them.

The sectoral distribution of the fifty projects (see Annex I for details) was as follows: urban housing (36%), population, health and nutrition (30%), and irrigation (34%). In terms of their geographical distribution, 40% of the projects were from Asia, 24% from Latin America and the Caribbean, 26% from Africa and the remainder from other regions. Thirty-six projects (72%) were initiated in the 1970's. One was launched in 1969 and thirteen belonged to the post 1980 period. In all, these projects accounted for US\$1360 million in loans and credit from the Bank.

The selection of projects for the present study was based on a review of the summaries of the staff appraisal reports of projects from the sectors of urban housing, population, health and nutrition (PHN), and irrigation. This was done in consultation with Bank staff who suggested additions to or deletions from the initial list. Wherever possible, sequential projects were included to see whether there were changes in project design and implementation over time. All projects in the sample had potential for using CP, based on an assessment of the tasks involved. Not all of them, however, incorporated CP in their strategies. Nor did all projects which adopted CP succeed with it. We thus have a mix of projects with varying degrees of CP.

This paper is divided into five sections. In section I, a conceptual framework for analyzing CP is presented. The framework relates the objectives of CP to other dimensions such as intensity and instruments, and examines how CP issues might be addressed in the project cycle. Section II surveys the role given to CP in Bank policies and identifies the gaps that remain. Bank project experience is then examined in the next two sections within the conceptual framework referred to above. The objectives and outcomes of CP, the levels of intensity and instruments used for CP in selected Bank projects, reasons for the neglect of CP in some projects and some hypotheses on the conditions under which the use of CP is appropriate are

among the subjects dealt with in these sections. The implications of the findings of this review for the policies of donors and developing country governments are discussed in Section V.

## I. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The definition of "participation" is a matter on which there is considerable disagreement among development scholars and practitioners<sup>1/</sup>. Some use the term to mean active participation in political decision making. For certain activist groups, participation has no meaning unless the people involved have significant control over the decisions concerning the organization to which they belong. Development economists tend to define participation by the poor in terms of the equitable sharing of the benefits of projects. Yet others view participation as an instrument to enhance the efficiency of projects or as the co-production of services. Some would regard participation as an end in itself, whereas others see it as a means to achieve other goals. These diverse perspectives truly reflect the differences in the objectives for which participation might be advocated by different groups.

While the debate goes on, for purposes of this review, we propose to define community participation as an active process by which beneficiary/client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well being in terms of income, personal growth, self reliance or other values they cherish. First of all, this definition implies that the context of participation is the development project/program. Macro level or political participation, while important (e.g. voting in elections, political lobbying, etc.), is not our concern in this review, though it is recognized that a participatory form of government will provide a supportive environment for CP at the project level. Second, the focus is on the participation of beneficiaries, and not that of government personnel or of donor staff. People (beneficiaries) are the object of development and it is their involvement in the direction and execution of projects which is of concern here. Third, the joint or collaborative involvement of beneficiaries in groups is a hallmark of CP. In the context of a development project, beneficiaries, as individuals, can be made to participate in many ways. Their needs and preferences can often be ascertained through individual interviews and they can be made to share in project costs individually through a government order. But CP can be said to occur only when people act in concert to advise, decide or act on issues which can best be solved through such joint action (e.g. where externalities/indivisibilities are present or organized groups are essential for commitment creation, learning, confidence building, cost sharing, etc). Hence the use of the qualifying term "community". Fourth, CP refers to a process and not a product in the sense of sharing project benefits. For example, acquisition of economic assets through a project (e.g., land, house, etc.) does augment the power and freedom of poor people. It is possible, however, that some people might get a fair share of the benefits of a project in the first round, but find it difficult to sustain them as they never went through the process of cooperative action, learning and building up their capacity. This is not to deny the importance of the sharing of benefits, but to say that CP viewed as process provides a dimension that goes beyond benefit sharing, and is germane to the issue of project sustainability. CP, as the sharing of benefits by the weaker sections, has

been the focus of many reviews of project impact, both within and outside the Bank since the 1970's. Participation as a process, on the other hand, has received much less attention.

The foregoing operational definition of CP in the project context should not be construed to mean that the nature and scope of CP will be uniform in all cases. From a conceptual standpoint, it is useful to distinguish between the objectives, intensity and instruments of CP. There could be variations in each of these dimensions which in turn tend to cause variations in the nature and scope of CP. Furthermore, there are inter-relationships among the objectives, intensity and instruments of CP. The combinations of these dimensions which emerge in specific contexts tend to vary depending on their consistency and feasibility in those settings.

### Objectives of CP

In the context of development, CP may be viewed as a process that serves one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) In the broadest sense, CP may be thought of as an instrument of empowerment. According to this view, development should lead to an equitable sharing of power and to a higher level of people's, in particular the weaker groups', political awareness and strengths. Any project or development activity is then a means of empowering people so that they are able to initiate actions on their own and thus influence the processes and outcomes of development.
- (b) CP may serve a more limited objective of building beneficiary capacity in relation to a project. Thus, beneficiaries may share in the management tasks of the project by taking on operational responsibility for a segment of it themselves. For example, beneficiaries may play an active role in monitoring. Developing beneficiary capacity could also contribute to the sustainability of a project beyond the disbursement period due to the enhanced level of beneficiary interest and competence in project management.
- (c) CP may contribute to increased project effectiveness. Effectiveness refers to the degree to which a given objective is achieved. It is useful to distinguish effectiveness from efficiency which measures the relationship between a given output and its cost (inputs). CP tends to enhance project effectiveness when the involvement of beneficiaries contributes to better project design and implementation and leads to a better match of project services with beneficiary needs and constraints. CP can provide inputs for project design or redesign so that appropriate services are devised and delivered. Viewed thus, CP entails the "co-production" of goods and services by beneficiaries jointly with the project authority. Here the focus is on the achievement of project objectives.
- (d) Yet a fifth objective of CP is the desire to share the costs of the project with the people it serves. Thus, beneficiaries may be expected to contribute labor, money or undertake to maintain

the project. Self help groups in low income housing illustrate this objective of CP. CP may thus be used to facilitate a collective understanding and agreement on cost sharing and its enforcement.

- (e) CP may improve project efficiency. Project planning and implementation could become more efficient because of timely beneficiary inputs. CP could be used to promote agreement, cooperation and interaction among beneficiaries, and between them and the implementing agency of the project so that delays are reduced, a smoother flow of project services is achieved, and overall costs are minimized.

These objectives may overlap in real life project situations. A project may simultaneously pursue several objectives. As one moves up the hierarchy, a higher level objective tends to incorporate some of the lower level objectives too. Empowerment, for example, implies capacity enhancement also. The reverse is not necessarily true. The pursuit of efficiency need not necessarily lead to empowerment. This issue is dealt with in greater detail towards the end of this section.

#### Intensity of CP

While CP can be used for any or all of these objectives, it may vary in the intensity with which it is sought in a particular project or at a particular stage of the project. The nature of the project and the characteristics of beneficiaries will determine, to a large extent, how actively and completely the latter can practice CP. Where complex technologies and their adaptation dominate the design of a project, there may be less scope for the active participation of beneficiaries in design, for example, than in a case where the technology is less complex and easier for common people to comprehend and interact with. Even so, it is necessary to assess likely beneficiary responses to the introduction of complex technologies. It is equally important to share information on design with beneficiaries in such cases, though decisions on design may be made, or at least dominated, by other actors. Information sharing on design is clearly a less intense form of CP than decision making on design.

It is useful to distinguish between four levels of intensity in CP, though different levels of CP may co-exist in the same project.

- (1) Information sharing. Project designers and managers may share information with beneficiaries in order to facilitate collective or individual action. Though it reflects a low level of intensity, it can have a positive impact on project outcomes to the extent it equips beneficiaries to understand and perform their tasks better. In family planning or nutrition programs, such information sharing may in fact be critical.

- (2) Consultation. When beneficiaries are not only informed, but consulted on key issues at some or all stages in a project cycle, the level of intensity of CP rises. There is an opportunity here for beneficiaries to interact and provide feedback to the project agency which the latter could take into account in the design and implementation stages. If farmers are consulted on extension practices and arrangements, project outcomes are likely to be better than if they were merely informed.



(3) Decision making. A still higher level of intensity may be said to occur when beneficiaries have a decision making role in matters of project design and implementation. Decisions may be made exclusively by beneficiaries or jointly with others on specific issues or aspects relating to a project. Thus slum dwellers may decide jointly with project staff on the design for upgrading their housing. Farmers may decide by themselves on a program for the distribution of water for irrigation. Decision making implies a much greater degree of control or influence on projects by beneficiaries than under consultation or information sharing.

(4) Initiating action. When beneficiaries are able to take the initiative in terms of actions/decisions pertaining to a project, the intensity of CP may be said to have reached its peak. Initiative implies a proactive capacity and the confidence to get going on one's own. When beneficiary groups engaged in a health project identify a new need and decide to respond to it on their own, they are taking the initiative for their development. This is qualitatively different from their capacity to act or decide on issues or tasks proposed or assigned to them.

