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# Does it take a Village to Teach a Child? Lessons from Experiments in Education

Piyush Kuthethoor
*Bard College*, pk4422@bard.edu

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Does it take a Village to Teach a Child?  Lessons from Experiments in Education

A Community-based Development approach to Program Evaluation in Education for
Adaptable Program Design, Implementation and Successful Targeting

Senior-Project submitted to the
Division of Social Studies
Of Bard College

By

Piyush Kuthethoor

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Piyush Kuthethoor

Abstract

Why should we and how do we incorporate a community-based development model into the design, implementation and targeting of experimental educational programs? This project is motivated to create a useful theoretical framework or "lens" for development that reflects social reality, one which sees communities, the space of patterned, meaningful interpersonal relationships, as a locus of development. It is interested in ways that such a framework can help design adaptable policy innovations/developmental programs and come up with successful and sustained solutions to pressing human needs. First, a "lens" of community is developed for analysis using findings from behavioral studies, historic observations, philosophy, anthropology and Herman Daly and John Cobb's economics for community. Then, development in a community is posed as a function of the "health" of community-relationships, the evaluative criteria for health being open communication of needs, responsiveness to (one-another's) needs and concern for (one-another's) needs, a lack of which indicates "relationship-failures". After critically reviewing the literature on Randomized Control Trial evaluations in education, it shows how programs which incorporate a lens of community, by being mindful of relationships-spaces in their designs, are adaptable to different community contexts; and programs that focus on improving community relationships and target relationship-failures can find solutions to pressing needs; ones that may be better sustained than programs that don't. The project concludes by offering a way ahead for development program design and evaluation that is attentive to key aspects of community-relationship health and incorporates a flexible, long-term understanding and model of community based development.

This project is dedicated to every development practitioner and policy maker addressing the concerns of those in need, and trying to make the world a healthier, safer and more meaningful place to live. It is also dedicated to the students and youth whom they inspire and energize into an unwavering, practical, idealism that is committed to achieving the same.

## Acknowledgements

I am incredibly grateful and thankful to have met and studied under my adviser, Sanjaya DeSilva. At a time when the microeconomic models felt mechanical and macroeconomic theory felt distant from the problems that people in developing countries like mine were facing, Sanjay introduced me to a whole new world. His advanced seminar on development economics renewed my passion for the subject. Needless to say, this project would not have been possible without his insight when my concepts got muddled, his patience when my explanations got hasty, and his moderation when my passion got intense. He has been a curator, map and guide to the sea of research in development, and I could not have navigated the waters without him.

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First is Pavlina Tcherneva, my first economics professor at Bard, who broadened the scope of what economics meant to me. Thanks to her, I got to explore the rich intellectual history of the field and the relevance of economic thought to pressing current-day issues. She showed me how important and urgent the study of economic systems and their bigger methodological and ethical underpinnings are to the world today. Conversations with her always left me with a desire to do something, to make my contribution, to rethink the "methodology with the big-M", as she loves to say. This project is partially a product of the passion that those conversations and classroom discussion have inspired, and I thank her for being my teacher and mentor.

The other is Maria Kronfeldner, under whom I studied the philosophy of the social sciences at Central European University. Until I had met Maria, I was trying to rethink economics from within. Maria broadened my perspective to look at the intellectual relations within and beyond the social sciences, the relationships space in which economists were embedded, so to speak. Most of the material I use in this project from outside economics- like that by Fricker, Little, and Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan- was presented to me by Maria. I highly appreciated Maria's ability to distil complex concepts with clarity, without reducing the nuances in them. Thanks to her, I began thinking broadly about key issues like objectivity, human relations, value and justice in the social sciences.

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CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTION: Internal versus External Concerns in Economic Development Programs</u>

In recent times, development economics has seen the spurt of Randomized Control Trials. These are experimental programs in the field of education, health, rural development, empowerment and finance that help isolate the real impact of a development program. RCTs are based on a clinical/ medicinal trial model- a treatment is randomly assigned or not to a pool of similar participants, so that differences in outcomes between the treatment and control groups over time can be validly identified with/ attributed to the program. RCTs were seen as a microcosmic problem-solving technique, whose transparency and usability "made up for the failures of the "thinking big" paradigm of macro-solutions" (Cohen and Easterly, 2010, p.7). However, the ethicality of RCTs, the legitimacy of findings on larger scales and the usefulness of results have been questioned by development practitioners.

Experimental program evaluation may often become a form of blind empiricism- as it is guided by the idea that one is only dealing with "raw data", it is hesitant to adopt any side of the theoretical debate. Indeed, an attachment to internal validity and a focus on statistical rigor is reflected in the spurt of RCTS, whose quest for "hard evidence" can sometimes come at the cost of narrowing the scope of the evaluation's results in understanding the problem and what works. As Rodrik (2008) notes, "the only truly hard evidence that randomized evaluations typically generate relates to questions that are so narrowly limited in scope and application that they are in themselves uninteresting. The "hard evidence" from the randomized evaluation has to be supplemented with lots of soft evidence before it becomes usable" (p.5). Moreover, the narrow scope can lead to a certain self-deception about "value-neutrality", as decisions other than the identification strategy in program design and evaluation do involve value judgments, so practitioners inevitably will resort to an existing paradigm, e.g. an economic model of irrational

behavior or constrained choice. Theorists have shifted the development paradigm from monetary or utilitarian gain to the idea of capabilities where people are said to also seek non-monetary fulfillment, for which individual agency is a central requirement. This explains the paradigm shift from GDP to HDI, the shift from the growth economics of aid, wage levels and employment, to holistic aspects of human development such as health, education, gender equity and political agency. While this is a shift in the right direction, the capabilities approach has some limitations, and in chapter 1, I discuss these and argue that individually valued functioning and agency are both constituted in community-relationships and should be conceptually framed as such. A community-based development model, where the focus can be shifting to the quality of community-relationships instead of individual pursuit of self-expansion might thus be increasingly relevant in a world of unsustainable growing inequality and polarization of wealth.

An important issue RCTs are yet to tackle is that of external validity- "Can an RE finding be generalized to other settings?" If its objective is to guide policy decisions, how can one make sure that what worked in the experimental setting would work in other contexts, or would persist over time when the experimentation process comes to an end? One possible solution is to replicate the program in many settings, but it is unclear how many are needed, or how to choose the right sample of environments. Replication is often mentioned as a solution to the external validity problem, without guidance for how many/ which replications establish generalizability (Cohen and Easterly, 2010, p.9). The problem of external validity needs to be reframed for three reasons: one, most meta-empirical studies that seek to look for a universally valid outcome fail to find any statistically significant outcomes; two, because general patterns of similarity and difference can tell us about the nature of the program, replication may not be necessary; three, as the mechanism of the program's impact emerge from the community context which varies, exact

replications may not be useful. As external validity does not seem possible, necessary, or useful, it is best to reframe the external validity question, and ask instead- is a program adaptable? Can my design adjust to different contexts? Am I targeting a pressing, broader, more general problem, or a fixing a minute detail which may not sustain after the program? A community based development model could provide insights into the adoption of old RCTs to new contexts and design of new ones. An adaptable program design that incorporates a community-perspective and successful targeting of the quality of community relationships that ensures the general well-being is crucial to development.

This project thus tries to bring two literatures in conversation- the community-based development literature, and the experimental education programs literature, to see if experiments that are mindful of community relationships and their health in their design, implementation and targeting have impacts that are more adaptable to different contexts and can sustain themselves after the program. Using a lens of community based development, general patterns in the RCT literature on education (where the community context is especially important) are studied to comment on issues of adaptability, and the effectiveness of an intervention discussed in light of its successful and sustainable targeting of vital mechanisms. Reframing the issue in the form of adaptability, focused mechanism targeting and sustainability, instead of replication and persistence, is a better way to think of external validity.

The rest of the project is organized as follows. The first chapter highlights the aim and necessity of using a community-based development model, arguing for an approach that moves away from unbridled value-neutrality and methodological individualism. It develops a model or "lens" using various ideas from the capabilities approach, behavioral studies, philosophy, anthropology and Herman Daly and John Cobb's "economics for community". The community

is seen as a "relationships-space", which is more than an instrumental institution or a collective. The "relationships-space" is the "is" and the overcoming of "relationship-failures", where certain basic criteria for healthy community relationships are unmet, is the "ought" of this "lens" of analyzing development. The chapter concludes by discussing how a "lens of community" can serve and be adopted in development program design and analysis. The focus on community relationships spaces and relationship failures may force looking into communal costs/benefits and taking a long-term view, which will become necessary conditions for the creation of inclusive, adaptable and sustainable development programs. The second chapter then goes into the steps of the decision-making process in program design and evaluation where such a frame can be adopted. Part (A) seeks to address how incorporating a Community Lens into the design and implementation of different types of programs (those targeting resource usage, those targeting demand for education, those targeting learner-teacher relationships and those targeting school decision making) may improve their ability to successfully adapt to different contexts. Part (B) seeks to discuss the importance of programs to focus on improving community relationships and target relationship failures in order to address the pressing needs for development and successfully improve outcomes, especially if outcomes are to be sustained beyond the program. Finally, the conclusion presents a possible way that programs could pay mindful attention to outcomes reflecting key aspects of community-health, and a sustainable, long-run understanding and model of community based development.

CHAPTER 1: CRAFTING THE LENS OF COMMUNITY

Understanding Relationship Spaces and Relationship Failures of persons-in-community

Should we use a 'Value-Neutral' Empirical Lens?

As discussed in the introduction, the field of economic development today professes a clinical, detached, supposedly value-neutral orientation or "empirical" lens with which it studies problems of economic development and tests solutions. Nevertheless, the design and analysis of development programs must proceed with certain conceptual frameworks of social reality and assumptions about what constitutes the problem field. Good concepts are those abstractions which adequately map onto some psychological and historical realities of humans, and unambiguously express them, making the means they describe appropriate and the ends they formulate plausible. Without deciding for themselves what frameworks and assumptions are valuable for study, the concepts and assumptions built into the design and analysis of programs may be inevitably mired by the individualist methodology dominating existing theory.

This implies that the belief in "value-neutrality" is a fallacy in and of itself. The "empirical lens" makes all sorts of choices about what constitutes as outcome, where (points, entities) the development or impact occurs, expected mechanisms and modes of operation, and necessary variables to fulfill expectations. But by not acknowledging the conceptual frameworks and assumptions backing these choices, it seems to believe that these choices are as random or "neutral" as the subjection to treatment itself. Thereby it assumes it acts "realistically", while unconsciously reverting to available frameworks and explanations of standard economic theory (orthodox or heterodox). In their book *For the Common Good*, Daly and Cobb (1994) recognize this persistent problem with economic analysis, one they call a bad case of the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness"(p. 41). Although "a genuine limitation of conceptual thought" is that we

abstract "away from concrete experience in different directions and distances", it can be limited

by a "recurrence to the concrete for inspiration" and "the acknowledgement of value-judgments

"in choosing the direction and distance of abstraction proper to each argument" (p.41). So, an

uninspired clinical detachment and failure to acknowledge value-judgments about one's analysis

of "the concrete" is prevalent in mainstream theory and practice. The state of value-neutrality is

summed up best by them here-

> there is a large element of self deception, the ideal of value neutrality itself being a value
> highly favorable to the status quo in general. More objectivity is in fact obtained by
> bringing values out into the open and discussing them than by denying their formative
> presence in the discipline. One must distinguish is from ought for clear thinking, but "to
> believe that some disciplines should specialize in "is" and others in "ought"" is at best a
> delusion and at worst an escape from ever facing the "ought" at all (p. 131).

Experimental evaluations in their quest for internal validity and clinical precision can also

unconsciously resort to this mainstream bias, unless consciously having and using a larger

framework for value-judgements.

Thus, moving away from this value-neutral attitude must involve "correction and

expansion [of the axioms of economics], a more empirical and historic attitude, less pretense to

be a "science", and the willingness to subordinate the market to purposes that it is not geared to

determine" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.8). This is what Daly and Cobb attempt to do in *For the*

*Common Good*. They offer a theoretical lens where the individual of economic analysis, ie the

*Homo Economicus* or economizing individual, is not seen as a pure individual but as person-in-

community (Daly and Cobb, 1994). They call their theory an "economics for community", in

which there is historic, psychological and anthropological ground to say that "the economy is

embedded in fundamental social relations and not that social relations are embedded in an

economic system"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.7), which implies that "the extent to which an

economy supports or destroys healthy communities is more important than where it is to be

located from left to right" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.10). The theoretical framework that they develop is the basis for a "lens of community" that this project recommends, one necessary to rethink and redesign developmental programs and address problems of economic development in a way that leads to adaptable and sustainable solutions.

The argument that will be made in this chapter is that the individualistic methodology present in the current "empirical" lens used to study economic development, neither frames social reality accurately, nor does it provide an understanding of the plausible ends and appropriate means to human development. This is perhaps the main reason why the new wave of experimentation is unable to provide adaptable or sustainable solutions (i.e., in their language, address external validity concerns). They focus mainly on internal, individualistic, atomistic and within-experimental-settings rigor and validity. As an alternative, this chapter calls for a more realistic methodology- a "methodological localism" that looks at socially-constituted individuals and what Daly and Cobb call "persons-in-community"- to construct a lens more appropriate to studying problems and solutions in economic development- a "lens of community."

