



Complexity-oriented Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)

From alternative to mainstream?

Public seminar, 10 November 2010, 1.30 – 5.00 p.m.

Concordia Theatre, The Hague

Rational

Donor agencies and policymakers are increasingly faced with demands by their constituencies to reveal the concrete results of the funds they have invested in development programmes. Similarly, Southern stakeholders and beneficiaries increasingly expect those that implement aid programmes to be held accountable for the results they set out to achieve. The introduction of results-based management, resulting in the refining of a variety of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) approaches, has been one response to meeting these demands. At the same time, studies and evaluations highlight the fact that the critical information and learning needs of donors and policymakers, as well as those of Southern stakeholders and the change agents responsible for the implementation of aid programmes, are often not being met. Back donors still face problems as regards receiving all the necessary information about concrete results and effectiveness from the programmes they fund. Actors in the field are faced by the limited relevance of PME approaches to support essential learning processes. This is especially the case in complex programmes with unpredictable outcomes and a multitude of actors and factors that contribute to the results. Internationally, there is a growing recognition of the possible need to combine traditional PME approaches, such as the logical framework approach, with other instruments for the PME of development programmes that work in complex social contexts. Consequently, more and more people are advocating complexity-oriented PME approaches to address these challenges.

The DPRN process

Within the framework of the Development Policy Review Network (DPRN), HIVA Research Institute for Work and Society of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, the Flemish Office for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB), Vredeseilanden/VECO and PSO Capacity Building in Developing Countries jointly explored the relevance of various PME approaches such as Outcome Mapping, the Logical Framework and Most Significant Change in complex development programmes. The organisations also assessed the extent to which the discussions and new insights relating to PME approaches are reflected in the PME policy frameworks of back donors. This was done by conducting a survey of current PME policies, developing learning histories, organising an online discussion forum and reviewing literature on PME in complex situations. This exploration process aims to generate practical lessons that can inform future PME policy and practice. The next and last step in the process is the organisation of a concluding public seminar.

Objectives of the seminar

The aim of the seminar is to:

1. Present the results of the DPRN process. These include:
 - a. The main insights from four learning histories on the use of different PME approaches in complex development programmes.
 - b. The review of current policy concerning PM&E in Belgium and the Netherlands.
 - c. The main lessons learned from the public discussion on the use of Logical Framework versus Outcome Mapping on the 'Outcome Mapping Learning Community' (<http://www.outcomemapping.ca/>), which was held from April till October 2010.
2. Provide a forum for discussion of potential recommendations for PME policies, based on lessons learned from practical experience with various PME approaches.

Target groups of the seminar

This is a public seminar aimed particularly at policymakers at government and NGO levels, researchers, independent consultants and all others who have an interest in rethinking PME practice and policies that can support complex development processes more effectively.

Practical details

Date: 10 November 2010

Time: 1.30 – 5.00 p.m.

Venue: Theatre Concordia, Hoge Zand 42 – 2512 EM, The Hague

Register: Send an email before 1 November to: aanmelding@pso.nl, mentioning 'DPRN seminar 10 November'



The 'Complexity oriented Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E)' seminar is being jointly organised by HIVA, PSO, VECO and VVOB as part of the DPRN process 'Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in complex social situations' (<http://pme.global-connections.nl>). The aim of the Development Policy Review Network (DPRN) is to stimulate informed debate and discussion of issues related to the formulation and implementation of development policies and to create opportunities to promote open exchange and dialogue between scientists, policymakers, development practitioners and the business sector in the Netherlands and Flanders. For more information see www.DPRN.nl and www.global-connections.nl.