In planning projects, governments and donors often tend to pre-empt the initiatives that beneficiaries might have taken. In such cases, the latter can play only a reactive role. Projects can, however, be designed to encourage beneficiaries to initiate action. There are also cases where beneficiary groups which seemingly failed in some projects went on to initiate other projects on their own and with greater success<sup>2/</sup>. The earlier projects obviously had strengthened their capacity for cooperative action and given them the confidence and skills to initiate action elsewhere. Projects also vary in their intensity of CP in different stages of the cycle. At the design stage, a project may rely on information sharing and consultation, whereas during implementation, beneficiaries may be given a decision making and managerial role. This may happen for two reasons. If the technology of the service is too intricate for its beneficiaries, certain design decisions may be made at other levels though they could be consulted. Similarly, if a community has no prior experience in dealing with the type of project being planned, the project management may move cautiously on the CP front, trying to sense its capacity and constraints. It is not surprising, for example, that in the initial stage when beneficiary groups are yet to be formed, a project agency starts with a low level of CP intensity and gradually moves up the ladder.

#### Instruments of CP

By instruments we mean the institutional devices used by a project to organize and sustain CP. These devices vary in their complexity in terms of design and management, and their relevance to different types of projects. The instruments of CP may be grouped into three categories.

(1) Field workers of the project agency. A project may use its field staff to mobilize and interact with beneficiary groups. They operate at the grassroots level and yet are part of the project agency. In agricultural and irrigation projects, field workers are often used to organize and interact with farmer groups. Field workers' orientation and commitment to CP are key determinants of their effectiveness as instruments of CP. Training can be used to influence their community mobilization skills and attitudes. If they

see themselves primarily as agents of the government or donor, their ability to promote and sustain CP is likely to suffer. If this perception is also shared by beneficiaries, the chances are that field workers will not be able to facilitate CP except at a relatively low level of intensity.

(2) Community workers/committees. A project agency may draw upon workers or volunteers from among beneficiaries to act as community mobilizers. Such persons may or may not be paid by the agency. However, in all cases, the community may have had a say in their selection and the roles they play. If they are selected through a community consensus or a consultative process, they are likely to identify better with the community's problems and feelings and facilitate CP more effectively. Instead of community workers, committees which represent beneficiaries may be organized as an instrument of CP. Where large numbers of people are involved, committees are a useful device for beneficiaries to reach higher levels of CP intensity provided they truly represent the community's interests. Committees have acted as a CP instrument in several primary health care projects.

(3) User groups. Where the number of beneficiaries is manageable either because of the local nature of a project or the specialized nature of the group (farmers, mothers with small children, etc.), it is possible to organize viable groups of users as an instrument of CP. This instrument has the potential to reach the highest level of CP though its creation and sustenance are the most complex. User groups may operate at any level of intensity, and over time may rise from one level to another. Of all the instruments, user groups are likely to involve the maximum number of relevant beneficiaries in a given project context. The use of one instrument, however, does not preclude the use of others. User groups may coexist with community volunteers or committees.

Unlike field workers, who by definition can be organized only through external intervention (e.g. by the project agency), it is conceivable that user groups could be created through the medium of internal leadership or external intervention. Where user groups are energized by local leadership, the intensity of CP is likely to be high. Intermediary organizations such as NGOs (non-governmental organizations) can also be a medium for the use of any of these instruments. Needless to say, it will take a highly committed NGO to create and sustain user groups at a high level of CP intensity.

### Interrelationships

Though the degree of complexity varies from one CP objective to another, the instruments and levels of intensity described above could be adopted by any objective. Thus both cost sharing and empowerment may make use of field workers, or user groups. Both efficiency and capacity building may rely on information sharing, consultation and decision making. Figure I demonstrates that the use of all instruments and all levels of intensity are technically feasible under any of the five objectives. In this figure, objectives and instruments are depicted on the horizontal and vertical axes respectively. Intensity is represented as a third dimension (height) perpendicular to the other two. A variety of technically feasible combinations of objectives, intensity and instruments can be found in Figure I.

The three dimensions of objectives, intensity and instruments of CP, however, are interrelated. There are certain combinations of these dimensions which are more likely to be consistent and hence more effective than others in a given project context. Generally speaking, the more complex the objective of CP, the greater the need for a higher level of intensity and more powerful instruments. By the same token, if CP has a less demanding objective, starting out from a lower level of intensity and a simpler instrument will be in order. Projects with different CP objectives may thus position themselves differently in terms of the configuration of objectives, intensity and instruments.

If a project has empowerment as its CP objective, for example, it must strive for a high degree of control or voice for its beneficiaries. To achieve a high degree of control, it must move up in intensity from information sharing to initiating action. To achieve empowerment and a high level of intensity, it must also move forward from the deployment of field workers to that of user groups. If empowerment is the objective, reliance on field workers and information sharing alone will not be adequate. On the other hand, if efficiency is the objective of CP, a low level of intensity (information sharing, consultation) and instruments such as field workers or community workers could deliver the goods. The relative role of user groups is likely to be less when efficiency is the goal. What is being highlighted is the need to search for more complex and internally consistent combinations as more difficult objectives of CP are sought to be achieved. Objectives differ not in terms of the exclusive use of one instrument or a level of intensity, but in the mix of instruments and the mix of levels of intensity they deploy. The relative importance of the different instruments in the mix, for example, could vary from one objective to another.

This can be illustrated by reference to Figure II. The mix of instruments and the mix of levels of intensity are represented on the X and Y axes respectively. Point B on the X axis has a mix dominated by user groups (U) whereas A has a mix dominated by field workers (F). Similarly, as one moves towards Q from P, the mix changes in favour of the higher levels of intensity. Initiating action (IA) dominates the mix at Q, whereas information sharing (IS) dominates the mix at P. The combinations of instruments and intensity (mix) which are likely to be associated with different objectives are represented by overlapping curves. EF, for example, lies above and to the right of CD, though there is an overlap between them. A major segment of EF represents combinations which are weighted in favour of higher levels of intensity and more complex instruments than is true of CD. Thus, as the complexity of objectives increases, the combinations of instruments and intensity also shift in favour of the more complex elements in the mix. An important implication is that while all elements tend to remain in the mix, their relative importance changes as the complexity of objectives increases.

The phenomenon of multiple approaches to and interpretations of CP in the literature and the world of practice can now be better understood within the framework presented above. When the objectives and constraints facing organizations vary, they are inclined to position themselves on different curves in Figure II. A local NGO committed to empowerment, but in a limited area, could choose to operate with the most complex combination. An international donor working through governments may not have the same freedom of choice. Given its constraints, the donor may decide to stay with a less difficult, and yet consistent combination. Donors may sometimes start with