This "lens of community" is a tool to focus on an aspect of social reality that is crucial for understanding human development in broader and sustainable terms- the mutual meaningful/ functional environmental and interpersonal relationships that constitute individuals and where they can act, bounded locally or through trans-local affinities. The understanding of the community here as a "relationship space", "place" or "translocal affinity" in which individuals exist and act has its roots in anthropology and other social sciences, and is not to be confused with what community has come to mean in economics- an instrumental "institution" serving individual needs, or an abstract "collective" which represents or acts on behalf of individuals. Since relationships are qualitative, the call to focus on a functional "relationship space" of

communities creates a need to develop criteria for judgment or assessment of these relationships. Without any presumption of value-neutrality, the "health" of community- relationships is judged based on what this project assumes indispensable to achieving inclusive and sustainable human development. Three criteria for health arise- the communication of, responsiveness to and concern for one-another's needs, the absence of each of which are considered "relationship failures." The "relationships-space" is the "is" and the overcoming of relationship-failures is the "ought" of this "lens" of analyzing development. The chapter concludes by discussing how a "lens of community" can serve and be adopted in development program design and analysis. The focus on community relationships spaces and relationship failures may force looking into communal costs/benefits and taking a long-term view, which will become necessary conditions for the creation of adaptable and inclusive development programs.

The (un)enlightened and (in)capable Individual: Addressing Methodological Individualism

The social contract theory of the human condition, that humanity was founded upon savage self-interest maximizing individuals entering into social relations involving property, barter and social contracts, in order to mutually further those individual self-interests, was envisioned in the enlightenment through the works of Adam Smith and Rousseau. This view was extremely influential on the development of empiricist and rationalist traditions that guide many academic disciplines in the social sciences today, especially economics. It involves the use of a picture of the human condition that is both considered uncommon by evolutionary psychologists and behavior scientists today and an ahistorical departure from how we theorize and understand human beings.

Firstly, this picture of the human condition, that of homo-economicus, assumed that individuals in the pursuit of self-interest have total wants that are insatiable and that as

individuals acquire particular goods, their rational desire for additional consumption of that good, called the utility function of that good, diminishes (Daly and Cobb, p. 85). Work in psychology and behavioral science surveyed by Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan (2010) showed how this assumes a rather narrow universe, because social scientists, especially economists, instead of empirically addressing population variation have *a priori* dismissed it, making broad generalized claims about human psychology based on samples mostly drawn from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic (WEIRD) societies (Henrich et. al., 2010). Making universal claims about human behavior from narrow WEIRD samples leads to a certain "WEIRD" bias in the social sciences, and their work suggests that these populations (distinguished only in a rhetorical, non-generalized manner) significantly differ from most other populations in various dimensions. This leads them to "question the ability of social science to distinguish reliably basic aspects of human psychology from more developmentally, culturally, environmentally contingent aspects given the disproportionate reliance on WEIRD subjects" (Henrich et. al., 2010, p.3). In some of these aspects, the WEIRD bias affects fundamental assumptions of theories of human well-being/ development. In particular, the variation observed in the dimensions of independent/interdependent self-concepts, self-views and personal choice, moral reasoning, fairness and the desire to punish individualism and folk-biological knowledge are useful to assess the robustness of concepts in a development theory (Henrich et. al., 2010). Concepts of well-being and human development in the individualistic utilitarian approach can be considered empirically inadequate because they are limited to WEIRD notions of satisfaction. In addition to this, numerous studies showing evidence of cooperation, empathy and social values in primates (see DeWaal's *Primates and Philosophers*) and young children (see Tomasello's

*Why we Cooperate*), also suggest that savage individual engaging in morality out of self-interest may be a psychological generalization of a peripheral phenomenon.

However, even Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic Societies weren't always based on these rationalist individualist self-maximizing tendencies, and such a concept is as much a historic anomaly as it is a behavioral outlier. Taking the starting point of Western industrial society- the individual's maximization of one's utilitarian or economic provisioning- and making it the central phenomena around which social relations are organized is a creation myth, not a real historic process. This picture has been found to be a mythical generalization of the pre-market human condition by historians and anthropologists who study various pre-capitalist societies. Most prominently, Karl Polanyi, a historian of the industrial revolution, argued in *The Great Transformation* (1944) that never before in the history of humanity has a means of economic provisioning taken a central stance in the organization of society and human relationships prior to the industrial revolution. He summarized the anthropology of the matter-

> For it is on this one negative point that modern ethnographers agree: the [historic] absence of the motive of gain, the absence of the principle of laboring for remuneration, the absence of the principle of least effort; and, especially, the absence of any separate and distinct institution based on economic motives (p. 49).

The idea that economic provisioning is embedded in a social system was reversed by the notion of a self-regulating market system that organized society around it, centralizing a peripheral motive in most societies to barter or gain and making peripheral principles central to production and distribution- reciprocity and redistribution (Polanyi, 1944). What was damaging in this process was precisely the objectification or commodification of what was hitherto treated with a certain subjective respect and dignity- nature and humans. Nature and humanity were now purely utility giving objects- "land" and "labor". Polanyi explained the consequences of such

mistreatment- "to allow the market mechanism to be sole director of the fate of human beings and their nature environment, indeed and the amount/use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society" (Polanyi, 1944, p.76) . The "satanic" nature Polanyi (1944) attributed to the "mill is thus not so much due to the fact that it is a mill or an industrial organization of life, but industrializing and marketing these "essentials" has a satanic nature to it. He writes, "In disposing man's labor power the system would dispose of the physical, psychological and moral entity 'man' " (p. 76). Physically, "nature would be reduced to its elements, neighborhoods and landscapes defiled, rivers polluted, the power to produce food and raw materials destroyed"; psychologically "robbed of protective covering of cultural institutions, human beings would perish from the effects of social exposure"; morally, "criminality and perversion would be natural aftermaths of pure competition" (Polanyi, 1944, p.76). Unleashing the market force as supreme thus most likely results in the destruction of society, so no system can sustain it unless "its human and natural substance and business organization is protected" (Polanyi, 1944, p.77).

Polanyi thus describes "the double movement," an unleashing of the market mechanism to all general commodities and thus a certain centralization of the process in social organization, but at the same time the creation of a system to protect land, labor and capital or have restrictions on the market mechanism with regards to these commodities- namely contractual law and the enforcing state (Polanyi, 1944, p.79). It suggests that both self-interested individualism and the abstract collectivism of formalized institutional power in the state emerged as mutually reinforcing tendencies, and that the sustenance of the market depends on brakes that certain protective mechanisms like social relationships guaranteed through contracts by an authority (the state) apply on its accelerating progressive tendencies. But both these movements effectively severe or fundamentally transform existing social relationships amongst human beings and

humans' relationship to nature through which provisioning occurs. Societies have always had modes of production and economic provisioning. But social relationships between individuals and their constitution as a member of society has always been arranged according to the values of the given societies, and the modes of provisioning are merely derivative of those social relationships. There is a way in which even the ideas from the enlightenment philosophy, of a contractual society between "free individuals" with economic contracts (markets) and political contracts (nation state), is exemplary of how certain societal values explain desirable social relations, and the mode of provisioning is a function of these social relations, not vice-versa.

However, the problem is that the axioms of the utilitarian model of the economy is proclaimed to have universal objective validity and left unexamined, leaving us under the impression that if all of us could and would pursue certain goals in our self-interest in the market, the market would produce the best outcomes for us in aggregate. It has made commodities out of humans and nature, thereby undermining the interdependent relationships we are fundamentally embedded in to sustain ourselves in the world. Three main problems arise from such a utilitarian picture. First, it is not so much the focus on utility or value, but the definition of utility as being something that is determined within an individual through objective evaluation, in isolation from their social context, thereby disembedding them from it. Second, even if "objective evaluation" includes the importance of cooperation, of caring for others, of acting in selfless ways and being accommodating of others' needs, the analyses excludes "concerns for others people's satisfactions or sufferings that do not express themselves as one's market activity" (Daly and Cobb, 1994 p.86). This means that *Homo Economicus* "takes no pleasure in nor envies a neighbor's good fortune" and philanthropy doesn't add to those who aren't on the giving or receiving end of the transaction- this creature doesn't know "benevolence or malevolence in

these instances, only indifference"(Daly and Cobb, 1994 p.86). Finally, acts of kindness or empathy just serve individual utility, which is the only plausible end of all (basically economic) activities. While this position may acknowledge the historic vitality of cooperation in the evolution of human beings, and understands the vitality of social relationships to an individual's survival, it looks at the relationship between individuals as instrumental to the utility of the individual, not as a necessary indicator and precondition of sustainable human development.

The Capabilities Approach, a new paradigm in development economics, as theorized by Amartya Sen, is an improvement from utilitarianism in terms of its conceptualized means and ends. Some concepts in Sen's general version are functionings, achieved functionings, capability, and agency. Here the notion of well-being is shifted away from utility, which is only a consequence, to functionings. Alkire (2005) illustrates these concepts using the example of the bicycle-

"A person may own a bicycle (a resource). By riding the bicycle, the person moves around town and presumably, values this mobility (a valued functioning). Functionings are beings and doings one has reason to value. The access to the bicycle (resource) coupled with the person's own characteristics (achieved functionings), creates the capability for the person to move around town when she or he wishes. If the person enjoys having this capability to meet a friend, then the capability contributes to utility (p.4).

The CA argues that utility can be distorted by personality or adaptive preferences; functionings can be enjoyed in a stifled environment, a bicycle can be useless if you cannot balance, so capability represents the most accurate space in which to investigate and advance measures of diverse kinds of well-being (Alkire, 2005, p.4) and achieved functionings for interpersonal comparisons of achieved well-being. Sen thus allows a more spacious definition of development as not just resource-based (national-income accounting) or preference based (utility/price) but on capabilities or what individuals are able to do, development being the presence of real opportunities to do and be what individuals have reason to value. Therefore, one

could value something not because it satisfies one, but because one has a valid reason to value it. So it is not so much immediate consequent satisfactions that governs human decisions, but an ideal, while real circumstances which allow its fulfillment are a mark of development. Agency, the freedom to choose from opportunities one has reasons to value, is central to the notion of capabilities, which are "substantial freedoms" [both "opportunity" freedoms- the set of interrelated real opportunities to choose from, and "process" freedoms, i.e. "agency" to choose] (Alkire, 2005, p.5). Individual agency is thus the primary means to individual well-being, contributing to the expansion of all other human capabilities, the end of human development.

The CA does seem to provide an opportunity to move away from utilitarianism, but it tends to remain in the realm of methodological individualism or rational decision making agents. Sen does argue that social relationships could be valuable to individuals in and of themselves, and not because they derive some utility out of it but have a reason to value it. However, two inadequacies remain. One, when agency is defined as the freedom to choose, having a choice to pursue things one values does not imply that valued functionings are chosen/ attained. We may choose x among "real opportunities" x and y, even though y gives us what we value more. This is an extension of Robeyns' critique of the CA, which acknowledges the lack of a normative theory of choice (Robeyns, 2000). In other words, agency provides no link between choice and value. This link is broken because collective hermeneutic resources or socially constituted self-concepts and goals guided by values may be at odds with each other. For example, mothers working to succeed in a corporate culture may want to devote time to the first few years of a child's life. They have this choice, but socially constituted hermeneutic tropes of what constitutes corporate success (committed, puts work first, etc.) pressures them to return to work as soon as possible. Similarly, students from marginalized communities in India choose not to

continue with education after high school (despite reasons to value it and real opportunities such as reservations to pursue it) because there are no role models- hermeneutic tropes of successful people they can be and act like- that instil such a value in them. In the first case, the link between choice and valued functioning is damaged by the inability to contribute to producing commonly held tropes (of corporate success). In the second case, the link is broken by the inability to use commonly held tropes (of educational success). Both are Miranda Fricker's "minimal" cases of hermeneutic injustice- valued ends are well-understood but there is a communication failure with dominant hermeneutic resources (Fricker, 2007). In both, individual agency alone is inadequate to ensure that valued- functionings are attained, or even chosen. Thus the theoretic means to well-being must use concepts incorporating what Robeyns calls a normative theory of choice.

Moreover, agency is the ability to choose "valued functionings"- beings and doings in line with "his or her conception of the good"- but the concept of valued functionings overlooks functionings one desires (or doesn't) but for which one doesn't have intelligible (rational or irrational) reasons to value/dis-value. Such a situation arises with what Miranda Fricker (2007) calls "paucity of concepts"- when hermeneutic resources in a society fall short of rendering certain individual's sense of wellbeing or experience of injustice intelligible (Fricker, 2007). For example, one's experience of queerness, a valued state of well-being, was until recently ineffable even to oneself, because of having to choose binary (male/female, straight/gay) concepts to identify valued beings. Similarly, the "American dream" defines a successful American as some who competes, works hard, and "makes" it, and "white privilege" suggests that white people have systemic favors. However, this dominant discourse prevented disenfranchised lower-class white Americans from understanding their own un-wellbeing using the tropes that the system/ American dream works and it works for them. In the first case, there was no available conception

of the well-being one valued; in the second, available collective hermeneutical resources didn't explain the un-well-being experienced- it made them either failures or unprivileged, unable to thus give them socially acceptable reasons for their un-wellbeing. What these have in common is a lack of reasons/concepts in the communal linguistic domain to deem a being or doing valuable/invaluable. But this does not make those experiences irrelevant to well-being. A theory of well-being that deploys as its means a choice made within one's individual objective evaluation, "conception of the good", or "reasons to value" is inadequate.

Recognizing the inadequacies arising from the misplaced concreteness in individual agency and individual reasoning or evaluation is particularly important to move towards economics for community. Community is precisely the feature of reality that has been most consistently abstracted from in modern economics. "The need is not for one more theorem squeezed out of the premises of methodological individualism by a more powerful mathematic press, but for a new premise that reinstates the critical aspect of reality that has been abstracted from: community" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.43).

