

Book Review

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Book Name: *Just and Lasting Change: When Communities Own Their Futures*

Author(s): Daniel Taylor-Ide, President Emeritus, Future Generations and Carl E. Taylor, former Professor Emeritus at The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Year Published: 2002

Author's argument (or perspective) and summary of the content:

Progress to development is hindered by inequities and unsustainable programs. *Just and Lasting Change* provides examples of the SEED-SCALE process through which some communities and nations have successfully facilitated community and health development. The last three chapters of the book are handbooks that consolidate lessons drawn from the examples in previous sections and explain how to implement the SEED-SCALE model.

Basic Concepts outlined:

A. Four approaches to development

- 1) The Blueprint Approach: Top-down, expert-driven approach and is used in mass development programs. A “fix” is fashioned and a plan is made to replicate the fix.
- 2) The Explosion Approach: Used to address large-scale, temporary, specific needs such as repairing roads, providing immunizations and food due to a catastrophe.
- 3) Additive Approach: Used in bottom up programs - adapting a program to local circumstances. Project often controlled and nurtured by NGO rather than community. Development grows neighborhood by neighborhood. Replication is slow. Programs are long term. These programs often fail because of lack of capacity building and local ownership and reliance on outside resources.
- 4) The Biological Approach: Explores and experiments in one environment to find a mix of actions suited to local circumstances and then provides an enabling environment for rapid scale-up. The program adapts to the new ecologies, economies and values of new environments. The biological approach combines the advantages of the additive approach with the potential for exponential expansion of the Blueprint and Explosion models

B. Basic concepts of SEED – SCALE (Self-Evaluation for Effective Decision making and System for Communities to Adapt Learning and Expand)

The three principles of community action:

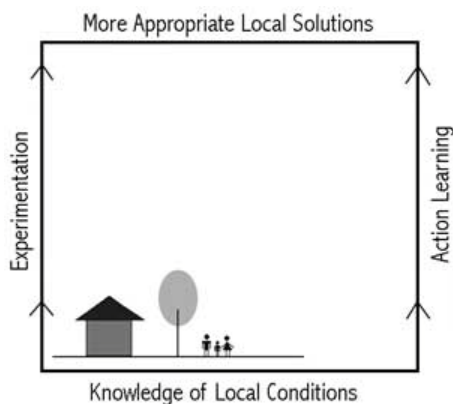
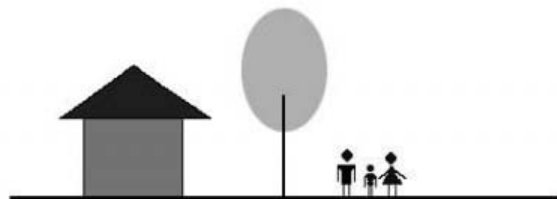
- 1) The need for three-way partnerships for community change: partnerships involving the community, experts who can help build capacity, and officials who make policies.
- 2) The need for basing decisions on locally specific data, collected at the community level, for example by PLA.
- 3) The need for social and behavior change at leadership, household level and individual level.

The six criteria for testing action:

- 1) Collaboration: A common vision and collaboration within the community
- 2) Equity: for the poor, less educated and ethnic and religious minorities
- 3) Sustainability: environmental, economic and cultural sustainability
- 4) Interdependence, not dependence: Interdependence within and among communities. Outside resources are certainly needed but should be accepted only if they do not shift control outside the community.
- 5) Holistic action: an orientation that addresses combinations of needs to achieve general well-being.
- 6) Iterative action: Sequential learning and continual adjustments.

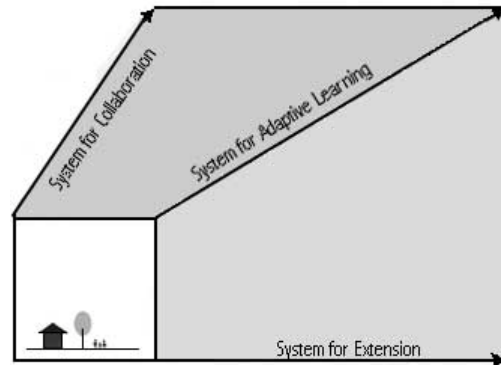
The three dimensions of SCALE:

SCALE One (Successful Change As Learning Experiences) Confidence and sophistication of services occurs within a community as it builds upon its own successes.