**FIGURE I**  
**OBJECTIVES, INTENSITY & INSTRUMENTS OF CP**

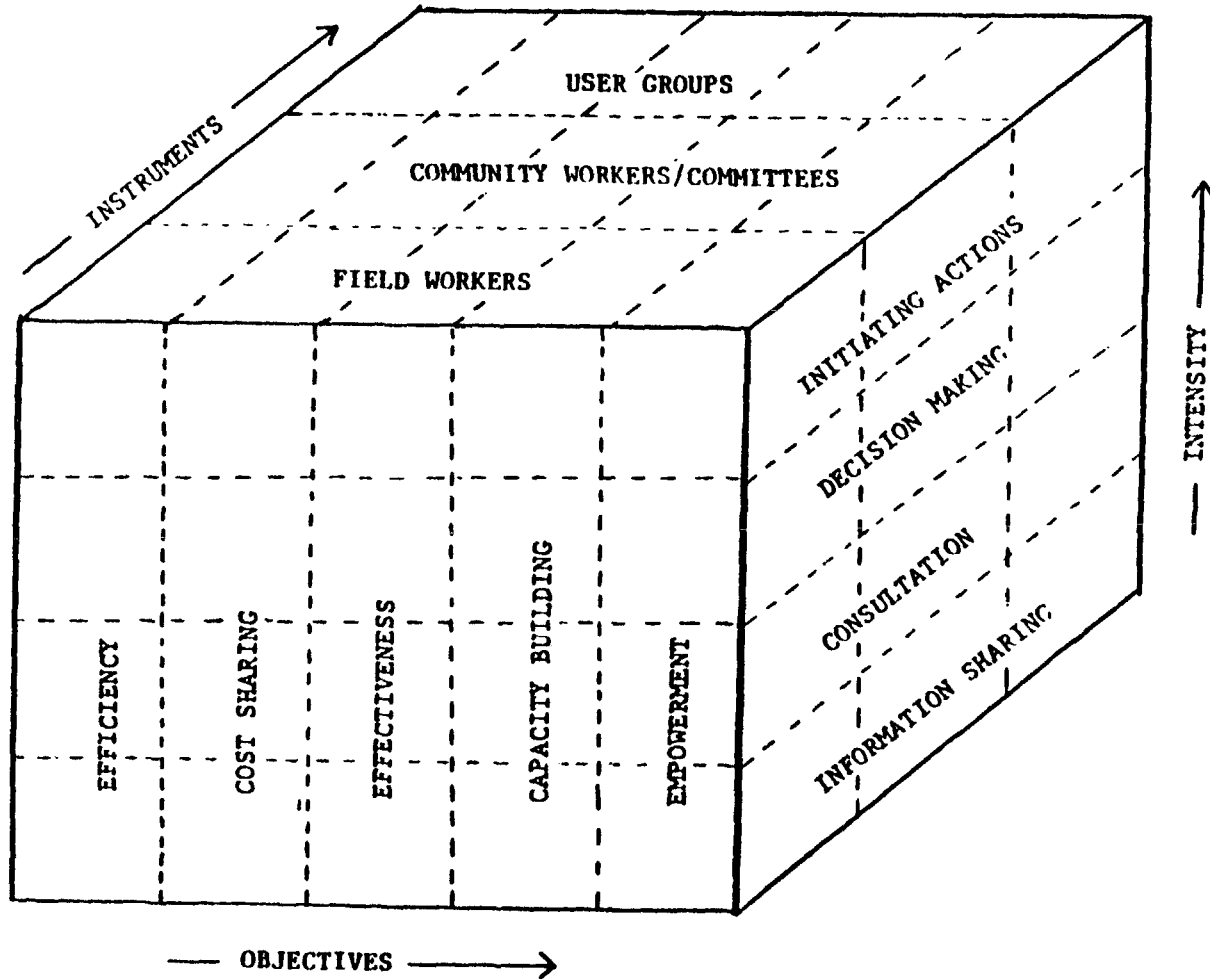
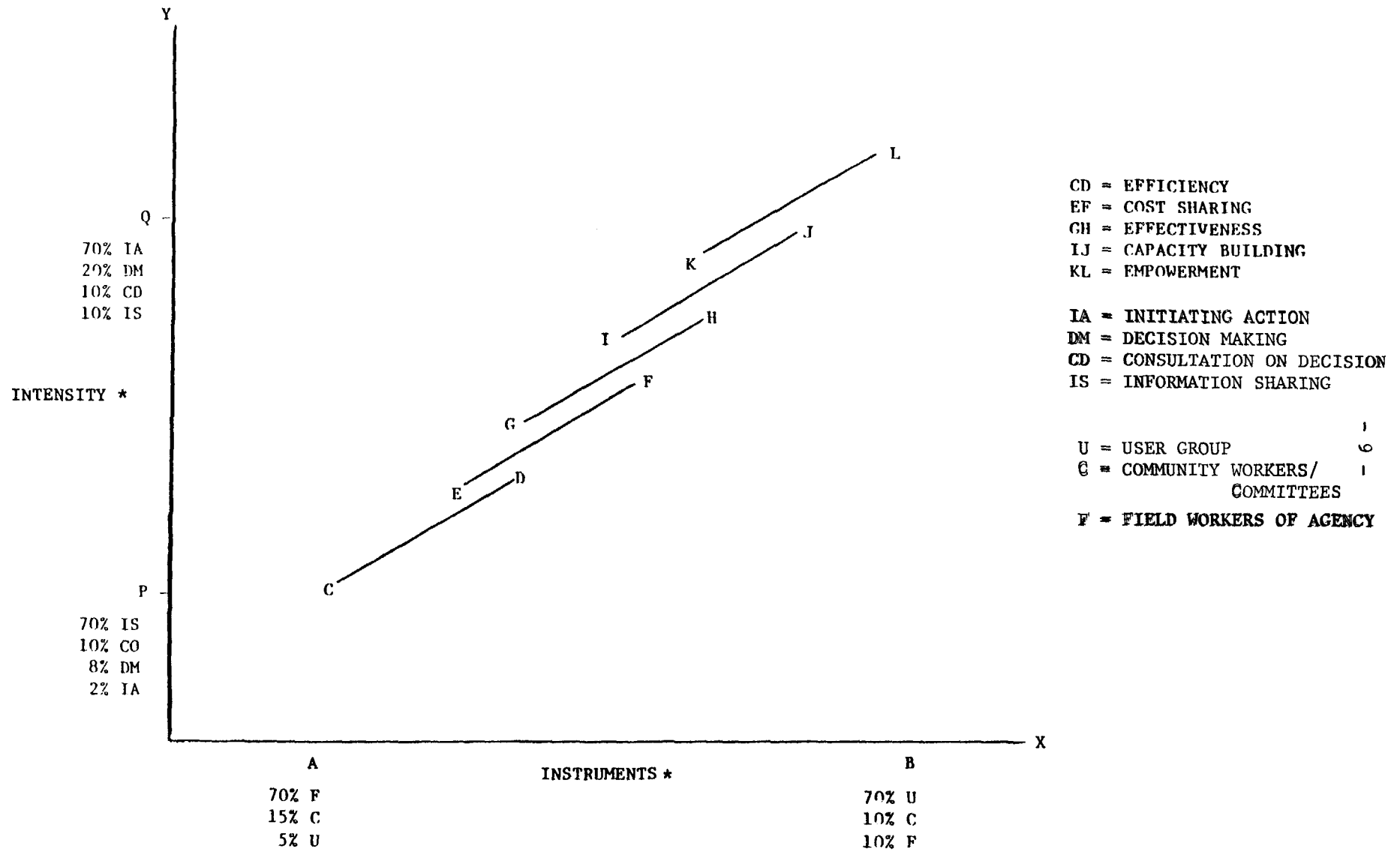


FIGURE II



\* The per cent figures given against the different points are illustrative only. They do not imply that precise combinations can be prescribed for each CP objective.

simpler combinations in the first stage of the project cycle, and move into more complex ones in later stages. Such moves, however, are difficult to manage unless they have a strategy for CP.

### CP and the Project Cycle

Though standardized guidelines on CP in the project cycle are unwarranted, it is possible to present an approach to thinking about CP that takes into account the different phases of the cycle. The focus of the comments below is on how to address CP issues rather than to prescribe its objective, intensity or instruments.

In the project cycle, CP feasibility should be assessed as early as possible. For instance, in the reconnaissance stage, basic information could be gathered on the nature of beneficiaries, role of the community, power relations, etc., with the aid of a trained social scientist. In urban upgrading and health projects for example, the latter should be as much a part of the reconnaissance function as an architect.

During identification, a needs analysis of beneficiaries could be attempted as a basis for designing the project to match community needs and capacities. It is in light of this exercise that a judgment should be made on the feasible objectives of CP in the project. Information gathered during reconnaissance will be useful at this stage.

If a feasible objective has been identified for CP, during the preparation stage, consultation could be started with the community on its role in the project. Sample studies of beneficiary groups could provide inputs for the consultative process. Specific tasks to be performed by the community could thus be identified to be incorporated into the project design.

During implementation, an important function of supervision will be to assess the progress of CP and the delivery of inputs to the community to perform its role. Again, visits to beneficiary groups in the project area on a sample basis will provide ample evidence to make a judgment. Assistance to solve the CP problems on the ground is as important a task of supervision as the follow-up on procurement or disbursement problems.

Those who plan to incorporate CP into the project cycle should bear in mind that participation is not a riskless enterprise. First of all, CP may tend to raise expectations in the public eye, which in some cases may be difficult to meet. Organizing beneficiaries is a time consuming and complex process. Those who expect quick returns from this investment may be disappointed. Second, the risk of failure and the visibility of the consequences of failure of CP are also pretty high. CP does attract wider public attention than many other project components because of the emotional involvement of people, and hence its failure will not go unnoticed. Third, and perhaps most important, the elites among beneficiaries tend to appropriate a disproportionate share of project benefits if inequality of income and power is considerable in the community where CP is practiced. The likely impact of inequality on CP therefore deserves special attention in the design stage.

CP is not a costless process either. It takes time, money and skills to organize and sustain participation. For communities of the poor, the short term opportunity costs of organization and active participation can be quite high. For project agencies, the initial investment in getting CP under way means an extra cost, though there is evidence from the field to show that such costs are not considerable in relation to the total cost of a project. In any case, if the objectives of CP are valuable (e.g. capacity building, effectiveness, etc.) and there is no better means to achieve them, in terms of cost CP will remain the only viable alternative.

### Complementarities and Impact of CP

It is not an easy task to evaluate the outcome of CP in relation to its objectives. First of all, there are some objectives, the achievement of which is more easy to measure than others. For example, the outcome in respect of cost sharing can be measured, whereas contribution to project effectiveness or capacity building is more difficult to measure and may have to be viewed from a longer term perspective. Second, even when measurement is feasible, interpreting the outcome of CP is not easy, as it depends also on the role played by other complementary elements in the project. The problem is that some objectives of CP cannot be disentangled from those of the project itself. Effectiveness, for instance, could conceivably gain from CP. If, however, the project had technical deficiencies which adversely affected the design of the service, or if certain complementary services needed by beneficiaries were not available due to poor strategic planning, the positive effect of CP on effectiveness would seem to be less than would be the case otherwise. CP cannot compensate for poorly conceived farm extension practices or health services. If the technical assistance given to farmers in terms of land preparation or extension is inadequate, an irrigation project's outcome will remain unsatisfactory even if a water user association was a project feature. This is not to deny that active user groups might work to minimize such bottlenecks and hence improve overall effectiveness.