New ontology: socially-constituted individuals and persons-in-community as reality

Both utilitarianism and the capabilities approach (in its original form) succumb to a form of methodological individualism. In this framework, they neglect "the effect of one person's welfare on that of others through bonds of sympathy and human community, and the physical effects of one person's production and consumption activities on others through the bonds of biophysical community" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.37). More importantly, from the discussion above, we realize that individual desires are "reasoned" only in relation to the communally determined ideas, tropes and goals that one could identify with and pursue. The individuals themselves- what they value, the beings and doings they identify with- are not to be constituted

as separate entities that are then limited by the social context, as the CA suggests. The individual

is defined by a social context, a set of historic relationships one finds oneself in, and various

parts of one's social, economic and cultural reality that one identifies with. Daly underscores the

idea of such an individual, noting that "people are constituted by their relationships. We come

into being in and through relationships and have no identity apart from them. Our dependence on

others is not simply for goods and services. How we think and feel, what we want and dislike,

our aspiration and fears- in short, who we are- all come into being socially" (Daly and Cobb,

1994, p.161). The "individual" is thus a confluence of circumstances that define, guide and shape

the desires one comes to pursue, thoughts one comes to believe in, and ideas one reasons with.

This is not to say that the individual has no power to shape and reshape the social context.

The claim is that one is defined from the outside in, but one can define from the inside out as

well. Daly and Cobb affirm that "people have the freedom to constitute themselves, and personal

responsibility is based on that freedom", but that this repurposing of relationships doesn't create

something separable from those relationships" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.161). To them, the social

character of human existence is primary, and can only be partially transcended- real freedom

depending on the quality of these relationships (p. 161). An analysis that prioritizes and makes

primary free rational decision-making without acknowledging context radically abstracts from

social reality and limits the definition of what it means to be human. Thus there is the need for an

ontology where an individual human being is not a purely independent agent, she is an

interdependent socially- constituted entity, a person-in-community making decisions based on

social influences and in-turn influencing society.

Daniel Little's idea of the socially constituted individual in the understanding of social

change and social phenomena might be a key in moving towards a lens in which the relational

space between individuals within which individuals constitutes themselves is considered. In "Levels of the Social", Little (2005) calls for neither methodological individualism nor holism but "methodological localism", where explanations of social phenomena must refer to relationships between individuals(Little, 2005, p.6) at the local or basic level of proximity/ immediacy to individuals. Little organizes "society" into various levels of entities: a socially constituted individual, organization and institutions, social structures (states trading systems, international), large factors of human interaction (race, ethnicity and national identity), and systems of ideas practices, norms and values (p. 14). By making socially constituted individuals the fundamental unit of his ontology, he accounts for interdependence between individuals and social entities, and explain why individual behave the way they do (because of social influences).

Here, although social entities do persist beyond individuals, higher levels are challenged and changed by moving from lower ones, and a change in interpreting norms (level 5) is possible because the actions of an individual is socially constituted. Thus, this approach is considered "micro foundational" but not in a way that reduces the micro into a narrow vision of an "independent rational, self-maximizing individual". The micro-foundation approach suggests that macro causation in always mediated by socially structured agents. The cause is the Situation or the individual's social context (Macro t1 $\rightarrow$ Micro t1), the causation or Action is taken by socially-constituted individuals (Micro t1 $\rightarrow$ Micro t2), and then social Transformation occurs (Micro t2 $\rightarrow$ Macro t2). This is the micro-foundational causation thesis (Little, 2005, 26). Ultimately, in Little's ontology, individual actions are affirmed to drive social transformation, but the socialness of these individuals implies that causes are planted by existing social relations and situations. Individual agents are thus socially constituted, conditioned by interpersonal and contextual relationships and acting based on the needs and ends determined by this constitution.

Daly and Cobb (1994)'s definition of person-in-community is an appropriate use of this "local" method, claiming that a critical element of all social reality is the situatedness of a person in a community. In this definition, the individual is defined *in* the social relations they find themselves in, unlike the Smithian view, where although "individuals are viewed as capable of relating themselves to others in diverse ways, basically either in benevolence or self-love", they "are not constituted by these relationships or by any others" (p.160). The concept of the economizing individual, *Homo Economicus*, as a person-in-community is the ontology we need to move towards, making the person-in-community our basic unit of analysis. This model, unlike holism, "does not preclude the element of individualism as in some dimensions of behavior, relative separability from others is prominent", but unlike individualism, recognizes that "the well-being of a community as a whole is constitutive of each person's welfare" as human beings are constituted by relationships to others (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.164).

Hence this definition, of individuals as socially-constituted and community as patterns of relationships that constitute persons, indicate that the two are inseparable, and to be human is to be a person-in-community. The methodology we thereby need is one deriving from the basic ontology of such a person; and this is what Little's "methodological localism" provides, where one adopts a "lens" of community to explore problems of human well-being and development. Our basic concept of analysis is a person-in-community, because it is truest to social reality and looks at community as that which is both constitutive of an individual and where individuals meet one-another's needs and wants and "develop", so to speak. Note that we do not idealize or despise this reality, but suggest that this must be our basic abstraction or analytic concept, "real units, social, political and economic, with recognizable strengths and weaknesses"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.166). While it can face obstacles from above [levels of the social] or need

technical help from outside [inter-community ties], the micro-foundational approach suggests that other social levels are derived from other larger communities and are thus what Daly and Cobb (1994) call "communities-of-communities" (p.177).

What we thus reject is an analysis that proceeds from self-contained individuals, which falsifies the situation of social reality. We also reject the holism of considering "society as a whole" as a society may or may not have extensive participation and respect for the diversity of individuals, and more importantly, individuals may not self-identify with it, thus failing to represent the vast set of social interactions and relationships people do self-identify with. By looking at communities as the set of relationships individuals are constituted and act in, we escape the abstract holism in society. While this makes it a normative term to the extent that defining a community involves a judgment of how much an individual is constituted in the relationships, "there is no ideal form or shape for this community ought to look like" and this ontology is open to "the many different ways in which societies can function as healthy communities"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.172). However looking into what patterns of relationships can be called a community and the criteria for its health is of vital importance to the study of human development. To do this, an ontology situating an individual in a community and adoption of methodological localism is the most appropriate way to proceed to a community "lens" for understanding individual well-being and development.

The lens of community: "communities" as relationship spaces, places and translocalities

Having adopted methodological localism, and understanding reality as consisting of socially constituted individuals and persons in community, we now seek to establish a working definition of community in order to examine problems of development. We must construct a lens, a concept that allows us to look at important aspects of social reality and understand it.

*We now define the "community" as the space of patterned interpersonal and person-environment relationships constituting individuals, bound to a meaningful geographic locus of action (place) or by trans-local affinities and engagements, whose functionings is essential for individuals to attain functionings (valued-beings and doings).* Here, the ends of the capabilities approach are not being challenged, which are individual functionings, but considers this to be constituted as functional communities, the means being the health or capability of these community relationships to address needs of its members. A lens of "community" hence is a consideration of a space of interpersonal relationships that constitute individuals in question. They are either a place, for example a village, neighborhood or community centers, or a college campus, or they are translocalities- eg the Yucatanense Mexican community in LA and New York maintaining social, economic and political relationships that make them a community defining their individual identities and meeting individual functionings. The community lens etches out certain aspects of social reality highlighted by the definition. These must now be situated in a framework and properly understood before proceeding to analyze a "community" in development programs.

The idea of a community as a space of patterned relationships in which an individual is made and acts is explored by Daly and Cobb(1994)'s "economics for community." They suggest that "oikonomia," the Greek root of economics, meant the management of the household to increase its use value to all its members over the long run, not as a branch of political economy related to manipulating property and wealth to maximize short-term exchange value to the owner; which was the domain of "chrematistics"(p.138). Since most individual functionings are attained today beyond the household, their "economics of community" is seen as increasing the scope of "oikonomia" to land, shared values, resources, biomes, institutions, language and

history(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.138), which are all different community-relationships amongst people or between people and their environment. The concept of a person-"in"-community suggests that the community is a basic space, a set of relationships, a reality "in" which individuals exist and act. The relationships are resourceful, historic, linguistic, institutional, or moral ties and bonds that form an individual's self-identification and field of agency. Thus the "pattern of relationships" that make up the community are at least as important as possession of commodities and ought to be supported by the economic order (Daly and Cobb, 1994 p.164). This functional relationship space is what a "community" lens must acknowledge, look into, understand, and address the health of, if development is to be achieved. This doesn't write away individual agency, but situates their choices and decisions in a realistic field of action.

But what makes some relationships community relationships and not others? First, our definition suggests that these must be patterned, and be maintained and renewed- identified with and acted upon by individuals, over space and time. Moreover, the word "community" suggests a mutual character to these relationships, how we are "bound up with one another" in community (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.188). Thus something that enriches the "community" or relationships-space must enrich all individuals involved in the relationship. Since the word itself suggests a "coming together" relationship, they are non-zero-sum games for individuals, where "each loses in the other's losses and gains in the other gains" (Daly and Cobb, 1994 p.188). Only then can they be considered relationships functioning as a community.

To get out of the discipline of economics' "chrematistics" and understand the true 'economy' of the community, it may be important to look into other disciplines or even outside of them as "the problem of disciplinary abstractness is exacerbated by the centrality of method to the self-understanding of disciplines" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.127). The boundaries of the

relationship space that frame the community lens are based on geographic locality or on trans-local affinity as defined above. This line of thought comes from two anthropological literatures- the anthropology of "place" and that of "translocality" or "multilocality". These broadly correspond to ways that humans are *placed* in relations *within* an environment, and the patterned relationships of *affinity* between humans *across* environments respectively.

In the Introduction to *Power of Place*, Agnew and Duncan (1989) discuss "place" as a concept capturing the situatedness of economic activity, individual self-identifications and social interactions, often used with misplaced concreteness in different disciplines. They write how "economists or economic geographers have emphasized location or space *sue generis*, the spatial distribution of social and economic activities resulting from between-place factor cost and market price differentials. Micro-sociologists and humanistic geographers have concerned themselves with locale, the settings for everyday routine social interaction provided in a place. Anthropologists and cultural geographers have shown interest in a sense of place or identification with a place engendered by living in it...but these are complementary dimensions of place. Local social worlds (locale) cannot be completely understood apart from the macro-order of location and territorial identity of a sense of place"(p 2). The power of this place lies in its role as a "constantly re-energized repository of socially and politically relevant traditions and identity which serves to mediate between the everyday lives of individuals on the one hand, and the national and supranational institutions which constrain and enable those lives" (Agnew and Duncan, 1989, p.7). This idea of place as a medium of daily individual actions and institutional boundaries for those lives to gain and limit their meaning in is very useful for our notion of communities "in" which persons exist and act. Furthermore, places are the very bounds of

community relationships, they are "contexts within which interpersonal, valuable and cultural relationships" occur, to which people are attached (Low and Altman, 1992, p.7).

Agnew (1989) points out how community has been falsely associated as a localism with moral connotations, while our lens involves the meaningful space and locus of social action-

> Confusion over place and community is the ambiguous legacy of the term community. Rather than distinguishing its two connotations- a morally valued way of life and the constituting of social relations in a discrete geographical setting, they have usually been conflated. In particular, a specific set of social relations, those of a morally valued way of life, have transcended the generic sense of community as place (p. 13).
> This is why place and society, community and society, have been seen as antithetical to

one another, ignoring the importance of social bonds and powerful mechanisms holding communities together (Agnew, 1989, p.13). We must thus abandon the "static view of a community" (Agnew, 1989, p.25) and look at community as place.

Furthermore, place is meaningful, and "refers to space that has been given meaning through personal, group or cultural processes" (Low and Altman, 1992, p.5). In *Place Attachment*, Low and Altman (1992) discuss this particular criteria of meaningfulness for understanding community as a place, and they argue that "through the vehicle of particular environmental settings, individual, group and cultural affective attachments to ideas, people , psychological states and past experiences are manifested"(p. 10). Therefore the medium of place "embeds a variety of life experiences, is central to those experiences, and is inseparable from them" (p.10). Place is consistent with our ontology of a socially constituted individual as "place attachment contributes to the formation, maintenance, preservation of the identity of a person, group or culture"(Low and Altman, 1992, p.10), and the meaningfulness can be transferred to higher levels through place as while "local community would then become a primary basis for self-identification", if there is significant participation in its affairs and those chosen locally

participate in important decision at higher levels, "personal identification would continue to operate there" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.177).

But another possibility of community may not necessarily be bound by location to a place, and can be translocal, as research on translocality suggests how "social relationships across locales shape migrant networks, economic exchanges, and diasporic spaces" and so our analysis must "deliberately loosening the boundaries of the local in an effort to capture the increasingly complicated nature of spatial processes and identities, yet insisting on viewing such processes and identities as place based rather than exclusively mobile or uprooted" (Brickell and Datta, 2011, p.3). Translocality can thus be seen as "groundedness during movement, including everyday movements" where "places need to be examined both through their situatedness and connectedness to a variety of locales" (Brickell and Datta, 2011, p.4). Translocality thus involves the relationships and interactions in the "connections made between places separated by physical distance; local-local connections in different scales, national or otherwise; and migrants' material practices in a range of sites that exist within interstices of departures and destinations" (Brickell and Datta, 2011, p.19). Translocality makes our lens of community as place more dynamic. We need to consider such communities, because even they can be functional and healthy: a Jewish community or the scientific community are equally "communities of participation, responsibility and respect/concern/affirmation of diversity" and by extending the lens to such communities, we can consider "activities which local communities are unable or unwilling to give sufficient support to"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.180).While Daly and Cobb consider them non-geographic, they are better understood and grounded as a translocal concept.