SCALE Squared (Self-help Centers for Action Learning and Experimentation) Establishment of learning centers or successful communities that can influence an entire region.

SCALE Cubed (Systems for Collaboration, Adaptive Learning, and Extension) Setting-up systems for partnership and top down support that makes the system sustainable



An example from the community: The White Mountain Apache, Arizona: Reclaiming Self-Determination

The government imposed agriculture and land ownership and use policies that changed the environment, social fabric and lifestyles. For example:

- Selling grazing rights to non-Indians
- Tapping the Salt River to meet needs of communities downstream
- Introducing timber industry

As a result of the passage of the Indian Self Determination Act and re-establishment of the tribal council, the community began implementing effective community – based solutions to problems in partnership with Washington and with independent experts from various fields.

Conducted a self-evaluation:

- Members build their ideal community with lego blocks.
- In depth interviews
- Environmental data gathering

The assessment found a dichotomy between health problems and health services provided at local health center. Health services did not address teenage pregnancy, road accidents, alcoholism and chronic health problems such as diabetes or provide prevention services. As a result, a local task force with representatives from the community and health care providers now collects health information and meets regularly to define health priorities and actions. There is now a wellness center connected to the health center.

The community found locally based solutions for watershed management and new economic alternatives to the timber industry such as a ski area, hunting for elk and tourist trout fishing.

By taking responsibility of their school, they expanded from eight grades to a full high school.

An example of large scale application: China, Expansion of Maternal and Child Health Services

From 1982 to 1995 maternal and child health services in China used this “going to scale approach.”

- 1) **SCALE One:** Began with 10 model counties, one in every region of the country. Chinese and international experiences were integrated to focus on activities that upgraded maternal and child health barefoot doctors could implement (obstructed labor, family planning, and treatment of diarrhea and pneumonia). Each county developed its own financing system.
- 2) **SCALE Squared:** Pilot counties were the initial experimental and teaching sites.
- 3) **SCALE Cubed:** With an enabling framework, twenty more counties were added, then 85 more counties, then 300 more counties, to finally reach a total population of 160 million people.

Enabling factors:

Top down support - MoH decided what would be done and local health department decided how it would be done and provided an **enabling environment of policy and financing to stimulate innovation.**

Partnerships:

- The MoH, and provincial and county governors and health officials signed contracts to define roles and responsibilities.
- National and regional experts trained provincial trainers, who trained county level trainers, who trained grassroots workers.
- In the 10 pilot counties, six medical universities conducted research to test innovations and adapt them to Chinese conditions and guided implementation.

Especially useful information from Handbooks:

1. Websites: www.ciet.org (Community Information and Epidemiological Technologies): CIET does epidemiological research and training with a special purpose. Their aim is to move epidemiology's centre of gravity from universities in rich countries toward places and situations where it is needed most: in developing countries, in emergencies and among marginalized populations. They want to see epidemiology used to make public services work better, reach more who need them, and be more accountable.
2. How communities, governments and experts (NGOs, academic centers, donors and community leaders) can promote SEED-SCALE

Main lessons learned/ applications to work in the international maternal and child health sector:

- 1) To design effective programs we need to understand the basic values and concepts that have guided past top-down and bottom-up approaches to health development and the influences that determine prospects for scaling-up.
- 2) There are no universal solutions in community-based development but there is a process to help find appropriate local solutions.

- 3) To promote community-based social development, health professionals, officials, and experts need to develop new values and attitudes in partnership with communities.
- 4) Good health care depends on social organization and change in community behavior.

Reader's professional opinion on the author's argument (perspective)

I would recommend *Just and Lasting Change* for those interested in participatory planning approaches to community development. The book is reasonably well written and provides good examples. It is more practical than many books on community development.

I learned a great deal from sections 2, 3 and 4 which provide examples of specific communities and nations that have made good progress in development using many of the SEED-SCALE principles and methods.

One concern I have is that the authors selected historical examples and made them fit the SEED SCALE model. It would be interesting for them to also discuss what did not happen – for example how did progress made in these examples compare with progress made in surrounding regions.

Another missing piece is that there is no comment on the political issues surrounding the examples - especially China and Tibet.