The phenomenon of complementarities thus makes the link between CP and overall project performance rather tenuous. The positive effect of CP on project outcomes may be masked by the negative impact of other variables which also influence project performance. The conclusion of some researchers that CP does not necessarily lead to project success in all cases can be explained in terms of this phenomenon. Given the severity of this problem, it is better to use intermediate impact indicators to reflect the direct contribution of CP to specific aspects of the project rather than link CP to the project's overall performance. Evidence on cost sharing, redesign of a service as a result of CP, etc., are examples of such indicators.

## II. BANK POLICIES AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The Bank's poverty-focussed lending in the 1970's stressed the access of low income beneficiaries to the benefits of development projects. There was an explicit emphasis on equity, and on CP as the sharing of benefits by the poor. Policy statements and sectoral priorities provided institutional support for the participation of the poor in the benefits of development projects. For example, the Bank's Operations Policy Notes (OPN) reflect the equity concerns of the "new style" projects of the 1970's<sup>3/</sup>. Specific guidelines were evolved for reporting and monitoring the poverty alleviation

impact of the rural and urban sector projects. Local involvement could lead to a simpler, less costly operation as well as greater commitment to implementing the project and achieving its objectives<sup>4/</sup>. Moreover, the publication of an annual report on the Bank's impact on poverty alleviation ensured institution-wide monitoring of the equity effects of Bank lending.

Concern for the participation of the poor in project benefits is built into the Bank's sectoral policies also. In the urban housing sector, the primary thrust of Bank projects in the 70's was to evolve an approach to housing that would respond to the needs of the lowest 20% of the urban poor<sup>5/</sup>. The Bank's "new style" rural projects were meant to benefit the rural poor and experiment with small farm operations<sup>6/</sup>. In health, Bank projects were to support country programs for universal access to basic health care services<sup>7/</sup>. Yet another policy-oriented Bank document has stressed the need for nutrition interventions in support of the poor, often the victims of malnutrition<sup>8/</sup>.

The sector policy statements refer in some detail to the role and function of CP in projects. The Rural Development Policy paper notes that people's involvement can lead to the adoption of new techniques of production<sup>9/</sup>. The paper acknowledges the mixed experience with cooperatives as participatory institutions and brings up the need to explore ways of working more closely with nongovernmental agencies. The Health sector policy paper speaks of the imperative of CP for the acceptance of health programs<sup>10/</sup>. It adds that CP has been a feature of successful low cost programs involving the Bank and other donors. A variety of roles for CP is noted: self help in construction of facilities; contribution of material inputs; cooperative mechanisms to finance drug purchases; unpaid volunteer workers and community selection of health workers. The Health sector paper goes on to identify ways of promoting CP in projects. Considerable attention is given to CP in the policy on sites and services projects in the Urban sector<sup>11/</sup>. Specific stages in which beneficiaries can be usefully involved are considered. It is noted that even the best of plans may have to change during project implementation since beneficiary reactions cannot be easily predicted. This would suggest the involvement of the beneficiaries at several intermediate stages of the development of a sites and services project.

Of the different objectives of CP, Bank policies have focussed relatively more on project effectiveness, efficiency and cost sharing than on beneficiary capacity building and empowerment. For instance, the Operations Manual Statements (OMS) give a great deal of explicit attention to CP for purposes of effectiveness and efficiency. The section on project generation and design says:

"when a project is aimed at a specific group or affects them or depends on them for its success, there is need for:

- (1) reasonable knowledge of the intended target group and the population in the area, and
- (2) appropriate incentives to elicit the participants' contribution to the project objectives"<sup>12/</sup>.



The OMS on project design speaks of the importance of understanding beneficiary attitudes, customs and skills and motivation in order to design appropriate project services and institutions<sup>13/</sup>.

The guidelines for Project Appraisal also reflect the significance of CP to the early stages of project development. A section on "Sociological Aspects", added to the guidelines in 1981, mentioned four factors as important for a sociological understanding of the community<sup>14/</sup>:

- (a) the socio-cultural and demographic characteristics of local beneficiaries;
- (b) the social organization of productive activities of the population in the project area;
- (c) the cultural acceptability of the project and its compatibility with the behaviour and perceived needs of the intended beneficiaries; and
- (d) the social strategy for project implementation and operation needed to elicit and sustain beneficiaries' participation.

CP in terms of cost recovery has been a continuing concern of Bank policy. A Central Projects Note refers to the high cost per beneficiary in irrigation projects and says that a part or all of it may have to be recovered from beneficiaries<sup>15/</sup>. It acknowledges that this is a difficult task and involves a "complex and politically sensitive process" which often may call for changes in current legislation and traditional practices. Other documents generalize this approach to public sector projects at large<sup>16/</sup>.

A review of Bank policies which address CP related issues leads to the following conclusions:

(1) In terms of the objectives of CP discussed in this paper, empowerment and beneficiary capacity building have received the least attention in Bank policies. On the other hand, the role of CP in the enhancement of project effectiveness, efficiency, and cost sharing (including cost recovery) have received somewhat greater attention (see Table 2). Issues of participation, however, have not attracted as much attention in Bank policies as questions of equity and access.

(2) While Bank policies are supportive of CP, operational guidelines to assist Bank staff to translate the concept into design features are yet to be evolved. According to the staff interviewed in the course of this study, the lack of guidance on this subject may have had the unintended effect of limiting their interest and initiative in CP related matters. The answer to this problem, however, does not lie in the dissemination of standardized guidelines on CP. The nature and scope of CP is likely to vary by sector, task and country. Operational guidelines perhaps should focus on the sector or sub-sector. Staff could then be trained to adapt them to specific countries or social settings.

Table 2

Reference to CP in Policy Statements

<u>Objective of CP</u>	<u>Extent of Reference in Policy Documents</u>	<u>Extent of operationa guidelines available</u>
(1) Sharing of benefits by weaker sections	Considerable	Considerable
(2) Empowerment	No reference	None
(3) Capacity Building	Hardly any reference in the past; recent interest due to sustainability concerns.	None
(4) Project Effectiveness	Considerable	Little
(5) Project Efficiency	Considerable	Little
(6) Cost Sharing	Considerable	Moderate

(3) In most Bank projects, the focus is on the collection of economic and technical data. Information on beneficiaries, especially in respect of their behaviour, preferences and attitudes, is seldom sought. Such data are not generated through conventional economic or statistical surveys. It is generally assumed that information of a behavioral nature is more difficult and costly to gather. When the basic data required to judge the relevance of CP are absent, the staff tend to shy away from the next step of probing into the nature and scope of CP required. Use of emerging methodologies in the field of beneficiary analysis in the project context is one way of filling this gap.

### III. CP IN BANK PROJECTS: OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

In this section we shall examine the objectives and outcomes of CP in the forty Bank projects which had planned to use CP in some form or other, and the reasons for the neglect of CP in the ten Bank projects which did not make use of CP at all.

Information on matters pertaining to CP in the selected projects was obtained through staff appraisal reports, supervision and project completion reports, audit reports and policy documents relevant to the sectors involved. In the course of the study, Bank staff (45 in all) associated with the projects were also interviewed. No attempt, however, was made to gather first hand evidence from the field through interviews with the project staff in the borrower countries.

The forty projects referred to above were reviewed to see whether any of the objectives discussed in Section I figured in the use of CP. The outcomes of CP and the issues and lessons emerging from the analysis are also presented below (see Table 3 for a summary statement). As some Bank projects may have more than one CP objective, overlaps between the categories listed in Table 3 are unavoidable. The percentage figures shown against each objective, when added up, will therefore exceed 100 per cent.

The five objectives mentioned earlier in section 1 were: Empowerment, Capacity Building, Effectiveness, Cost Sharing, and Efficiency. We shall now discuss the projects with reference to these objectives.

#### Empowerment

Empowerment was an objective of CP in 3 of the 40 projects (8%). In one of them (Zambia Sites and Services), the borrower government had adopted a development philosophy of strengthening local communities and institutions. Consequently, the project had to be sensitive to the preferences and participation of local political and community organizations. In turn, this accounted for a great deal of beneficiary involvement in implementation. In the case of the other two projects (El Salvador Sites and Services, I & II), the implementing agency was an NGO whose goal was community empowerment. Housing and other development projects were vehicles to accomplish that goal. Beneficiaries were therefore actively involved in all the projects and activities that the NGO undertook.

The project documents did not examine the impact of the empowerment goal on the project outcomes. There were, however, references to the fact that beneficiaries had gained the strength to deal with governmental agencies other than those related to the project. In the two Salvadorean projects, the Foundation - i.e., the implementing agency - aimed at forging solidarity among beneficiaries. Mutual help and progressive development strategies were useful means of pulling community members together to face an environment which was unsympathetic to the poor<sup>17</sup>/<sub>.</sub>

Table 3

CP: Objectives and Outcomes

<u>Objective</u>	<u>No. of Projects</u>		<u>Impact</u>	<u>Issues</u>
	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Implemented</u>		
Empowerment	3 (8%)	3 (8%)	Not well documented. Evidence that beneficiaries gained some strength and awareness.	So far not a major objective of Bank projects.
Capacity Building (Direct)	7 (20%)	7 (20%)	Beneficiary groups managed operational responsibilities.	More evident in the post '75 period. Resource limitations and concern for sustainability may direct greater attention to CP in the future.
(Unplanned)	-	5	Beneficiary Groups Played an active role in specific activities.	Capacity building was a consequence of demand mobilization efforts.
Effectiveness	15 (38%)	10 (25%)	New services offered. Positive results in demand generation.	Technology intensive sectors may allot a weaker role for CP in project design. CP not fully effective if not accompanied by extension of

<u>Objective</u>	<u>No. of Projects</u>		<u>Impact</u>	<u>Issues</u>
	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Implemented</u>		
	-	3 (8%) (not planned)		technical assistance or training of beneficiary. Intensity ranges from information sharing to consultation to limited decision making. CP useful for project redesign during implementation.
Efficiency	19 (48%)	14 (35%)	Difficult implementation steps made possible through CP. Smoother progress of projects.  Operations management improved in some functions only.	CP useful for management of project operations.  Reasons for the full impact or potential of CP not being realized: lack of beneficiary training; poor extension or inadequate technology. Other elements in project complement CP.
Cost Sharing	19 (48%)	14 (35%)	Little success with cost recovery. Only two cases of exemplary performance.	Constraints: lack of political support; lack of guarantee of smooth flow of services; insecurity with respect to basic assets like land; inadequate information.