Translocality or multi-locality also helps to incorporate increasingly intertwining economic activities as it "can refer to a comparative or contingent analysis of place". Some

activities (like those of corporations, churches and social movements) which arise from actions of multiple agents in different places can only be understood by identifying "intended and unintended consequences in the network of complex connections within a system of places" (Rodman, 1992, 646). Multilocality therein creates a "reflexive relationships with places" as one does "experience social relations that are located in places elsewhere" (Brickell and Datta, 2011, p.11). But this is nonetheless grounded in a locale as "heightened mobility and virtuality do not in any way reduce the importance of locales but negotiate the scale of the locales through multiple articulations of situatedness which constitute the translocal geographies of migrant lives" (Brickell and Datta, 2011, p.20). Larger communities are thus "relationships of relationships" or "communities of communities" as Daly puts it.

The lens therefore incorporates both the concept of community as a geographically bound place and translocal or multilocal affinities. We do this by considering Rodman (1992) 's perspective in "Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality"-

> The divide between existential and naturalistic conceptions of place appear unbridgeable, made wider by adopting a decentered [objective] view. Address both sides from a point in between, that leads us to the vast realm of narrative forms. From which we gain a sense both of being "in a place" and "at a location", of being at the center and being at a point in a centerless world. To ignore either aspect is to misunderstand the modern experience of place. (p. 642)

Thus to avoid misunderstanding our present-day experiences through the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, we consider any such 'places' with which "preferences, satisfactions, fondness, emotional embeddedness, security, esteem and belonging are associated" (Low and Altman, 2011, p.4). All of the above are a concern for economics, and so the local and trans-local definition of community, which has a history in anthropological analysis, is welcome to the study of human development through a "community lens".

Figure 1: A visual of the community (relationships-space) and persons-in-community

The insight here is that community is defined in relation to an individual and vice-versa-it is the spaces and persons to which I am related, but one's interests are never one sided self-interests but relational interests. Figure 1 attempts to visualize what this relationships-space/ its functioning looks like. Thus there is a geographic locus and a set of other individuals who are tied to me, and my desires, goals, value, ideals and reasons are shaped by how these relationships influence me. But the community is not a collective or an abstract contractual institution that serves me but a place in which my capabilities are defined and whose functioning necessarily constitutes and attains my functionings. This definition is trying to undo the severing or alienation of an individual from their relationships to nature, each other, and themselves caused by the philosophy of the enlightenment. "True economics must concern itself with the long term welfare of the community" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.159).
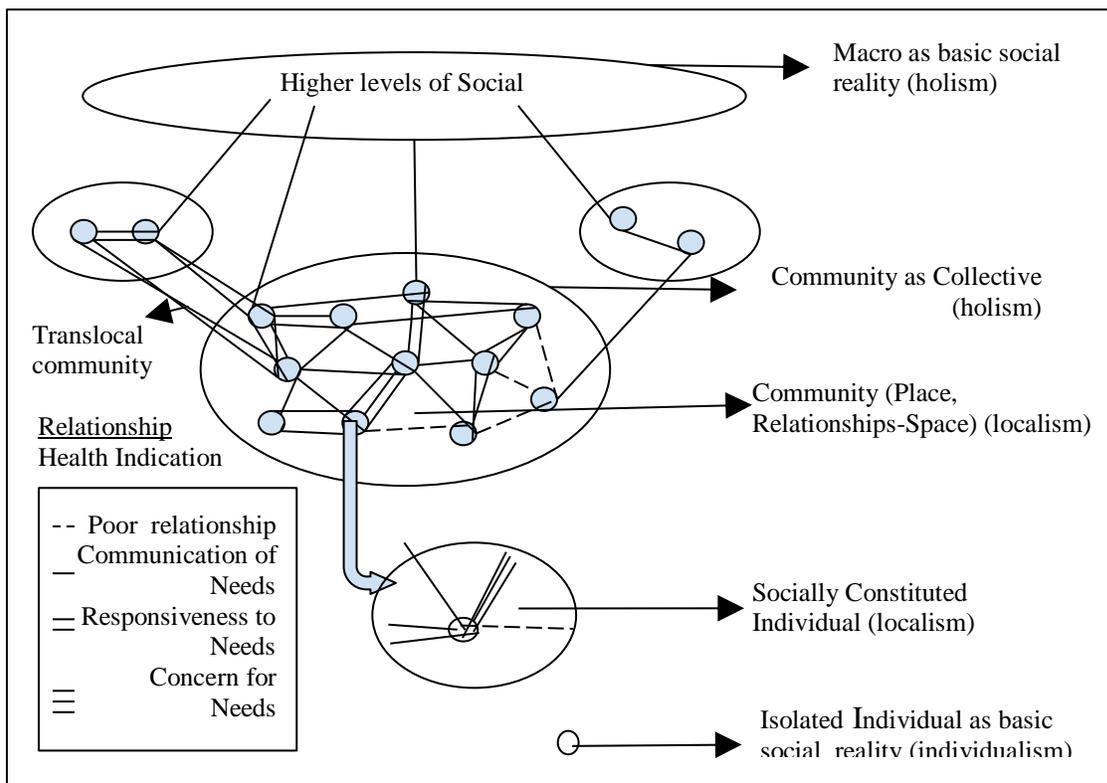
<u>Why 'lens': Beyond instrumentalism (community as tool) and collectivism (community as agent)</u>

Before proceeding with the analysis, misconceptions must be clarified as to what isn't a community "lens" as there are varying definitions of a "community" and its use in economics. Important here is to recognize that neither is the community an informal contract or set of contracts (institution) that an individual employs to attain desired functionings, nor is community used in the sense that it is an autonomous unit that subsumes individual agency. The former would be a form of methodological individualism going against the ontology of a socially constituted individual, and the latter would be a form of methodological holism that goes against the micro causation theses. Two definitions of community prevalent in economics- the institutional definition of community as an informal set of contracts that are enforced through mutual trust and intense personal ties, and the collectivist definition of community as a commune or autonomous political and economic unit. This section suggests how the community "lens" definition can overcome the limitations of both in the serve of theorizing development.

First, we do not adhere to Hayami and Godo (2005)'s definition of community as a "principle of organization" where "a group of people tied by mutual trust or intense personal interactions" ( p.310). Here, the community is an institution or organization, albeit not formalized or legalized. In this contractarian vision of society, it is a "tribe", considered a smaller version of more broader and formal contracts based on informal mutual trust (Hayami and Godo, 2005). However, this definition falls to Agnew's critique that community is more than just a mutual-trust institution and is to be seen as a "place"- a neighborhood or village in which I satisfy my needs and wants and earn a living may not have mutual trust amongst all its members, but the neighborhood is still a meaningful place. It is not just the physical space but spaces with social and cultural meaning and interpersonal connections and engagements- like a community

center, cafe, park or even the only gas station. Moreover, the role of this institution is always seen instrumentally, as it is "a means of cooperation based on consent, coordinating division of labor among people towards socially desirable direction" (Hayami and Godo, 2005, p.311). So relationships are seen as instrumental to some useful or utility inducing end- the "socially desirable outcomes", which reflect maximum aggregate utility to individuals. In such a definition, the relationship is not valued in and of itself, and the "definitions of community and state overlap" (Hayami and Godo, 2005, p.311), because it is merely a body of social contracts between individuals useful to them. Thus, resorting to methodological individualism, this definition ignores that "societies are not merely statistical aggregations of individuals engaged in voluntary [contracted] exchange but something more subtle and complicated. The community will not be understood if the unit of analysis is the individual taken by himself...it is greater than the sum of its parts"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.7). Communities are not just informal institutions, which like formal institutions serve the purpose of aggregate individual's self-interest. Hayami and Godo's community is thus close to Sen's instrumental notion of "opportunities freedoms", serving to provide certain individual capabilities. It doesn't observe in-and-of-itself the relationships- space or 'place' of the community as where the very individual is constituted in.

Peter Evans (2002) suggests the idea of a community as a form of "collective capabilities". In this collectivist definition, a community may be reduced to a commune, where "collective action is required" for the attainment of freedom. Communities here are the basic units of collective action, "organized collectivities- unions, political parties, village councils, women's groups- [which] are fundamental to development" (Evans, 2002, p.56). Collective action is considered to bring about well-being as "opportunities for collective action are of instrumental value in securing kinds of freedoms" (Evans, 2002, p.57) and "strategies for

facilitating collective capabilities important to the expansion of freedoms" (Evans, 2002, p.59).

However tendencies to talk about "collectives" with agency are rooted in forms of social and

cultural determinism, but if that were the case, "we would be like the social insects- neither

individuals nor communities but a single social organism genetically determined to act as a unit"

(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.183). It is a form of methodological holism. A community need not be

committed to a polity of collective action; it is not necessarily the communes of central planning

systems. Again, collective action and/or local democracies of community participation may be

ways in which a healthy community might manifest itself. But the community lens has no fixed

ideal for healthy action, and we just develop a lens to note presence/absence of meaningful

community relationships, and have qualitative criteria to measure their healthy functioning in

various contexts. Thus each context may manifest different ways for healthy functioning,

collective action being one of many. The drawback of this definition is that by focusing its

analysis on the "collective" it may subsume the active nature of a socially constituted individual

and allows the crowd, the "people" or the mob to assume the active function. But "what

constitutes the community to be developed is quite complex involving as it does groups of

individuals who are not necessarily homogenous ethnically, culturally, or religiously" (Daly and

Cobb, 1994, p.168) and we need to move towards a definition of community that doesn't assume

homogeneity and favors a more pluralistic notion.

The community "lens" definition escapes the instrumentalism prevalent in economic

theory, where "the gain of the society as a whole is viewed as identical with the summation of

the increase of goods and services acquired by individual members" because "there is no reason

to suppose that the quality of relationships constitute the community has been improved by the

increase of commodities" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.161). At the same time it isn't an abstract

collective or impersonal form of society but "a basic, immediate personal form of society", a term suggesting "that people are bound up with one another despite differences… and participate together in shaping the larger group- tribe or collective- of which each is a member" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.170). The lens look into functional communities (meaningful community relationships or "places") not as a tool for a self-determining individual or a society with a collective interest subsuming others, but as a place necessarily constituting any meaningful state of and action towards well-being in which an individual exists and partakes respectively.

<u>Problems under a community "lens": Relationship Failures in communication of, responsiveness to and concern for one-another's needs</u>

It is not just sufficient for development to look at the community that is the meaningful relationships-space or 'place' in which individuals are constituted and act where members contribute to the self-identification in these relationships. Now, "the concrete nature of these relationships is of utmost importance" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.183). What this lens gives us is a definition of what is functionally a community. But whether it functions in a healthy manner or unhealthy manner is a necessary condition that determines economic well-being or development. For development, the relationships need to function healthily. We cannot commit to an ideal shape or form that a healthy community takes, as we need to be "open to many ways in which societies function (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.172), but we could develop evaluative criteria for the health of the relationships space itself, and an economics for community would target the fulfillment and maintenance of these conditions for health.

Because we speak of health, it is important to note that economic and social welfare is considered to be of a qualitative kind- an argument found in Thomas Michael Power's *The Economic Pursuit of Quality*. He notes that in the commercial sector we really purchase quality,

not quantities (beyond a rather low level of income) of taste, nourishment, and distinctiveness; outside the commercial economy, important qualities to well-being such as clear air, scenic beauty, safety and a sense of community are supplied. It is their total that determines our welfare, and while these qualities are not independent of physical dimensions, they are rendered meaningful socially (as cited in Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.133) like the "places" we study under the notion of the community relationships-space. Thus qualities matter to human well-being, irreducible to quantitative utility calculations.

In economics, a lack of human development is often characterized as a failure to meet the criteria for good functioning by a market or institution, which is reflected by certain lack of outcomes of society. These are either said to be defective, obstructed or irrational individual behavior (market failures) or inefficient/captured political authority (state failures). In either way, human development is characterized as meeting the ideals of certain institutions (markets and states) representing aggregate utility and welfare. By noting how humans grow, Daly and Cobb (1994) point to the need for a fuller notion of development-

> In order to survive, an infant needs not only the good and services, but also care. The amount, quality and character of that care, along with all that goes with it, affects all that person will become...some adults manage to exist with minimal social involvement… the literature expresses this possibility of separated experience with Robinson Crusoe models, the self-sufficient individual par excellence…but this choice of the limiting case as the normative model makes evident how drastically economics abstracts from normal social reality. (p.161)

But because individuals and their actions are constituted in the relationship-spaces of communities, the quality of these relationships, their health or failure, concerns development. Thus "relationship failures" will subsume the wide range of market-failures and state-failures that economists have studied. What is valuable to the study of development is criteria to help understand and evaluate whether community-relationships are healthy or failing, criteria whose

presence or absence can be indications of long-run, sustainable development. Daly and Cobb note three traits describing a healthy "community" which an economics for community must encourage- extensive participation of members, taking responsibility for the members, and a sense of respect or concern / altruism governing one's behavior (Daly and Cobb, 172). In this section, I develop these traits into three evaluative criteria for healthy communities- the open communication of, responsiveness to, and concern for one-another's needs. Figure 1 indicates these different levels of quality in community relationships. Arguing for the ethical superiority of these ideals over others is beyond the scope of this project. But if community relationships neglect these criteria, we argue that certain relationship failures result that hinder the community and individuals ability to facilitate development.

