

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The 8th National Social and Economic Development Plan during 1997-2001 has imposed people as the center for development, aiming for warmth in a family and strength of communities. These objectives corresponded to the objectives of the primary health care operation in the country. In 1999, to demonstrate potentials of development and self-reliance of people in public health area, the Office of the Primary Health Care, the Ministry of Public Health, which is responsible for developing of strength for communities, has developed measurement criteria to measure public health self-reliance of communities. The measurement criteria were promoted for implementation in assessment and development of public health self-reliance of communities in every province from the 2000 financial year onwards. The key principal and objective of developing these measurement criteria was to use them as guideline directions or goals for public health development in communities. Public health officers in collaboration with Village Health Volunteers (VHVs) and community leaders were to find any existing weaknesses in public health development within their responsible area using the measurement criteria as guidelines to obtain the same concept direction of the development. At present, it is generally recognised that community development work is not an onus of one individual ministerial sector to develop its own work in one area for a community. However, community problems could be resulted from various factors, thus, public health officers should be aware that:

1. Application of the community self-reliance measurement criteria required collaboration of people in the community to learn and participate with public health staff in assessment of their own community. This enables the staff to detect any weak points that required development supports and initiation, and at the same time enables the community to perceive its own problems.
2. Development of public health self-reliance must be integrated and at the same time required equivalent development of other areas such as economics, education, social, cultural, environmental and so on. These areas are linked to one another and mutually produce strength for the community.
3. Development of public health self-reliance require preparation of both the community and staff from various levels in order to understand meaning and methodologies of the evaluation instruments, including to practice for community development in the right direction.

The Office of the Primary Health Care (1999) defined “*public health self-reliance*” as the community ability to operate its own public health work for healthy status of the people by gathering powers from both within and outside the community, by operation management of public health works, and by participation of community members. All factors will lead to continuous and sustainable community development.

The components of the community public health self-reliance evaluation instrument comprised of 5 sets of measurement criteria as follows:

1. **Organisation/ Manpower** means a group of people, an organisation or a community member who is responsible for operating community development

activities. It can be a person or a group of people with various areas of knowledge formed into an organisation by a community process, having similar purposes. The objectives of organisations are such as to solve community problems and respond to community needs continuously. Several organisations may cooperate in planning and operating activities, and there may be supportive and collaborative network both within and outside the community.

2. **Budgets** mean the budgets used in solving problems and developing communities. Those include financial budgets, knowledge, intellectual heritages, cultures, and natural resources. These budgets are acquired by the community through various means and are managed to create efficient circulation and profits gained along the process is used for community development work.
3. **Operation management** means operation management process of the community for its development work. That includes utilization of current information, activity planning and operation to solve problems directly responding to community needs as well as efficient using of community resources. Uses of resources are managed for benefits of every group of people. There is also value adding and replacement of the used-up resources.
4. **Learning process of the community** is a learning process and knowledge transferring among members of the community by learning from knowledge sources in the community. There are learning activities to educate various groups of people from within the community and from other communities.
5. **Participation of the community** is people's involvement in the development process of their community with senses of belonging. People can be from various groups who participate in planning, running activities, monitoring, and evaluating the activities.

To achieve the principles and goals of the community public health self-reliance measurement criteria, the author as the staff responsible for Primary Health Care work under the Roi-Et Provincial Public Health Office and whose main onus is to develop a model for Primary Health Care operation in the area, had established a pilot project of potential assessment and development of community public health self-reliance. The Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation technique was adopted as a model in operation of the project. The study outcome and recommendation gained from this project will be valuable for model development of the provincial health operation in the future.

The meaning of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) “is a process of collaborative problem-solving through the generation and use of knowledge. It is a process that leads to corrective action by involving all levels of stakeholders in shared decision making.” (Deepa Narayan, 1993)

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a collaborative process that involves stakeholders at different levels working together to access a project or policy , and take any corrective action required. Monitoring is usually conducted as an going activity throughout the life of a project, whereas evaluations are undertaken at certain times, such as at project midterm or completion. In participatory M&E work , the distinction between monitoring and evaluation can often become blurred, as participatory assessments and feedback mechanisms are built-in to project design as a regular component of the work , rather than one-time events.

The stakeholder groups typically involved in a participatory M&E activity include : the end users of project goods and services, including both men and women at the community level ; intermediary organization, including NGOs ; private sector businesses involved in the project ; and government staff at all levels.

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation : Key principles

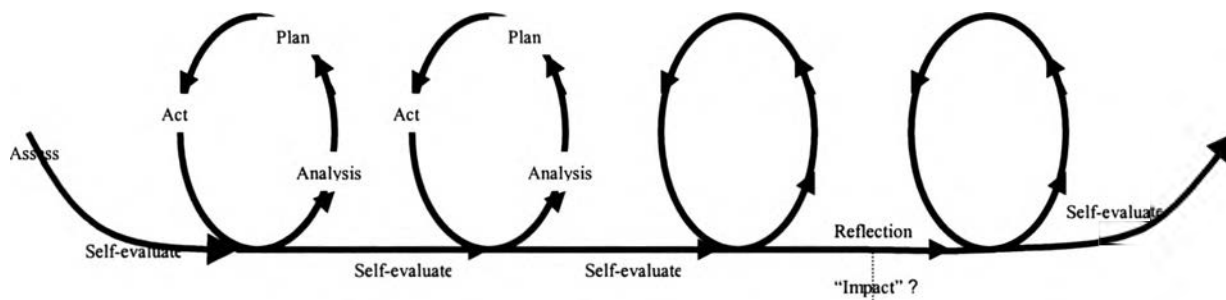
- Local people are active participants – not just sources of information.
- Stakeholder evaluate , outsiders facilitate.
- Focus on building stakeholder capacity for analysis and problem-solving.
- Process builds commitment to implementing any recommended corrective actions.

Participatory and Conventional Approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation Compared

	Conventional M&E	Participatory M&E
Who	External expert	Stakeholder , including communities and project staff ; outsider facilitator
What	Predetermined indicators , to measure inputs and outputs	Indicators identified by stakeholders , to measure process as well as outputs or outcomes
How	Questionnaires surveys , by outside “neutral” evaluators , distanced from project	Simple , qualitative or quantitative methods , by stakeholders themselves
Why	To make project and staff accountable to funding agency	To empower stakeholders to take corrective action

Source : Adapted from Deepa Narayan , Ibid.

The Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle



Source: Jacob Pfohl , 1986

Key Stages in Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Preparation**
 - Deciding on the need for an assessment
 - Determining the cost and time available
 - Identifying a lead participatory monitoring / evaluation facilitation
 - Training the team of monitoring / evaluation facilitators
- **Participatory Assessment , Self-Evaluation , and Analysis**
- **Action Planning**
- **Dissemination of the result**

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation : Some Methods

- Stakeholder workshops
- Participatory methodologies , including:
 - Participatory Rural Appraisal
 - SARAR (Self-esteem , Associative strengths, Resourcefulness, Action planning ,Responsibility)
 - Beneficiary Assessment
- Self-assessment methods