## Capacity Building

Building beneficiary capacity was a direct objective in 7 of the 40 projects (20%). As noted earlier, by capacity building we mean the efforts aimed at strengthening the skills and knowledge of the beneficiaries so that they could take on responsibilities for managing segments of the project themselves. In the five urban housing projects which viewed CP in terms of capacity building, it was hoped that beneficiary organizations would gain adequate strength to manage local ploholders' associations, organize self help and mutual help activities and negotiate with municipalities for civic services. The two irrigation projects that emphasized capacity building both belonged to the post 1980 period. Bank staff pointed out that these projects reflected the growing feeling among irrigation project planners that user groups had to be strengthened since governmental efforts to build and maintain entire irrigation systems were unlikely to succeed both financially and organizationally.

Building beneficiary capacity was an indirect objective in five population and nutrition projects. Community members were to be organized into project related groups (such as mothers' groups) in order to educate themselves and motivate potential users. At a later stage, the community groups took on additional functions such as contraceptive distribution and nutrition education. However, in these projects, demand mobilization, rather than beneficiary capacity building was the main objective. Indeed, capacity creation was a consequence, not the prime mover of project interventions.

What was the impact of these direct and indirect efforts at capacity building? In the case of El Salvador, beneficiary organizations maintained almost all the sites under the housing project and successfully carried out important functions such as collection of dues<sup>18/</sup>. In the Zambian (Lusaka) project, road planning groups were one of the main forms of beneficiary involvement in road routing and reorganization of settlements. These groups decided on the location of community centers, road routes and targets for demolition. The experience with the groups was positive, but appeared to be limited by a lack of technical knowledge<sup>19/</sup>. The Senegal housing authority undertook systematic efforts to develop ploholders' associations and the latter effectively campaigned to obtain transportation and municipal services. Instability in the implementing agency led to delays in the Colombian Cartagena housing project and this in turn affected attempts at capacity building due to staff shortages.

Of the two irrigation projects which aimed at capacity building, one was unable to develop water users' associations (WUA) after a year and a half of project implementation due to the project management's preoccupation with technical and other institutional issues. In the other project, the WUAs formed as part of the project performed relatively simple functions which were within their reach. The project authorities did not assist in the development of beneficiary skills that would have enhanced their capacity to handle greater responsibilities in maintenance. Consequently, the full potential of WUAs was not realized.

These experiences suggest that capacity building found a place in project design due to the concern for the long term sustenance of facilities created by projects and considerations of operational maintenance. However, where there were no specific programs for training and community organization to translate plans into operational activities, impact tended to be limited. In this connection, it is interesting to note that projects do not usually provide resources for training in community organization and social development of the beneficiary<sup>20/</sup>.

### Effectiveness

Effectiveness of a project demands that project services are congruent with beneficiary needs and preferences. Where they do not match, project goals are unlikely to be achieved. CP in this context is relevant in so far as:

- (a) appropriate services are designed in tune with the beneficiary environment;
- (b) significant modifications of prior project design are made to suit the beneficiary; and
- (c) adequate demand for project services is created.

CP for project effectiveness was planned for in 15 of the 40 projects (38%) and implemented in 10 of them (25%). In addition, CP was introduced to enhance effectiveness in three projects although not explicitly planned in the beginning. In these cases, questions about the appropriateness of services arose in the course of implementation. The project authorities then sought the views of beneficiaries in order to improve project design.

In the 10 projects which implemented CP as planned, the two major contributions of CP were the following:

- (a) New services or activities were introduced or existing ones modified in line with beneficiary preferences; and
- (b) Potential clients were motivated to use project services, thus mobilizing demand.

The former was evident in three housing projects and the latter in seven PHN projects.

A typical illustration of the adaptation of services to beneficiary needs was the effect of CP on the Philippines Tondo housing project. Two community organizations were already active by the time the project was initiated in Tondo. These organizations clearly perceived the threat of relocation and displacement arising from the government's urban development plan. As a result, they forcefully sought and gained a consultative role in the project. The participation of these organizations and the direct inputs from the beneficiaries together played an important role in evolving strategies for the reorganization of the slum. Indeed, beneficiary groups brought up the alternative of reblocking as a viable strategy for reorganizing the settlement - an alternative that would normally have meant a great deal of

disruption and change for the people. Another illustration of CP's contribution to project effectiveness is the Salvadorean housing project where it was realized that a lack of access to credit prevented progressive consolidation of houses by the beneficiary. Consequently, the implementing agency extended credit through cooperatives or through its own development unit. In all cases, CP seems to have brought about a redesign of project services to better match beneficiary needs.

The PHN projects demonstrate another interesting point. In urban housing, the problem was not one of mobilizing demand but of allocating the limited supply through a proper selection of beneficiaries. In the PHN sector, demand was uncertain and hence services had to be "marketed". In order to perform the marketing function effectively, it was necessary for the management of the projects to:

- (a) develop a good understanding of the community in terms of (i) its attitudes towards health and family planning and government services in general, and (ii) its actual health and family planning practices. This was largely done through surveys and studies, an essential component of the population and nutrition projects; and
- (b) find ways of improving access of the community to services. This was achieved largely through well trained field workers which included community based volunteers.

Thus, the marketing strategies of these projects were based on insights from research and extension, rather than on insights derived from direct interaction with beneficiary groups.

The effect of CP on demand mobilization seemed to have been positive in population projects. The first Indonesian population project was a significant part of the national family planning program which averted 1.5 million births between 1970 and 1979. The Bangladesh population project utilized separate cooperatives of men and women to extend family planning education and motivate the use of FP services. The men's program was not effective; one of the reasons being the inappropriate timing of their meetings. The women's program was more successful. Knowledge and use of contraceptives among cooperative members was higher than that of non-members by about 85%<sup>21</sup>/. The field studies of the experimental Indonesian nutrition project showed that active local organizations and leadership stimulated better use of project services and nutritional improvement among children. Similarly, where mothers were actively involved in a nutrition research and education program, nutritional status of mothers and children in the project area showed a significant difference from that of a non-project area<sup>22</sup>/. Similar evidence is available also for the Tamil Nadu nutrition project as well as the Dominican Republic population and health project.

We have so far discussed CP's contribution to project effectiveness in projects that planned for and implemented it. There was a sub-set of projects - 3 out of 40, all in housing, that did not plan for CP, but faced problems of beneficiary dissatisfaction while they were being implemented. Subsequently, interaction with beneficiaries was sought with a view to designing or modifying activities which satisfied beneficiary preferences. In



these three projects, the participant-observer method devised by a consultant, was employed to elicit operationally useful, project related information on beneficiary attitudes and perceptions<sup>23/</sup>. This method helped to incorporate beneficiary feedback into project design and implementation. Two useful insights which emerged from this evaluation were the following:

- (a) Beneficiaries have needs which may not be apparent to outsiders. Without credit, for instance, they were unable to finish the core housing made available to them through the housing project in Thailand. Similarly, there was a need to separate renters from owners in the La Paz project in order to respond to the needs of different types of clients.
- (b) Beneficiaries have preferences which need to be analyzed and understood. Even affordable housing approaches had to deal with particular preferences of beneficiaries such as their design for private water connections or better construction ensuring greater privacy even at a higher cost.

In similar circumstances, it was found that the absence of technical assistance hindered beneficiary efforts at the progressive development of housing in the second Tanzania project. In El Salvador, credit was a missing link which the project made up for after a few years.

In brief, these experiences suggest that understanding beneficiary needs and attributes can help improve project design. CP is a way of gaining this knowledge. The actual means by which this understanding is produced may vary from direct CP to indirect ways of information gathering. User groups could be made to take the initiative to generate design ideas. Consultation with relevant beneficiary groups on their preferences is an alternative approach.

In irrigation design which is dominated by technology considerations, CP has played a limited role in the project design phase. User groups are brought in more for operational efficiency (as will be discussed below) than for the effective design of services. Technologists and administrators seem to dominate the design phase. In PHN projects also, technical inputs seem dominant in the design process. Beneficiary inputs enter the scene through studies. However, CP through direct dialogue with community groups has been relied upon in PHN projects mainly for demand generation. In this case, demand mobilization follows the design of services.