Healthy community relationships primarily involve open communication of the needs of community-members. In order for needs to be met, one first needs to be able to communicate the need to another, verbally or through other behavioural indications. For community members to know about each other's needs and readily express their own requires a space for negotiating needs that allows healthy communication in community relationships. Certainty about other individuals' motivations and ability to negotiate each other's interests is primary to the development of trust, trust for belongingness and responsibility, and responsibility for cooperative action and non-zero-sum games of development. Hermeneutic failures to express one's needs for well-being, as discussed under the drawbacks of a limited reason-based notion of individual agency in the capabilities approach, is thus a basic relationship-failure that needs to be addressed to facilitate human development. As Daly and Cobb suggest, "By realizing that the most important relations are internal, we want to participate in constituting others at a deeper level than overt behavior. We want to influence them. One important way this is done is by

communicating to them ideas we want them to hold. The other side of this coin is being willing

to listen to the ideas they want us to hold and being genuinely open to their persuasiveness"

(p.184). The presence of communication of needs in a community is thus dependent on how the

relationship facilitates individual ability to persuade and willingness to listen to and be

persuaded. But persuasion is not coercive assertion of self onto others, or propaganda and the

manipulation of other's' thoughts but effective communication of ideas and their power to inspire

action, which involves "making new proposals as to how they might think, suggesting new

possibilities that expand the options". It is such healthy communication that can "free and

empower others, enhances their agency and is the power of influence. It is illustrated in good

teaching and good communication" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.185). This power- to persuade and

be persuaded- is important for development because "to believe in persuasion is to believe in

pursuing the existence of truth, however cloudily we perceive it", and if there is no truth, there is

no persuasion, and "we are left with coercion or deception" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.184).

Some examples that manifest good communication in development program design, are

taking open ended surveys about local needs that are anonymous or case-specific depending on

privacy concerns, having platforms for participation and sharing local concerns and grievances,

state schools and other external institutions communicate their potential benefits to the well-

being of the community, etc. Good local-state and informal-formal institution communication

will involve providing global knowledge, while internal bodies are able to share local knowledge

and be listened to by external authorities without any prejudices about their truth-value. One can

see how this relationship-failure covers information failures in markets, but is more than that. It

also includes intra-household communication, especially healthy communication between men

and women in the household. For example, a woman's ability to express a dilemma and appeal to

the community, and her opinion being heard, is the first step for the household or community to be able to respond to her needs from those relationships. Healthy, civil, conversations are indications of basic health in community-relationships.

After channels of effective communication are established, responding to these expressed needs, to situations and to the environment or circumstances is an important ability that relationships must facilitate. Under the lens of methodological individualism, power has often assumed the active stance of the ability to change and influence society, an individual's knowledge, wealth, political power or following. But a community lens equally facilitates receptive power, where having listened to and negotiated needs of fellow members and or observed needs in the situations and environment, they *can be* incorporated into communal-existence and its socio-economic activities. "The distinction between receptive power and active power is that receptive power is the power to incorporate into oneself the feelings and thoughts of others, and is the enlargement of one's selfhood. The ability to understand, to feel, and to think are increased, and thus this also is an indicator of well-being- one becomes more powerful through the exercise of receptive power and also empowers others"(Daly and Cobb, 1994,p.185). Moreover, even active power can be responsive- "by thinking and working together we are able to achieve something quite different from any summation of our separate activities" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.186) because we "bounce ideas off of each other". Responsiveness to needs thus not only involves receptivity but the ability to take on roles and actions in a situational, dynamic manner to address given needs of the environment and persons, instead of static socio-economic roles that negatively disable one's scope of action. Responsive community-relationships are those that can be accommodating and pragmatic, allowing for a vibrant, adaptive community.

The ability to respond is a particular capability in a relationship. Only such a community can continuously reshape its own condition towards well-being, i.e. facilitate long-term development.

The ability to respond should not be mistaken for the willingness to respond and build the community, which is more akin to our third criteria of having concern for, caring about, and acting benevolently for one another's needs. Responsiveness to needs is more of a capability that community-relationships possess or don't. Some examples of this in development programs are the ability of schools to respond to needs of low-income or low-performing students who may require financial support or attention, the ability to maintain common scarce resources that existing relationships and socio-economic tasks performed by community members can address, and the power of local authorities to effectively meet local concerns in light of higher-level hindrances or bureaucratic obstructions. Thus, a lack of organizational capability; rigid social roles and relationship-structures which people negotiate and mutually accept but which don't address arising environmental concerns; and local authority that cannot effectively adapt to situations and implement programs are some relationship failures. These issues are often studied as state failures, but chapter 2B shows its broader implications as relationship-failures.

We now move on to the willingness to meet one another's needs, which is probably the highest level of ethical behavior in relationships, theorized by many moral philosophers as benevolence, concern, care or compassion. If individuals are constituted in self-other relationships, caring for the fact that one is dependent on both self and other in these self-other relationships is important for well-being and development. Having concern only for one aspect of this relationship, i.e. self or other, is thus a failure of the relationship to be balanced and mutually affirming. Concern only for self is what Daly and Cobb call "will to power" and concern only for other is the "will to sacrifice" oneself, while concern for each-others needs is a

healthy community relationship- "The will to control others...flourished especially in relation to individualistic models" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.182), but "the proper service of community is (also) not sacrificing one's life but enriching the community in ways that enrich oneself as well" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.188). Concern for one-another's needs is the willingness to belong and engage in cooperation, to engage in non-zero sum games.

But the will to power cannot be theoretically written away, as "a person-in-community may seek to dominate other persons in the community, thus weakening the community, or may seek to have the community dominate other communities, thus weakening the community of communities. This requires that communities at every level have the power to defend themselves and their members against such expressions of will to power. What prevents the power they possess for keeping a just peace from being used for oppression and war?"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.183)" Ultimately, the best defense can be to channel this will into healthy competition and play: non-zero sum games where "the gain of one enhances the wellbeing of all and the competitive elements central to any model that treats social groupings as self-contained entities is secondary to relations of mutuality" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.189). Moreover, as "the form taken by the will to power is influenced by socially held ideas about power", one can argue that the presence of the socially held ideas of care, concern and compassion are of vital importance here, depending on a "widespread social recognition that the domination sought does not yield the power that is desired could open the way to redirect the will to power" (Daly and Cobb, 1994 p.184). Teachers caring for those of different castes and ethnicities from them, local participation involving caring for more than the local political elites' interests, and migrants caring for their translocal community with the homeland and remitting income are some examples of healthy concern in community-relationships. Thus, these are the major normative points on which we

analyze the community- relationships: that in order to have an adaptable, solution-providing, sustainable development model, competitive tendencies must be treated as of secondary value, and as serving the mutual concern for, ability to respond to and open communication of needs.

<u>The Lens of Community for Development program Design: Considering communal</u>
<u>costs/benefits and long-run view</u>

The discipline of economic development, through experiment programs now know "more and more about less and less" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.132) due to their empirical rigor of fragmented successes, which aren't synthesized into a broad frame of understanding that facilitates redesign and long-term solutions thinking. This stems from a certain dichotomizing between internal and external issues inherent to economic theory where individual outcomes of income, enrollment, grades and employment take precedence over healthy, sustainable community relationships. The problem is not that economists don't understand how the social-context of community- relationships affects individuals. But, their analysis often starts with units or assumptions that abstract away from such a context. So there is a lack of primary concerns for externalities or "non-market interdependence" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.53) in general economic models, and an attitude towards the future where "discounted present value represents the value to present people derived from contemplating the welfare of future people, not the welfare of future people themselves, or even our estimate of their welfare: it reflects how much we care about future people compared to ourselves" (Daly and Cobb, 1994 p.155). This is because "the undeniable importance of externalities too pervasive and general in scope in today's world is a serious challenge to the relevance of these conclusions" and "an expectation of continual increase in productivity into the distant future is little more than a wish, whose empirical support seems already to be coming to an end. Discounting is not a law of nature, but is based on a

number of questionable judgments of both value and fact" (Daly and Cobb 155). Despite

programs that acknowledge the central importance of non-market interdependence and

sustainability, remaining in models that frame these as external or discounted can really skew the

values and narrow the vision of economic development programs designed under this rationale.

And thus, "directing the market to serve total welfare may well involve rejection of

discounting in certain social decisions where community with the future is threatened" (Daly and

Cobb, 1994, p.155). Caring about communal costs/benefits and taking a long term view, which a

community lens can help with, will make program designs more shaped by the context of

community-relationships and make the targeted outcomes sustainable in the long run. "From the

point of view of persons-in-community, things look different. One asks: what are the long-run

consequences of everyone behaving this way?" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.156). Such questions

are important to development program design, implementation and targeting, as "externalities are

too pervasive and non-marginal, and present value-maximization does not sufficiently respect

community even in the absence of market failures" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.157).

Power noted the various forms such programs can take: "some goals for local

development policy are the availability of satisfying and useful work for community members,

security in access to biological and social necessities, stability in the community, access to

qualities that make life varied, stimulating and satisfying, a thriving vital community" (as cited in

Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.135). The two way negotiation between program implementers (states,

nations, non-profits and global institutions) and local communities involves "thinking of rather

small communities having considerable economic self-determination without supposing that they

could supply all their needs; and the idea of "subsidiarity" where power should be located as

close to the people as possible, that is, in the smallest units feasible" (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.

174). As the individual is dependent and socially constituted, such a unit is the community. Healthy communication of needs, responsiveness to needs and concern for needs may thus also need a certain level of "decentralization in all levels- in government, the assignment of responsibility, the diffusion of information, and productive small scale agricultural production" where there is "widespread popular participation in decisions from below and outside formal organizations" and "the smaller farms will aim at first to satisfying the basic needs of those working in it and, later, at creating an expanded base for economic well-being"(Daly and Cobb, 1994, p.167). Having seen these various proposals and suggestions for what programs whose design, implementation and targeting adopt "a community lens" look like, we now turn to understanding what makes design and implementation adaptable and targeted outcomes more sustainable by using the community lens. The purpose of understanding relationship-spaces and relationship failures are explored in the subsequent chapters using cases of experimental development programs in education. The non-empirical decisions made in designing and implementing RCTS shall now be put under scrutiny of the community-lens.

CHAPTER 2: Using the Community Lens to Review Experimental Evaluations in Education

2A: (How) Do Experimental Programs in Education Incorporate a Community Lens?

Seeing How Programs with General Patterns
Incorporate Relationship-Spaces Into Design and Implementation

The Decision Making Process of Development Programs

Chapter 1 briefly discussed the problems of value-neutrality inherent in taking a solely empirical lens. Despite its ethical stance and concern for human well-being, the empirical field of economic development does not develop or maintain a robust model for ascertaining and discussing value judgments going into development design, implementation and targeting of outcomes and mechanisms. Discussions about what concrete *realities* and desirable outcomes or *good* constitute human well-being and development, because of their "normative" theory angle, are considered best left out of "positive" development practice. So ultimately, a lot of the choices practitioners make in the process of designing and implementing programs involve value-judgments that are unexamined, originating in different personal and theoretical backgrounds. These value-judgments can be of two types- one, they are manifest in the choice of method and interpretation: i.e. beliefs about *social reality* and the fundamental categories assumed by the intervention and used to process results. Two, they are manifest in the choice of *targeted outcomes* and functionings. The former values are understandings of how individuals act, determine and meet needs and development occurs, like methodological individualism, holism or localism; the latter are beliefs about the "needed" outcomes and functioning processes/relations indicating their fulfillment. Loosely, they can be understood as beliefs about treatment/ control/ explanatory variables, and importance of targeted response variables in impact evaluations. So far this project discussed and argued for the use of looking into the community- the

"relationships- spaces" and (local/translocal) places an individual is constituted in and engages with- and the need to overcome "relationship failures" in these communities. Now it turns to beliefs and judgments factoring into the choices that development programs make, even if these are unconscious theoretical and personal biases that creep in without due consideration.

| # | STEP | CHOICE | CRITERIA | Value? |
|---|------|--------|----------|--------|
| | Figure 2: Decision Making Process in Program Design and Evaluation | | | |
| 1 | LEVEL/ PLACE | Which social reality? Household? Individual? School? State? | Interesting? Demanding? Feasible? Effective to Intervene in? | YES |
| 2 | NEED ASSESSMENT | What is the problem field? What is desirable?? | Missing Good/utility? Well-being? Political Agency? | YES |
| 3 | TARGETED OUTCOME | What reflects desired end? Growth? Voting%? QoL? | Observable? Measurable? Sign of Market or Political Functioning? | YES |
| 4 | IDEA/DESIGN OF TREATMENT | What are the means? What treatment leads to the goal? | What do I believe works? Can it be packaged? Policy? Program? Offer? | YES |
| 5 | TARGETING | What mechanisms create impact? | How can (2) and (3) arise from given treatment? Where is locus of change? How could implementation induce it? | Y/N |
| 6 | IDENTIFYING | How to identify impact? Statistical? Narrative? | Internal Validity: Empirical? Isolates impact? Good Counterfactual? | NO? |
| 7 | IMPLEMENTING | What steps constitute treatment? | What are the practical procedures that lead to uptake of treatment? | YES |
| 8 | OBSERVATION/ RESULTS | What information does data gathered provide? | What statistical tools to extract info? How precise are findings? | NO |
| 9 | INTERPRETING | Why do I think the results are what they are? | If successful, what key decisions led to it? If not, why wasn't 5 the means-end link, why is 4 not a good mean or why end (3) was not desirable. | YES |

Figure 2 highlights various steps of decisions made in experimental program evaluations, and value-based choices in development program design, implementation and targeting process. The order of the steps in Figure 2 may not exactly reflect the order in which these decisions are made by development practitioners- lot of the initial decisions and value judgments are often made simultaneously or unconsciously assumed as given, decisions about targeting the right mechanisms are entwined with the design of the basic treatment, and procedures of

implementation are often premised in the process of designing a solution. But these are all

important considerations that affect the form and shape of the program and the understanding of

well-being that development practitioners bring to the table. And as the results can be interpreted

in different directions as noted above, depending on how committed you are to your

explanation/design or importance of outcome, the findings can furnish varied understandings

about how the world works, what works and what is good. Having constructed a lens/ framework

to make more aware and meaningful judgments in Chapter 1, the project now elucidates how

programs which are more "realistic" or generally adaptable to the social reality incorporate an

understanding of the relationship-space in the design and implementation, and then shows how

programs targeting "relationship failures" meet pressing needs constituting development, perhaps

in a way more sustainable than those ignoring them. In this section, we expound the former claim

by reviewing program evaluations of a particular type- Randomized Control Trials in education.