### Cost Sharing

Cost sharing was an important objective in a significant number of the projects reviewed. Contributions from beneficiaries were encouraged both to reduce the share of public costs and instill a sense of ownership in the people. Of the 40 projects, 19 (48%) planned to recover the operating costs of project operations and in some cases, even capital costs from beneficiaries; 14 (35%) attempted to convert plans into action, but only four (10%) achieved some success.

The population and health (PHN) projects did not provide for beneficiary contribution to cost at the design stage. This was largely because the projects were usually components of national programs which did not provide for cost sharing. Based on the findings of a field study, the Peru project cautioned planners against undue optimism with regard to raising local resources. A Bank study on financing health programs has reported that community financing was likely to have limited scope and that considerable initial assistance from the project would be required even if subsequent community contributions were expected <sup>24</sup>/. Nutrition projects were relatively more successful in raising local resources.

The two housing projects that succeeded in mobilizing beneficiary contributions were those implemented by the Salvadorean Foundation. Here, it was a set of effective strategies, carefully implemented, that contributed to CP in terms of cost sharing:

- (a) detailed dialogue with beneficiaries prior to implementation;
- (b) hiring and training motivated field workers to follow up on individual beneficiaries;
- (c) a monitoring system that kept track of payments and proposed immediate action in cases of default;
- (d) a system of investigation and negotiated action in default cases; and
- (e) accessible field offices to assist beneficiaries with information and problem solving skills.

In brief, the management strategy of the project facilitated resource mobilization and cost recovery from the community. By July 1980, five years after the first housing project was initiated, arrears of total repayments were only 2.3% of the total loan portfolio<sup>25</sup>/.

Several other urban projects, however, performed poorly with respect to cost sharing. The major reasons for their failure on this front were:

- (a) a feeling of insecurity due to delays in policy implementation, e.g., non-allotment of land titles, lack of stability in government housing policy;
- (b) lack of guarantee of adequate quantity and quality of service, e.g., unreliable supply of water in irrigation;
- (c) inadequate communication to beneficiaries about project components, costs and beneficiary obligations; and
- (d) lack of a set of follow up (i) systems (monitoring, legal), (ii) procedures (response to default), and (iii) institutional arrangements (community organization).

The expenditure by beneficiaries on the improvement of houses was satisfactory. In La Paz, Bolivia, 66% of beneficiary households in the experimental project site made improvements in their houses as a result of the upgrading project. This compared very favourably with 12% in three low income "control" areas<sup>26/</sup>. In El Salvador, 73% of families improved on their houses and had more than doubled the price of the initial unit<sup>27/</sup>. Contributions from family and friends aided in the improvement of houses<sup>28/</sup>,<sup>29/</sup>.

### Efficiency

Attention to efficiency implies a focus on cost via the most productive use of available materials, money, people and other resources. CP with efficiency in view can lead to:

- (a) cost savings through a reduction or elimination of delays in implementation due to misunderstandings or conflicts between the project staff and beneficiaries, and
- (b) improved maintenance of project services and facilities.

Nineteen of the 40 projects (48%) planned for CP with the objective of efficiency. Of these, 14 projects (35%) translated CP plans into specific activities.

There were two significant contributions from CP in these projects. The first was savings in time and money from the smooth implementation of tasks which are normally prone to conflicts and delays. This was particularly evident in the housing projects. The sites and services projects brought a heterogeneous set of people together in a project area. In the absence of a trusting community of neighbours, beneficiaries' suspicion of and distance from one another easily led to conflicts about real and perceived acts of unfairness or hostility. Even in upgrading projects, the absence of clear and specific expectations of what the municipality would do and what the project would offer in a particular slum caused apprehensions among beneficiaries leading to a hostile behaviour towards the project. The outcome was expensive delays and hurdles to implementation. It was mentioned earlier that in the Tondo housing project in the Philippines, beneficiaries agreed, on a collective basis, to the more complex strategy of reblocking. It was their sustained involvement that made its implementation easier and more acceptable. In the case of Lusaka, Zambia, as in the case of Tondo, tasks with the greatest potential for disruption did not encounter resistance from beneficiaries. According to a study "...during the four years of the project, 8000 houses were resettled...relations between party leaders, landlords, business persons, and city councilors were disturbed. Yet, active collaboration with community leadership kept a potentially volatile situation free from conflict."<sup>30/</sup> In El Salvador, the project was discussed with beneficiaries through four issue specific meetings covering the physical, financial, social and organizational aspects. This approach seems to have been well worth the initial time spent. Adequate information and dialogue on what the Salvadorean project called the rights and obligations of participants prepared the beneficiaries on what to expect in the future. Smoother implementation and better cost recovery were made possible by these preparatory efforts.

The second contribution of CP towards project efficiency was through sounder operational maintenance and in general, better day-to-day management of operations. This was particularly evident in the irrigation projects. Irrigation involves the need to make decisions about on farm use of water, water flow and allocation from the distribution point to the farms. Interaction and consensus among water users at the distribution system level is therefore crucial for efficient day-to-day operations.

Irrigation projects of the 1970's did not take the participation of water users seriously until operational problems compelled them to do so. For instance, the National Irrigation Authority (NIA) of the Philippines started off as an "engineering" organization. The Upper Pampanga project typically spoke of providing "...dependable water supply for year round cultivation and flood protection to lands lying below the dam site"<sup>31/</sup>. In the course of implementing the Upper Pampanga project, the NIA realized the limitations of a purely techno-economic approach and turned to the functions of farmer organization and development. IRDP I in the Papalopan Basin in Mexico "would develop integrated and rainfed agriculture, experimental farms, feeder roads and marketing facilities"<sup>32/</sup>. Similarly, in the Jatlihur (Irrigation IV) project in Indonesia, the early supervision reports concentrated on the completion of civil works. It was only when the deteriorating tertiary systems set up by the project was detected that Water Users' Associations (WUA) gained prominence.

The impact of CP on the maintenance of facilities was mixed. Beneficiary involvement in operations and maintenance seems to have been successful in some functions of operations management but not in others. The main reason for the lack of success in some functions seems to be the absence of complementary inputs or support services such as effective training and extension or an adequate technology. This will be elaborated in the next section of the paper.

#### Successful Projects Without CP

The ten successful projects in the sample had the potential to use CP, but did not. The nature and tasks of these projects were similar to those of the first set of projects. Nevertheless, in the judgment of the project authorities, CP was not considered appropriate for several reasons. Their experience shows that the absence of CP need not necessarily lead to poor project performance as other factors could compensate for the lack of CP as far as performance is concerned.

In the ten successful projects, CP was not considered relevant or feasible for three reasons.

- (a) In societies which do not have a tradition of CP, Bank staff felt that it was imprudent to advocate CP. This was the case in the Mali Urban Development project and the Senegal Dali Lampson Irrigation Project. The staff assessment was that forcing CP under these conditions would have been counter productive, as conflicts of various kinds and apathy might have surfaced in the process.

- (b) Even if a country has a tradition of CP, in the specific setting of a project, the incentive for CP may be low, and hence the case for promoting CP in such a setting is weak. In Northern Tunisia which has successful agricultural cooperatives, water users' associations have not attracted much interest. According to the Project Officer for this country, unlike South Tunisia, water is not a very scarce resource in the north, and hence farmers were not interested in maintaining water courses under collective auspices. They were content to leave the task to the government agency which has always been responsible for it.
  
- (c) The reluctance of the local project authorities to organize or involve community groups in the project is a third reason for the exclusion of CP from the project strategy. Project managers resisted CP either because they feared loss of control over the project or because of their skepticism about the capacity of local groups to carry out specialized tasks. In the First and Second India Population Projects, the doctors in charge were reluctant to rely on community health volunteers for the reasons given above.

Why did these projects perform well despite the lack of CP? In the Korean Second Regional Development Project which had a sites and services component, no self help or mutual help was planned as the public was willing to pay for a completed housing unit about which they were well informed. Housing was a private good the provision of which did not call for any collective action in that country's setting. The government agency involved was able to perform well in this field. In Korea, however, there were other sectors in which CP was an important factor. In Mali, where there was no tradition of CP, the beneficiaries expected the government to provide the service. The project staff, however, assessed beneficiary needs and preferences through field interviews, thus generating useful information for design which CP might otherwise have provided. Where the public's awareness about the service was adequate and people were willing to respond to family planning ideas as in the Tunisian Family Planning project, there was no need to mobilize community groups for information sharing, collaborative action or mutual reinforcement.

#### IV. CP IN BANK PROJECTS: A REVIEW OF OTHER DIMENSIONS

The instruments, intensity and complementarities of CP in Bank projects are discussed below. Based on an analysis of the Bank experience with the different dimensions of CP, some hypotheses are presented on the conditions under which it is appropriate to use CP in the project context.

##### Instruments

All the three institutional devices discussed in Section I were used in Bank projects to elicit the participation of beneficiaries: user groups, community workers selected from among the beneficiaries, and field extension workers of the implementing agency. The nature of tasks in each of the sectors determined the choice among these alternatives. In irrigation, since group decisions and commitment were important, user groups were given a great

deal of importance. Indeed, in four Bank projects, attempts were made to formalize user associations by legislation or decree. The urban projects stressed the role of the individual beneficiary for matters concerning his own house and of beneficiary associations for matters regarding community services. Where mutual help was essential, the project brought together groups of beneficiaries. The PHN projects stressed the role of the extension worker and the community worker. Both types of persons acted as intermediaries for the project vis-a-vis the community and mobilized demand for public health services.

Projects with successful CP stressed the selection of appropriate field workers and their training. Funds and staff were provided to look after the community organization function within the project. Staff designated to carry out community organization and contact functions were as much a part of the field team as technical personnel, thus building a rapport between the technical and social wings of the project.

In several Bank projects, the neglect of local indigenous organizations created problems in project implementation. However, the involvement of these organizations did not necessarily ensure that beneficiaries were fairly represented. For instance, it was found in La Paz and Guayaquil housing projects that local leaders did not serve as a two way channel between the project agencies and the beneficiaries. Acceptance of the upgrading project took three years or longer as a result of the leaders' unhelpful attitude despite the individual residents' interest. In other words, cooperation of indigenous organizations and leadership must be won, and steps taken to ensure that leaders indeed represent the beneficiaries of the project.

Yet another means of seeking CP was the use of intermediary organizations. Non-governmental organizations were sometimes involved in implementation and field research. The PHN projects were more attentive to the possibilities of involving NGOs. Even here, NGO contribution in the early phase of the Bank's work in a country seems limited. But over time, health bureaucracies in borrowing countries showed greater willingness to experiment with their involvement. In Bangladesh, despite the presence of 72 NGOs in the population and health sector, it was only towards the end of the first population project that the government set up a committee to screen and support funding requests from voluntary organizations. In Indonesia, as noted earlier, there was increasing support for village organizations as well as NGOs oriented to research and extension over the period of implementation of the four population projects. The Peru project initiated in 1982 included a budget to fund innovative action by local NGOs or community groups. In the Dominican Republic's health project implemented between 1976 and 1983, a church sponsored agency was responsible for the execution of a community based distribution system of contraceptives.

It is important to note that practical "proxies" to direct CP were used with good effect in housing and PHN projects. The participant-observer method provided useful insights, among other things, on the differential attitudes of renters and owners in a housing project site. The method involved visits and interviews by a consultant and a team of trained investigators using the participant observer methodology to study a selected problem of interest to project management. CP here was indirect since

beneficiary groups did not directly interact with project staff and yet their perceptions were made available through a third party. Although this alternative could not be regarded as a form of CP, it seemed to be of benefit to project managers. Yet another alternative to gain feedback on beneficiaries was the studies and research resorted to by the PHN projects as a way of gaining insights into community behaviour. The research components of the PHN projects were followed up carefully by the supervision visits. These methods seem to be worthwhile alternatives to direct CP if the project is not ready for the latter.

### Intensity

The intensity of CP in Bank projects ranged from the low level of information sharing to the moderate level of restricted decision making in selected design and implementation aspects of the project. Information sharing, for example, was practised widely in population and health (PHN) projects and urban housing projects. In many projects, intensity did not go beyond the consultative level. For instance, consultation on house design was attempted in sites and services projects. Decision making by beneficiaries was confined, for the most part, to certain aspects of project design and implementation. Agreements on maintenance responsibilities and water allocation in irrigation projects, and participation in the reorganization of slums and cost recovery in the urban housing projects illustrate this mode. In most Bank projects, the role of decision making by beneficiaries could be characterized as modest.

In brief, Bank projects with CP fell within the low and moderate levels of intensity. Project managements attempted to get a good picture of beneficiary perceptions or offered opportunities for limited decision making during design and implementation. Projects with empowerment goals (only three) were at the right end of the moderate category. Where project effectiveness was the goal, consultation with, rather than decision making by beneficiaries was the preferred mode. Bank experience shows that in the absence of active local beneficiary organizations in a project, the intensity of CP will at best increase from a low to moderate level.

### Complementarities

Table 2 shows that one of the reasons for the failure of Bank projects to tap the full potential of CP was the absence of other critical elements in the project. Thus outcomes were not completely satisfactory despite the presence of CP in the projects due to factors such as technological deficiency that affected the smooth flow of services, lack of an integrated set of services for the beneficiaries, and the inability of government to implement policies critical to the project. CP and other elements of the project strategy are mutually reinforcing. A missing element can reduce the effectiveness of CP because beneficiary needs may not be satisfied despite their participation as is clear from the projects under review. Some elements are parallel in nature (e.g. technical assistance) whereas others are integral to CP (e.g. training of community workers or groups).

When project services were not available to the beneficiary due to inadequate technology or inefficient management of the technology, it was difficult to make effective use of CP to the fullest extent possible. The First UP (India) public tubewells project involved the setting up of 500 tubewells. In designing the project, it was recognized that the reasons for the unsatisfactory performance in the region were: inadequate power supply, inefficient means of conveying water through open channels (technological problems), and ineffective water allocation practices. The First project concentrated on the resolution of these key technology related issues and the second UP project took on the organizational issues two years later. Moreover, the technological improvements introduced by the First UP project reduced the complexity of CP by making it possible for the project to work with groups of smaller size. The West Bengal agriculture credit project found that technical deficiencies in a communal irrigation system could hinder its effective management by user groups. Indeed, the projects studied confirm that if technical problems lead to poor water availability, performance of the project would be adversely affected even if there were active WUAs.

CP in a project may not perform as expected when beneficiary education and assistance through extension is unsatisfactory. In the Pakistan on farm management project, the extension agency did not stay on the project site to help farmers with the task of precision land levelling. As a result, watercourse improvement was done well, but not land levelling. An earlier study of USAID on-farm management projects revealed similar results<sup>33/</sup>. A separate study of 20 projects which identified appropriate areas for CP in irrigation mentions that CP was most useful in water allocation and least in land preparation<sup>34/</sup>. The first irrigation rehabilitation project in Tunisia found that water consumption had increased by only 10% over five years. At project completion, water use continued to be low compared to crop needs partly due to insufficient guidance for farmer action from the project. The Tanzanian beneficiaries of the housing project could not pursue progressive development of their sites due to the lack of technical assistance. The PHN projects, in particular, explicitly provide for extension and training of field workers. A nutrition projects review document of the Bank notes that "...where extensive CP is deemed feasible, experience from the Bank's nutrition projects suggests that the main ingredients for success are appropriate training and adequate supervision".<sup>35/</sup> Another Bank study of the applicability of the T&V system to PHN projects found that the training and supervision components were essential to the success of the Tamil Nadu nutrition project<sup>36/</sup>. Supervision missions in the First Indonesian population project and the Brazil health project were concerned about the training component and commented on it regularly.

Beneficiaries may need a range of services in order to gain from a project. We have referred above to the effect of a missing service such as technical assistance, and the problems faced by the beneficiary when there is no access to credit services. In the Bangladesh population project, for instance, the women's cooperatives needed assistance in marketing their manufactured goods. This service was not available, and as a result, the project's income generating activities were not successful.

The effectiveness of CP is influenced also by the adequacy of the policies and laws of the government and how well they are implemented. The incentives for CP will be weak where this enabling condition at the macro



level is absent. For instance, if land reforms are not implemented and as a result, land titles are not in order or there is a fear of eviction, it is unlikely that poor beneficiaries will be motivated to come together and invest in a housing project.

#### Relevance of CP

Based on the projects reviewed, we hypothesize that the use of CP is appropriate in the following contexts:

- (a) When the objective of the project is empowerment and capacity building and projects are used as instruments towards these ends. Objectives such as empowerment may be derived from national policy or the implementing agency's philosophy. CP will then be relevant in all phases of the project cycle.
- (b) When the design of project services calls for interaction among groups of beneficiaries as a basis for identifying their needs and preferences. This is particularly relevant for projects in an experimental phase when little is known about the type of service which would match beneficiary preferences and attributes. Examples are urban housing and population and nutrition projects which require collaborative action and mutual reinforcement among members. Even if the private sector or NGOs are made responsible for implementation, CP is essential in the design phase in such cases.
- (c) When the nature of the project demands frequent dialogue and negotiation among beneficiaries and between project authorities and beneficiaries. The distribution of water in an irrigation project is a good example of a case where the absence of consensus among users can lead to bottlenecks in the allocation and actual flow of water to the farms. Similarly, population and health projects require demand mobilization which in turn calls for community approval. When beneficiaries are responsible for developing the core units in housing projects, a great deal of information sharing and negotiation will be required. Furthermore, new groups of people may have to be brought together as in the case of sites and services projects. This too demands interaction between the project and its beneficiaries. Here is a case for CP in the implementation phase of the project cycle, even if CP is minimal in the design phase as may well happen in the design of a dam, for instance.
- (d) When beneficiaries (with initial external support) rather than an already overloaded or weak bureaucracy are better able to manage a part of the project operations. The project may perform better because beneficiaries are able to share the management burden with the bureaucracy, e.g., monitoring, conflict resolution. This is evident in the case of on farm development, water allocation and operational maintenance in irrigation projects. The reference here is to the implementation phase.