RCTs have mastered empirical steps of identification and data-analysis, and have become

the "gold standard" today, preferred by many practitioners. This is indeed a welcome

development, as discussed in the introduction, and their "desirable characteristics, important role

in impact assessment and under-utilization in the international development context" indicates

there is scope to extend their use (Shaffer, 2011, 1620). However, Randomized Control Trials,

like other experimental evaluations, cannot exempt themselves from making the above decisions.

As Figure 2 indicates, even programs like RCTs that assume an empirical stance involve many

steps with non-epistemic and non-empirical value judgments. Moreover, an excessive concern

for internal validity in (6) and (8) may leave other value-judgments unexamined, unconsciously

assumed, set-aside as secondary or ignored as irrelevant, and can even be affected by the quest

for internal validity. But Shaffer (2011) pointed out that if the evaluation is to inform program

redesign and solutions-thinking, we "must understand the reasons why certain components of the program have failed and or could have performed better" (p.1628) and so the impact assessment should be driven by "the research question at hand and not by the alleged superiority of the method"(Shaffer, 2011, 1619). Thus, trying to answer the research questions of the "how" and "why" surrounding impact will involve extrapolating mechanisms, which are the explanatory reasons of "the processes linking program activities and development outcomes/ impacts, derived either from the theory or from the perceptions of stakeholders" (Shaffer, 2011, p.1628). So, we must pay attention to the theoretic and perceptual filters that contribute to the judgments about the ways, mechanisms or processes by which the context of the intervention interrelates to the outcomes. Understanding their effect on decision making, is quintessential to realistic and meaningful program design, targeting and implementation. If RCTs in this process develop more of "an 'optimal mix' of research methods which address key research questions at hand" (Shaffer, 2011, p.1632), they will have a better chance of providing programs that are more sensitive to different social contexts and targeting outcomes that solve pressing problems and needs and for human being and development. In this section, we shall look into how educational programs which have or have not adapted to different contexts make decisions that are using a community lens and are aware of relationships-spaces.

Such community aware decision-making in design and implementation is particularly important in international development programs on education, making it a relevant case study for this project. There are numerous mechanisms or processes by which the intervention interacts with the social context to manifest desirable educational outcomes such as regular participation, attainment and performance. The desirability of such an education to individuals and households, the inspiration to persist, the ability to learn and the quality and use of achievement all depend on

various levels of engagements and quality of relationships of community members, inside and outside the school, and the relationships between those inside and those outside. So in each of the steps in figure two, the decision-making matters. The level of social reality and place where one wants to understand and intervene can determine the scope of the intervention. One may choose look at and intervene on markets for, or formal institutional policy relating to education, individuals as students in schools or household members, study phenomena of participation in education at the level of households, communities, etc., which will affect how the problems are characterized. Desirable ends and how they are measured are also based on shared value-systems of various stakeholders- school administration, teachers, students, parents and interveners themselves. The designed means depend on the development practitioner's theoretical framework on how education is conducted and knowledge from fieldwork and perceiving the situation on the ground. Mechanisms are understandings of the important processes ascertaining how the means are to be realized as outcomes, given the context of actors. We must learn the modes of impact on resource use processes, household decision making process, teaching/ learning process and school-decision making process, which are the various mechanisms of delivering educational participation, attainment and performance. Finally, implementation involves setting the rules actors such as school boards, teachers, and students must follow and tasks they must perform to successfully administer treatment and enable the mechanism, along with the necessary tracking, ensuring regular behavior and adherence to procedure by different agents practitioners must account for, in order to be able to interpret the results correctly.

A community lens can be incorporated into each of these decisions. Educational programs can choose to intervene and conduct treatment at the village, neighborhood or school level, each of which can be associated with a place where needs and wants are met and

livelihoods maintained. The means may be designed and implemented in a way where one conceptualizes and pays attention to the mechanisms in the community-context. When an intervention uses the relationships-space as that upon and through which a particular intervention acts and brings about ends, it recognizes the base of community relationships in development. Also, the desirable ends can be understood with independent or interdependent need concepts; one can target community relationships and focus on mechanisms that maintain their health, and interpret the outcomes in terms of such mechanisms.

While the latter three are explored in the next chapter, we hope to draw out distinctions in general pattern of outcomes when programs adopt the community lens in intervention level, design/plan and implementation decisions and when they don't. Because the goal is to understand how adaptable a program is in different contexts, and what contributes to this adaptability, we need to look at the patterns of results that mostly or partially replicated program designs (the level, plan and implementation process of intervention) have. As mentioned in the introduction, the goal isn't to find absolute replicability but design flexibility and adaptability. So while there may be exceptions, the general patterns in findings- both of success and failure, can highlight common mechanisms that give an insight into the types of program design that work in various contexts. Moreover, a particular type of program with mixed patterns may also provide information about the adaptability of program design in terms of implementation or component differences in different replications, i.e. the steps and means employed to influence outcomes.

Keeping these various decisions of program design and implementation in mind, we now turn to review the randomized control trials in education. We shall survey the literature for general patterns in four categories, determined based on the treatment's focus on each of the four processes contributing to educational outcomes mentioned above. These are-

i) Resource or Input usage: Programs that target the provision of resources needed to run a school or to attend school for an individual- like teaching material, books, materials and uniform, classroom and school construction, and extra manpower.

ii)  Household Decision Making: Programs that mostly target the demand for education are hoping to make changes in this process- the rate at which individuals sign up for courses, programs and school attendance, and households invest in the education of children is manipulated here by various incentives or policy initiatives.

iii) Teaching/Learning Process: Since the learning happens (mostly) in the classroom, or in a student-teacher interaction, many programs involve perfecting the teaching or learning process, such as improving teacher effectivity and performance, assisting student learning, curriculum and instruction modification etc.

iv) School-Decision Making Process: For education to be successfully conducted, programs also target aspects of school management, such as the participation in the decision making by parents and community members, training of local leadership for making decisions in education matters, modifying school leadership and bureaucratic structure, etc.

The nature of the general/mixed patterns will allow us to make conclusions about the role of incorporating a community lens in programs targeting each of the four processes. Since the first type of programs is mostly associated with the physical space and material, such programs can be considered to mostly be working without a lens of community, place or relationships. So, unless the material usage develops a meaningful significance in community-relationships, we hypothesize that they must run into problems of establishing a general successful pattern across community-contexts. In the second category, because internal factors and external factors affect household decisions, when programs model decision making and household behavior in a

manner detached from inter-household and intra-household relationships, they may not observe consistent outcomes across contexts. An extremely successful program in this category are conditional cash transfers- the presence of a "community lens" in important features of the designs and the causes for variations in their success across contexts can support the hypothesis here. In the third type of program- how a program seeks to understand and improve this interaction- either as a mutual engagement or as a transaction, through individualized incentive structures or by focusing on student-teacher dynamics, and how the student and teacher roles are characterized is relevant to how the design adapts (or doesn't) to different contexts. Because the community lens can be adopted in such different ways here, we take two types of programs- one that is clearly designed keeping a community lens and one that highly individuates this teaching/ learning process- and see if and how the former attains more general patterns of success. Finally, the last type of program, because it focuses on the participation and agency of persons in community directly, must ideally show general patterns of successful participation, attainment and performance in education. However, because the community can also be seen as an instrument or a political agent of collective action, what must distinguish successful replications of school decision-making participation programs is if a community "lens" is truly incorporated or not. With this in mind, we proceed to review the patterns in RCTs.

I Programs Targeting Usage of Resources

There is an existing skepticism about focusing on inputs to make a difference, because the pattern of findings suggests that they generally don't seem to work. While retrospective non-experimental studies "provide at best mixed evidence on the effect of many types of school inputs," they tend to arrive at a conclusion that "additional textbooks (and other inputs) in

schools with low initial stocks can improve learning" (Kremer, 2003, p.103). However, RCT

evaluations suggest that it is more subtle than that and that these OLS estimates could be biased

upwards. For example, a randomized evaluation in Kenya finds that textbooks had little effect on

the typical students and the results aren't significant, and they only increased the scores by 0.2

standard deviations of those with high pretest scores without affecting the bottom 60% of

students (Glewwe, Kremer and Moulin, 2009). Another program that administered flipcharts and

evaluated their effects using RCTS found that while retrospective estimates show an increase of

20% of a standard deviation, RCT test scores in subjects where flip charts can be used are

virtually identical in control and treatment schools (Glewwe, Kremer, Moulin, Zitzewitz, 2004).

The general pattern indicates that providing inputs alone is ineffective[1]. Rigorous studies in

different contexts thus indicate that spending more resources on inputs such as textbooks and

flipcharts don't have impacts on education (Kremer, 2003).

These findings reflect the idea that working without a lens of community, place or

relationships by focusing purely on the physical and material is not going to address the

particular needs emerging in the context as it doesn't understand the embeddedness of the

education process in a place or meaningful relationship-space. Poor performance on tests, high

repetition and dropout rates of developing country pupils suggests that they fall behind on the

curriculum because providing centralized uniform educational inputs like textbooks or flipcharts

"does not serve the vast heterogeneity in the educational and economic backgrounds of students

generated by a rapidly expanding education system" (Glewwe et. al., 2009, p.113). While most

primary schools teach in the mother tongue or common regional language in Africa and India,

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[1] An exception might be the Indonesian school construction program (Duflo, 2000). But it is hard to isolate the impact of the physical input here as the construction of a school is the creation of a place and a whole set of meaningful community-relationships.

secondary schools teach in the language of the former colonial power or a local majority group, so just providing inputs only "tends to be oriented towards academically strong students and favor disproportionate elite power" leaving (Glewwe et. al., p.113). Thus, not paying attention to the heterogeneous backgrounds is the major problem with these standardized input-provision programs. As Kremer (2003) notes, "in a poor country with a substantial local role in education, [the use of] inputs are likely to be correlated with favorable unobserved community characteristics" (p.104). This may explain why non-experimental find them effective, but administering inputs alone do not have identifiable general effects. Paying attention to the functional relationship space in which educational processes such as resource usage occur is necessary, as "providing more inputs in the existing system may prove ineffective" (Banerjee et. al., 2007) without incorporating a community- lens into the design and approach of the program.

Inputs can be significantly useful when they are administered in a way that it is embedded in the meaningful relationships-space or community. For example, uniforms were found to have a significant positive effect on school absenteeism and test scores in Kenya, reducing school absenteeism by 6.4 percentage points (43%) from a base of 15% school absenteeism and raising average test scores of recipients by 0.252 standard deviations (Evans, Kremer, Ngatia, 2009). Closer examination reveals the effect is about 4.3 percentage points higher for those previously without a uniform, which may allude to them being previously sent away, stigmatized, or reprimanded by teachers for not having one(Evans et al, 2009). This brings out the relevance of a learner's social characteristics into picture as the effect of uniforms seems grounded in creating a sense of "visual equality" for the student as a learner, and in defining her relationship to the community, in terms of being identified as belonging to a place- a student in a school- which can prevent "engagement in bad behavior or being co-opted into helping a village

resident"(Evan et al, 2009, p.14).Thus programs focusing on the resource-usage process education are also better equipped with identifying contextual problems when they adopt a "community" lens of understanding the relationships-space in which needs are met.

## II. Programs Looking into Demand for Education

We now turn to the programs that target primarily the decision making process of households that affects the demand for education. Our hypothesis suggests that such decisions should always occur in the context of household members as members of a larger community-the place and meaningful relationships in which they are embedded- and programs must consider factors of intra-household and inter-household relationships in their design and approach to the problem. In this section, we examine the most popular and successful type of program in this category- the conditional cash transfer. These are cash subsidies or educational grants which are made available on the condition that the child is enrolled in the school and confirmed to be attending a certain number of school days. PROGRESA, the first CCT, was successfully conducted in Mexico, after which they spread like wildfire to the rest of Latin America, and subsequently to the rest of the world. We isolate here the reasons for its success and variations in success, and attribute them to the incorporation of a community lens in how chosen features of the program tackled and affected demand.

The general design of a CCT involves identifying poor rural communities, within which persons in households (often, women) below a certain history of income level (not current) are eligible for a cash assistance conditional on school enrollment and attendance. However, only a certain portion (about 2/3rds) of these communities is randomly selected to receive the program, and the remaining receives it after the evaluation has been complete (in about two years). Grants

also varied with age, and gender, and as a significant portion of the wage for full-time fourteen year old labor in the village; moreover, school quality, distance, remoteness, and urban market distance were controlled for. Most CCTS have large successes, especially significant short run impacts on school enrolments among children in poor rural households, while even long term effects are promising- PROGRESAs gain in cumulative enrolment is about .66 years and the discount rate on earnings increment is 8% per year (Schultz, 2004). Spillovers of cash transfers include increases in height-for-age score, endurance, long term memory, short term memory, visual integration and language development (Gertler and Neufeld, 2008).