## V. IMPLICATIONS FOR BANK POLICIES

1. In recent years, policies of developing country governments and donors have given much greater attention to issues of equity and access to services for the poor than to CP. In the context of poverty eradication, policies have rightly emphasized the importance of increasing the access of the poor to development services. It is necessary to reinforce this concern by highlighting the role that community organizations can play in improving the access to services for the poorer sections of the population. This is an aspect of empowerment which deserves to be emphasized in policy statements. Organizations of the poor may effectively mobilize the demand for services, provide efficient feedback and lead to a more equitable sharing of benefits, thus complementing the efforts of governments and the Bank on the supply side to improve accessibility.

2. Even where policies refer to CP, the objectives of CP emphasized are cost sharing, project effectiveness and project efficiency. While these are valid objectives, when viewed against the spectrum of objectives discussed in this paper, they are rather narrow in focus and short-term in orientation. If the preoccupation with these immediate goals limits the contribution of CP to the sustainability of projects, projects would not have accomplished much. Government policies may in fact achieve much more by laying greater stress on the building of beneficiary capacity as the basic rationale of CP. Capacity building is a long-term task, which invariably cannot be achieved within the short time horizon of a project. Nevertheless, if the approach to CP and the methods used to promote CP in projects are informed by a commitment to capacity building as the long-term objective, it could make a difference to the way donors and governments treat CP in project design and implementation.

3. CP seems most appropriate when (1) projects aim to enhance the self reliance of beneficiaries, (2) the design of projects calls for interaction among groups of beneficiaries, and (3) project effectiveness depends upon a process of negotiation between beneficiaries and project authorities. Where these conditions exist, it seems useful for project planners to find ways of effectively incorporating CP. The indiscriminate promotion of CP in a standardized manner in all projects is certainly unwarranted. The project context, beneficiary characteristics, social traditions in the community, the nature of project tasks and related factors need to be assessed before deciding to incorporate CP in a project. In people oriented sectors which must deliver services to vast masses of poor beneficiaries, for example, the potential role of CP would seem to be significant.

4. In this connection, there is a need to keep track of innovative experiences of governmental agencies, NGOs and other donors in the borrowing country. For instance, the interest of the National Irrigation Authority (Philippines) in issues of a social and organizational nature have been a consequence of its own efforts to improve performance as well as the inputs and feedback from a number of donors such as the Ford Foundation, USAID, the World Bank and some national research institutions. The UNDP housing project in Upper Volta, on a more modest scale, generated interesting lessons for the Bank and other donors. In Zambia, the work of UNICEF and the American Friends' Service set a good example for the Bank's housing project. A series of interventions by USAID through studies and pilot projects in Pakistan created the operational base for Bank's own initiative in irrigation.

5. There is yet another sequence in the learning process. Where new policies and strategies are involved, as in affordable housing, governments need to be convinced of the validity of the new approach. Similarly, in a country where the public infrastructure is weak, as in population and health, governments want to first establish the infrastructure before worrying about other aspects of a project. This early preparatory period - when there is a great deal of uncertainty - is perhaps a good time to support experimentation on issues like CP for which solutions are not readily available. This is also an opportune time to gain an understanding of the activities of others in the field in that particular sector.

6. Where there is uncertainty regarding the relevance and outcome of CP, proxies like the participant-observer method could be used with advantage if the objective is to design services that match beneficiary needs. However, these methods must be incorporated into projects at the preparation stage, and not viewed merely as a means to deal with performance problems during implementation.

7. Training programs for donor staff and of governments on the theme of community participation and its proxies will be useful. To begin with, the subject could form a part of the curriculum on project design and implementation. In view of the paucity of training materials, it would be useful to prepare case studies of projects with CP as the focus. Detailed accounts of how a public agency organizes CP in its projects are not available; if written up, they could form a valuable part of the project management literature.

FOOTNOTES

1. The literature relevant to this issue is not negligible, but deals primarily with the rural sector. See for example, Norman Uphoff and John Cohen, "Participation's Place in Rural Development: Seeking Clarity through Specificity", World Development, Vol 8. pp. 213-235; Michael Cernea (ed), Putting People First, Oxford University Press, New York 1985; John Mellor, The New Economics of Growth: A Strategy for India and The Developing World, Cornell University Press, 1976; John D. Montgomery, "The Allocation of Authority in Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study of Administrative Process and Outputs", Administrative Science Quarterly, March, 1972; David Korten, "Community Organization and Rural Development: A learning Process Approach", Public Administration Review, Sept.-Oct., 1980; S. Huntington and Nelson, No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1976.
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20. IBRD, Project Completion Report, Bangladesh Population Project I, September 1984.\*
21. IBRD, Nutrition Review, Office Memorandum from John North, Nov. 28, 1984.
22. IBRD, The consultant, Lawrence Salmen, has summarized these and other Bank project experiences in his book Listen to the People (forthcoming).
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25. Salmen, L.F., Participant-Observer Evaluation of Urban Projects, Report UDD-36, Water Supply and Urban Development Department, November 1983.
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APPENDIX I

PROJECTS SELECTED FOR STUDY

The projects are listed by sector. The entries refer to serial number, project title, (project number) and starting year.

URBAN HOUSING

1. Lusaka Sites and Services and Squatter Upgrading Project, Zambia (1057), 1974.
2. National Sites and Services, El Salvador I (1050 and 517), 1974.
3. El Salvador Urban Sites and Services II (1465 and 726), 1977.
4. Tanzania National Sites and Services (495), 1974.
5. Second Sites and Services, Tanzania (732), 1977.
6. Colombia Urban Development I (1558), 1978.
7. Colombia Cartagena UDP (1694), 1979.
8. Upper Volta UDP (766), 1978.
9. Senegal Sites and Services (336), 1972.
10. Philippines First Urban Project (Tondo) (1272 and 1282), 1976.
11. Second Urban Project, Philippines (1647), 1979.
12. Bolivia Urban Development (La Paz) (1489), 1978.
13. Ecuador Urban Development (Guayaquil) (1776), 1980.
14. Thailand UDP I (1556), 1978.

POPULATION, HEALTH AND NUTRITION

1. Brazil Northwest Region Integrated Development Program (Health) Project (2062), 1981.
2. Peru Primary Health Project (2211), 1982.
3. Indonesia Population Project I (300), 1972.
4. Indonesia Population Project II (1869), 1980.

5. PDR Yemen Health Development Project (1377), 1983.
6. Bangladesh Population Project I (533), 1975.
7. Indonesia Nutrition Project (1373), 1977.
8. Brazil Nutrition Project (1302), 1976.
9. Tamil Nadu Nutrition Project (1003), 1980.
10. Population and Family Health Project, Dominican Republic (1325), 1976.
11. Tunisia Population I (238), 1971.
12. First Health and Population, Tunisia (2005), 1981.

#### IRRIGATION

1. Souss Groundwater, Morocco (1123), 1975.
2. Small and Medium Scale Irrigation, Morocco (2253), 1983.
3. Pakistan On Farm Water Management (1163), 1981.
4. Small Scale Agriculture Infrastructure, Mexico (1643), 1979.
5. IRDP I Papalopan Basin, Mexico (1053), 1975.
6. Nepal Birganj Irrigation I (373), 1972.
7. Nepal Birganj Irrigation II (856), 1978.
8. West Bengal Agricultural Credit (541), 1975.
9. UP Public Tubewells I (1004), 1980.
10. Jatlihur Irrigation, Indonesia (Irrigation V) (514), 1974.
11. Irrigation VII, Indonesia (1268), 1976.
12. Upper Pampanga Irrigation, Philippines (637), 1969.
13. Irrigation Rehabilitation I (1068), 1975.
14. Medjerda/Nebhana Irrigation (2157), 1982.



Projects with Good Performance (without CP)

Urban Sector

- |           |                      |  |
|-----------|----------------------|--|
| 1. Mali   | - Cr. 943            | - Urban Development  |
| 2. Mexico | - Ln. 1554           | - Lazaro Cardenas Conurbation  |
| 3. Korea  | - Ln. 1758           | - Second Guangiu Regional  |
| 4. India  | - Cr. 427 & Cr. 1369 | - Calcutta Urban Development (427)<br>3rd. Calcutta Urban Development (1369) |

PHN Sector

- |             |            |                         |
|-------------|------------|-------------------------|
| 5. Thailand | - Cr. 767  | - Population            |
| 6. India    | - Cr. 981  | - Second Population     |
| 7. Tunisia  | - Ln. 2005 | - Health and Population |

Agriculture Sector

- |             |            |                            |
|-------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 8. Senegal  | - Cr. 775  | - Debi Lampsar Irrigation  |
| 9. India    | - Cr. 843  | - Haryana Irrigation       |
| 10. Tunisia | - Ln. 1431 | - Sidi Salem Multi-purpose |





**The World Bank**

**Headquarters**

1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433, U.S.A.

Telephone: (202) 477-1234

Telex: WUI 64145 WORLDBANK  
RCA 248423 WORLDBK

Cable Address: INTBAFRAD  
WASHINGTONDC

**European Office**

66, avenue d'Iéna  
75116 Paris, France

Telephone: (1) 47.23.54.21

Telex: 842-620628

**Tokyo Office**

Kokusai Building  
1-1 Marunouchi 3-chome  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan

Telephone: (03) 214-5001

Telex: 781-26838