Important to the design is the fact that communities were randomized to receive the CCT offer, not households. Indeed, this decision is primarily made because randomizing by household can "distort" the true effects of the programs, as there are vast "spillovers" to when certain households in the community can participate in the program and others cannot. This really means that decisions and behaviors of households have influence on the other households in the community, as people are embedded in and engaged with the community relationships-space, and so their needs and sources of livelihood influenced by the choices and actions of fellow members. Most economists call these "spillover" effects, but this language suggests that the effect was individualized to begin with, when what they refer to is this mutual engagement and influence in household decision making when they chose to intervene at the community level. A basic design and implementation feature common to the different conditional cash transfer successes has been the intervention at the community level, which can boost take up as it makes opportunities available to all eligible households in the community and thus is designed to address the entire relationships-space.

In fact, this may also be the most prevalent reason for the transfers' successful adaption- while the level of income of the target group, the targeting of the mother, or even conditionality may contribute to its success in the different social and cultural context of community relationships where they were implemented, they may not be necessary in others. Outside of Central America, a large RCT in the middle-income country of Morocco experimented with an unconditional "labeled cash-transfer" program, where a small cash transfer was made to fathers of school-aged children in poor rural communities, not conditional on attendance but explicitly labeled as an education support program (Benhassine, Devoto, Duflo, Dupas, Pouliquen, 2015). They documented large gains in school participation- "the LCT reduced the dropout rate by 76 percent among those enrolled at baseline; increased re-entry by 82 percent among those who had dropped out before the baseline; and cut the share of never-schooled by 31 percent". And while "the CCT also had a large positive effect on school participation, explicitly conditioning transfers on attendance, if anything, decreased their impact in the context of this program, particularly on re-enrollment of children who had initially dropped out, and generally on children with lower probability to re-enroll or stay in school" (Benhassine et. al, 2015, p.89). While acknowledging this is a special context, where "only 4.5% of children came from families in rural areas who had never enrolled a child" (Benhassine et. al, 2015, p.89), they are suggesting that cash transfers do work without a conditionality feature, and even without targeting mothers, as all versions of the program recorded large impact, irrespective of targeting mothers or fathers.

In this context, "nudge effects" are extrapolated as relevant mechanisms for impact, such as parents' beliefs and perception about education benefit/ quality (Benhassine et. al, 2015, p.90). What is common to both the effectivity of the nudge of a labeled transfer and the "shove" of a conditional offer is that the intervention is still at the community level- this program also

intervened on the poorest rural municipalities or administrative units called "communes" in

Morocco (Benhassine et. al., 2015), but without depending on the various eligibility and target

conditions for households that other CCTs had. Even nudging beliefs and perceptions can thus

effectively translate to outcomes when the design intervenes on a relationships-space where such

beliefs and perceptions can "catch on", and can do so as much as conditional offers, each

performing their role of contributing to outcomes in their particular community contexts.

Finally, the variability of success amongst CCTs can also be attributed to the different

functioning of relationships-space or communities a program is dealing with, and its observation

of how much truly household-decision making is embedded in the interpersonal relationships and

engagements of a meaningful place during the intervention. A paper by Angelucci, Giorgi,

Rangel and Rasul (2010) understands the significance of "informal institutions", i.e. community

relationships such as the extended family which are "especially relevant for objectives and

constraints set on household behavior", and addresses the issue of how "neglecting the role of

this network leads to an incomplete understanding of household behaviors" (p.197). So by

incorporating a lens of community, their evaluation looks at data from PROGRESA to identify

inter and intra-generational family links through paternal/ maternal surname naming conventions

in Mexico, and creates "an almost complete mapping of extended family structures across 506

villages, covering around 22,000 households and over 130,000 individuals" (Angelucci et. al.,

2010, p.198). They then study heterogeneous treatment effects based on the presence/

characteristics of these relationships, and their main findings suggest that only connected

households respond to the program in terms of secondary school enrolment, their ATE at 9%;

eligible but isolated households do not respond (Angelucci et. al., 2010). Moreover, behavior of

connected household depends on demographic composition of others in the family network as

response is a function of primary school aged children both in the household and the extended

family network as a whole, pointing to resources being redistributed within family networks

towards households on the margin of enrolling children into secondary school" (Angelucci et. al.,

2010, p.198). These results must drastically change our understanding of household decision

making and demand for education, which seems relatively inelastic and unresponsive to cost

coverage and benefits of cash subsidy unless the household is part of a bigger network of

relationships and has a platform addressing and meeting mutual needs. Such findings indicate

that program designs that seek to influence the household decision making process and demand

for education must examine and understand the nature and influence of the

community/relationships-space in which household decisions are made. The presence of such a

"community lens" in key features of successful CCT replications such as the right intervention

level and using community characteristics attests to its importance for adaptable program design.

III Programs dealing with the Teaching/Learning Process

The interaction between teachers and learners can be considered the crux of educational

attainment and performance, and if a program is designed and implemented based on a realistic

understanding of the modes of actions and behaviors of teachers and learners in this interaction,

it may successfully target the mechanism and processes that achieve desirable educational

outcomes. A community lens can take many shapes and forms when adopted by these programs-

for example, seeing the teacher-student interaction as a relationship instead of as a transaction in

which individuals seek to maximize themselves, focusing on the role of student-teacher

dynamics in shaping incentive rather than theorizing individualized incentive structures, and

characterizing learner and teacher roles as shaped by the relationships-space rather than as

individually defined. Because many programs incorporate such an understanding to different

degrees, this section looks at how easily adaptable to different contexts two types of programs

are- one where the mechanism of the impact is understood by seeing the teaching/learning

process in the community, and one in which this process is highly individuated. It examines if

and how their adaptability relates to a community lens in the program design.

The usage of contract teachers, as opposed to posted civil servants, is a type of program

design which alludes to the importance of understanding the teaching process as embedded in the

community context, in terms of the relationships of teachers to students, parents and citizen

groups. In this program, teachers are hired on short-term contracts, which are subject to the

renewal by the community, often from the local area. Duflo Dupas and Kremer (2015) note how

contract teachers "have been used in a dozen countries across sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia,

and Latin America, and their share among public school teachers grew from 6% to 30% in India

(2003-2010) and is about a third across a dozen countries in sub-Saharan Africa" (p. 93). In

places like Kenya and India, a centralized postcolonial public education system, usage of civil

service teachers and the presence of strong teachers' unions "strengthened the emphasis on

formal educational qualifications and on accountability to professional norms rather than to local

parents" (Duflo et al, 2015, p.94). So, experiments were conducted in both India and Kenya to

see if the expansion of local contract teacher would change the learning-teaching process in rural

schools via their effects on the roles and incentives of the teacher. In India, Muralidharan and

Sundararaman (2013) find that students in rural primary schools with extra contract teachers

perform significantly better in math and language tests by 0.16 and 0.15 standard deviations, and

contract teachers were significantly less likely to be absent from school, and were no less

effective than civil teachers at teaching (Muralidharan and Sundararaman, 2013). Similar results

are found in Kenya- locally hired supplemental teachers on an annual contract renewable conditional on performance, at one-quarter normal compensation levels exerted much greater effort and showed up more than civil service teachers, and students assigned to them performed better at end-line than those assigned to civil service teachers (Duflo. et. al, 2015).

The main reason students assigned to locally hired teachers performed better is because the latter exerted much greater efforts, but this stems from the fact that they had stronger incentives and different characteristics which are shaped by the nature of their involvement and role as a member of the community. The market salary benchmarks and the equal effectiveness of contract teachers suggests that wage differential doesn't reflect differences in productivity but the rents of civil teachers from unionization- so contract teachers are not inefficient. Their additional contribution also isn't merely a matter of additional total effort- both in India and Kenya, civil service teachers reduce efforts in response to hiring of contract teachers as they were less likely to be in class teaching if their school received funding to hire a contract teachers (Duflo et. al., 2015, p.93). Moreover, scores remained the same in Kenya for students within the standard system despite a reduction in the student-teacher ratio, suggesting it is not just the ability to pay attention to more students but the local contract teachers' more specific involvement with them.

Characteristics and incentive structures that differentiate them, due to their involvement and engagement in the community relationships as locals, emerge as key reasons for their ability to facilitate improved educational outcomes. Firstly, the importance of their involvement in community relationships can be inferred from the fact that they may have a broader concern than civil service teachers. This is because in Kenya, the "civil service teachers captured some of the benefits of the program for their extended family- about a third of the contract teachers hired

through the program were relatives of existing civil-service teachers in the school, and the

students of these teachers appear to have learned less than students of other contract teachers"

and when the program increased parental involvement and control at the local level, "the effort

of civil teachers and the fraction of contract teachers related to them were cut by half, and the

test-score differential associated with relatives eliminated" (Duflo et. al., 2015, p.93).

Furthermore, the incentives seem to stem more from the fact that they are local rather than

because they are incentivized to work by a contract conditional on performance. There is

evidence from an RCT in India where an organization called Pratham conducted special teaching

classes called "Read India" with the help of lightly trained but carefully monitored local youth

volunteers, which significantly improved reading ability of children than of those in villages that

didn't (Banerjee et. al., 2016, p.8). This suggests that local members, regardless of whether

assigned teaching roles based on contracts or voluntary interest, improve the outcomes by virtue

of identifying with and being involved in the local relationships-spaces of their communities.

On the other hand, a completely individuated method for improving the teaching/learning

process is the usage of computers and information technology to assist or even conduct the

teaching process. Such programs have had mixed results, and it is interesting to note the factors

contributing to why they adapt or don't to different contexts. A program in Vadodara and

Maharashtra, India found computer assisted learning effective, only when it was adapted to the

level of current achievement of the student (Banerjee, 2007). Moreover its impacts were also

limited to math scores- using computer technology for overall learning outcomes has generally

proved ineffective. The majority of general evidence from studies in Israel, US and the

developed world "on the effectiveness of large-scale efforts to place computing resources in the

classrooms is at best ambiguous with most studies finding small if any effects" (Linden, 2008,

p.2). In fact, when used as a substitute for teacher delivered curriculum they reduce the learning level- a program conducted in Gujarat shows that by using these techniques those in "in-school" technology programs learnt significantly less than they could otherwise have learned (-0.57 standard deviations), but as an out-of-school complement, these inputs have insignificant general effects (0.2SD) but large significant positive gains (0.4 to 0.69 SD) by weakest and oldest students in class (Linden, 2008). These findings suggest that technological instruction matters inasmuch as it can resolve the lack of attention given to learners in dysfunctional student- teacher relationships. Computers allow "slow students to practice remedial drills and review material" (Linden, 2008, p.1), but cannot replace the community relationships-space where they occur.

Furthermore, technological diffusion in Indian society may contribute to these outcomes and prevent such programs from adapting to other contexts, where they may perform worse. For example, in Senegal, when school grants were provided (projects d'école) as a tool to fund improvements in education quality, there were positive effects in tests scores concentrated among Southern schools, which focused on human resources improvements through the training of teachers and school administrators, rather than "schools in the North, which emphasized information technology (IT) and other educational materials" (Carneiro, Koussihouèdé, Lahire, Meghir, 2015). They conclude that the former type of investments, in teaching personnel and quality human engagement in the teaching/learning process, is likely to be more effective than the latter. The fact that the highly individuated teaching method of technological instruction that abstracts education away from a relationship space is not easily adaptable, or helps only when it complements regular teaching, or when it addresses the learner's particular background and context, stresses the importance of incorporating a community lens into program design.

IV: School-Decisions Involvement and Participation Programs

In its brief on community participation programs, JPAL notes that "Community participation and oversight is sometimes seen as a way to address the poor quality of public service provision and the lack of responses from governments, in many countries." It strengthens the role of the community in the process of education because communities "know better what they need than outsiders, and citizens who stand to benefit from services have more incentives to monitor and improve the delivery of services"("Community Participation", n.d, para 1). But their survey of randomized evaluations using community participation as a tool for improving educational outcomes, though having several nuanced implications for community development policy, finds overall mixed results. If incorporating a community lens improves the adaptability of the program, then shouldn't community participation programs, which clearly seemed to have had an understanding of the importance of community while designing programs, have been successful across contexts? JPAL found that "specific action plans and direct control over some components of service providers' work tend to be more effective at improving the quality of public services, though there is still a role for top-down monitoring and auditing to improve service delivery and reduce corruption" ("Community Participation", n.d. para 2). This suggests that studying "community" may not imply incorporating a community "lens"- as discussed in Chapter 1, a community may be seen as a "tool" or instrument in the service of individual utility, or as a "collective" agent or political body that acts on behalf of the members. The above summary suggests that both individual agency and healthy accountability relationships need to be fostered in the program- one that requires overcoming collectivism or instrumentalism that tip the balance either way and instead looking at the community as the relationships-space of socially constituted individuals. When programs take on these polarized understandings, they do

not succeed, but when they synthesize them and incorporate a true "community lens", healthy community relationships can facilitate individual outcomes.

A program that has an instrumental notion of a community may look at it as the local informal contracts that enforce socially desirable behavior and attain social desirable outcomes. By seeing relationships as a contract instrumental to a "social benefit", which is tied to individual utilitarian picture of maximum total utility, they may take away from the value of functional community relationships-spaces themselves. A program evaluation in Niger provides findings on heterogeneous short-term parent and teacher behavioral responses to increase in school resources under parental control, (Beasley and Huillery, 2015) that failed due to an instrumental definition. In this program, the Ministry of Education in Niger gave grants explicitly under parental school committee control who were assigned to a training to manage schools, the grant was randomly allocated to half these committees, and the evaluators measured impact on parent empowerment, school management and school quality between 2007 and 2009 (Beasley and Huillery, 2015 p.4). Results show that parents are willing to increase their participation in school management, but quality of education didn't improve meaningfully (Beasley and Huillery, 2015). The findings also suggest that the program did "succeed" in the sense that there was an active healthy community involvement- "an overall positive impact on parent's involvement and responsibility, communities with grant engaged in more participation actions (going to meetings and managing school supplies) and took responsibilities", cooperation between stakeholders in school-management improved and that "parents did not reduce own contributions in response to grant"(Beasley and Huillery, 2015, p.4). Another interesting finding was that "rural schools invest in agricultural opportunities while urban invest in school infrastructure" and there was "more spending in infrastructure, school festivals, playground equipment, and unexpected

investments in agricultural projects too" (Beasley and Huillery, 2015, p.5). But from the instrumental point of view, it "failed" as "the overall teacher accountability did not change and the community did not engage in supervising teacher presence", there was a "small but significant decrease in teacher effort" and "while there were fewer dropouts, test scores were not changed" (Beasley and Huillery, 2015, p.4).

However, these results can be explained by one of two reasons: One, that this wasn't really a failure: the above healthy changes to the community facilitated with the help of the grant truly addressed its needs, and so by understanding community programs instrumentally and asking whether these investments "eventually benefited" schooling, meaningful impacts are mischaracterized as failure. Two, the community may actually also need learning improvement, but individual member agency isn't an instrumental tool as it may not be efficient (individuals diverting resources away from pressing community needs) nor effective (the paper notes that the grants do not improve teaching effort and learning unless parents consider teacher concerns). So the failure arises because the program looks at community as a tool or informal contracts that individual agents have and enforce, instead of as the functional relationships-space members are constituted in, which needs to be nurtured. Seeing the community grant as instrumental for educational outcomes doesn't recognize the basic value of the community in and of itself, and moreover fails to effectively attain the intended outcomes through individual agents alone.

On the other hand, when a program solely targets the collective, or a political body that is considered an agent representing the "community" or the relationships space of socially constituted individuals, it can also lead to failure. Banerjee, Banerji, Duflo, Glennerster and Khemani (2010) discuss such a program failure in Uttar Pradesh, India- The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a program that empowered a Village Education Committee with 3 parents, a head

teacher, and a village head, to monitor teachers and request resources (p.3). The VEC

represented the collective action of a community. Three interventions were conducted to increase

beneficiary participation- providing information about existing institutional support, training

community members in a testing tool for children and training volunteers to hold remedial

reading camps. While they didn't have any impact on community involvement, teacher effort or

learning outcomes in school, in the youth-volunteered camps, children who attended

substantially improved reading skills (Banerjee et. al., 2010). The results suggest that "providing

information alone is not sufficient to encourage involvement in public schools due to the

schooling bureaucracy", as parents may be "pessimistic about their ability to influence the

system even if they are willing to take an active role, or parents may not be able to coordinate to

exercise enough pressure on the system" (Banerjee et. al, 2010, p.5). The local bureaucratic

authority alone thereby doesn't address community needs. There is also a greater willingness of

individuals to help improve the situation for other individuals (via volunteer teaching) rather than

by collective action through political bodies. So, the authors recommend "the process of

constituting the beneficiary control committees like the VEC, its compositions, roles, and

responsibilities and statutory powers need to be looked at carefully, both in concept and in

practice"(Banerjee et. al, 2010, p.5), as collective action by a local political body may not signify

true community engagement. A community can also find other ways to participate without

relying on a body of collective action, as indicated by the volunteer program.

So taking a true community lens in development program design to achieve adaptable

outcomes avoids the polarized characterization of community as an instrument or as a collective.

The instrumentalists may get carried away with "bottom-up approaches" that don't consider how

needs are defined and attained in the relationships space rather than by informal contracts

enforced by individuals, while the collectivists may get carried away with top down approaches that focus on the formal but local political body as a "will" of the community without looking into the engagement and involvement of community members. A "lens of community" though, acknowledges the importance of both, as it is a bottom up approach which acknowledges the reality of the relationships-space *in* which individuals are constituted, and welcomes an outside-in approach that helps improve the health of community relationships by facilitating the communication of and ability and willingness to respond to needs of members.

A program in Madagascar incorporates both these approaches and affirms the community lens. The "AGEMAD" training /policy intervention in Madagascar used workflow-enhancing interventions- tools to "streamline workflow process of all actors by making explicit functional responsibilities of teachers, school directors, district and sub-district administrative staff" and provide a "coherent and detailed manual of operations to increase information flows and accountability through report cards"- to alter the behaviors of service providers and schooling outcomes, but also tested how the bureaucracy can be of any help by seeing how impact differs when aimed at school, sub-district and district level (Lassibille, Tan, Jesse, Nguyen, 2010, p.304). Under the school level program, two community meetings were held, the first resulting in an action plan with goals (e.g. increase the school exam pass rate by 5 percentage points by end of year) based on the report card. Common tasks specified for teachers included lesson planning and student evaluation every few weeks. The parent's association was expected to monitor the student evaluation reports which teachers were supposed to communicate to them (Lassibille et al, 2010, p.311). The workflow enhancing interventions were designed on relationships between different actors, involving planned, coordinated, deliberated actions taken by community members on educational quality. Findings showed that district and sub-district heads didn't visit

their schools significantly more often, teachers in both groups did not plan for lessons more and

no improvement in test scores was seen. But school level interventions led to significantly

improved teacher behavior, which on average were 0.26 standard deviations more likely to create

daily and weekly lesson plans and have discussed them with their director; and test scores were

higher than those in the comparison group two years after implementation. Additionally, student

attendance increased" (Lassibille et. al, 2010, p.305). While accountability didn't improve much,

locating the problem in school-parent-teacher relationships was a necessary first step. The

authors suggested that "interventions limited to the subdistrict and district levels were largely

ineffective due to weak mechanisms for ensuring responsibility and the lack of a true leadership

culture among these actors", but they did complement success of school-level interventions. So

they concluded that only when combined as a package of  local school-level interventions

reinforced by interventions at subdistrict and district levels do workflow enhancing tools

improve management practice of education (Lassibille et al, 2010, p.305). AGEMAD is thus a

successful adaption of a school-decision making/participation program design- it neither

abstracts away into the local body as an agent nor reduces the reliance on the community

members to individualism, but incorporates an understanding of the necessary functional

relationships-space in which individuals are constituted and act- an actual "lens" of community-

into its design.

CHAPTER 2B: (How) Do Experimental Programs in Education Target Relationship Failures? Thinking about and learning from Program Solutions

Chapter one argued for both the basic importance of a functional relationships-space and the need for healthy community relationships, posing the improvement of communication of (one-another's) needs, responsiveness to (one-another's) needs and concern for (one-another's) needs as indications of development. As noted earlier, to justify these ends is a matter for ethical theory- arguing for the superiority or ultimate value of the ideals assumed by this project is beyond its scope. What is explored here is a broad pragmatic significance of focusing on these ends- this section shall see how successful programs in education attain or don't attain their targeted outcomes by virtue of targeting the vital community "relationship failures" or ignoring pressing ones. Having seen how the adaptability of a program can be improved by incorporating a community- based development model or "lens" into decisions relating to intervention level, program design and implementation, we here turn to the remaining steps from Figure 2 where an understanding of community in the critical examination of value-judgments may be necessary.

These steps have to do with understanding outcomes of programs- what outcomes reflect desired ends (3), how it is delivered (5), and why what was really delivered was delivered (9). When we have a certain outcome to be attained with a certain means, we are really trying to understand the relationship between them, to test if an explanation of an education process- a certain hypothesized mechanism that achieves the end with given means- works. So while they hope to achieve outcomes (targets), the programs are really (targeting) seeking to facilitate these

underlying mechanisms. If a program fails, the explanation or initial belief about how desirable ends are delivered- i.e. the mechanisms or processes involved in letting outcomes emerge in the context- has to be revised. If we get too attached to the target as desirable ends, we may render the means as useless, and if we are too attached to the efficacy of means and relevance of a particular mechanism, we may conclude the context did not support them. Either way, the explanations or understanding of mechanisms may suffer- they may not provide valuable information for thinking and rethinking solutions to development problems. Our understanding of improving community relationship-failures here serves as a value framework for explaining successful mechanisms of impact. Improvements in relationship-failures are what working mechanisms attain, so they provide a model for good solutions thinking and successful targeting.

A factor limiting the scope of this analysis is the lack of diverse response variables in the RCT literature that measure what constitutes a successful outcome in education, one relevant to development. Almost every paper either focuses on measures of school enrolment/ attendance, or standardized test scores. While some may foray into tests for logical ability, comprehension, forms of information retention, or even attitudes, most use the above general response variables to measure educational attainment and learning. Moreover, as some experimenters acknowledge, average scores may not capture some changes that are slow to manifest, for example, "If the reduction in students' absenteeism in schools leads to an increased attendance of students with poorer performance, then the average treatment effect on test scores would be biased downward" (Blimpo and Evans, 2011). Effects on poor performers may only be gradual. Thus the lack of breadth and depth of indicators, and the intrinsic bias towards quantitative measures, could handicap the understanding of what reflects human development, but it need not. In the defense of RCTs, empirically rigorous qualitative research is difficult. Moreover, these papers do

not claim to be finding direct measures of human well-being, but how some key educational outcomes can be attained. The question is whether such changes in outcomes are reflections of improvements in community relationships, and if the way these goals are sought and met effectively targets relationship failures hindering the fulfillment of needs. A lens of community-based development precisely seeks to expand the understanding of what program results reflect, by examining these existing measures of success and failure in the particular cases of various programs, and the community-relationships they activate or neglect. So this paper generally goes along with the assumption that increases in educational attainment and learning is a sign of success. But in the concluding remarks, it acknowledges how such measures could be narrow and discusses alternative measures of development that may be helpful in terms of sustainable improvements in community relationships and long-term impacts on persons-in- community.

The argument here is that programs that meet their outcomes do so by successfully targeting "relationship failures", i.e. meeting the needs constituting development. Furthermore, it highlights how outcomes attained by ignoring the health of relationships may not be sustainable. And where pressing relationship failures exist, not targeting them will prevent program success despite incorporating a community lens. This discussion alludes to how programs focusing on relationships-failures address a broader range of concerns than just market failures and state failures- they subsume both these issues but are more than that. This section thereby claims that educational programs targeting certain mechanisms or processes which improve the three criteria for health thus effectively facilitate needed community-relationships that bring about outcomes. In the conclusion, a way to mindfully target community-health and model development with a sustainable, long-run view is presented. We now proceed to survey various successful programs based on their role in improving the three different criteria for healthy community relationships.

I. Improvements in the Communication of Needs: Articulating Needs to Self and Other

Recall from chapter one that the basic criteria for meeting needs is to be able to express them- to be able to communicate the need to another, verbally or through other behavioral indications. For community members to know about each other's needs and readily express their own requires a space for negotiating needs that allows healthy communication in community relationships. In a certain sense, the other two criteria for health are an improvement on this one, and this is the most basic need programs can and should address, especially in learner-community relationships that affect demand for education and learner-teacher relationships that bring about learning. Here we examine how programs addressing failures in both these types of relationships bring about successful outcomes.

An important sign of a functioning learner-teacher relationship is the learner's ability in it to express questions, clarify doubts, formulate thoughts and communicate needs for assistance that are vital to the learning process. The medium of instruction can be crucial in enabling or preventing such communication, depending on the level of literacy and linguistic background of the learner's family. Successfully targeting discrepancies in the medium of instruction can thus facilitate the communication of needs and improve outcomes. We see this in the 1994 education reform in Ethiopia which led to a change in the medium of instruction in primary school to mother-tongue instruction. Prior to 1994, Amharic was the national language, but after that, the medium of instruction was the local language spoken in the school district. Using the fact that in the State of Amhara, some schools retained Amharic while others adopted the language of the

local community, an evaluation by Seid (2016) explored the causal effect of mother-tongue instruction on enrollment in primary school and whether a child attends the "right" grade for her/his age (p.22). Results showed that a change in the medium of instruction in primary school to mother- tongue instruction increased the probability of enrollment by 7.4 percentage points and increased the probability of a child attending the "right" grade for her/his age by 8.8 percentage points, falsification tests suggest results are not confounded by other factors, and they also find that the 1994 education reform has stronger effect on educational outcomes of kids in rural areas relative to those in urban areas (Seid, 2016, p.22). Lower dropouts and learning differentials in rural areas are in line with the idea that students more isolated from exposure to the school's language of instruction in their community are likely to find it harder to learn it in the classroom. So they may fail to express their needs, participate, and engage with the materials, and thus fall behind other students. Successfully targeting this improves educational outcomes.

Another pressing need for healthy communication in community relationships is for tropes and ideas with which students and parents can formulate their own needs, without which certain hermeneutic failures arise that hinder one's own understanding of the desirability of what one may value, as discussed in chapter 1. Because the individual is socially constituted, one's desires and values take shape and are guided by commonly held tropes about what is valuable. If they are deficient, they may prevent the expression of one's needs, which is particularly true in the case of factors hindering demand for education. Poor communication by schools or poor understanding by parents and students of how one could be (beneficially) educated may indicate relationship failures that need to be resolved. Two programs successfully improve education demand by focusing on the role of these tropes in individual aspirations. One, a variation of a CCT in Nicaragua's Atencion a Crisis (Macours and Vakis, 2014) provided resources for

productive investments by a (female) leader, and found that leaders who received the largest program package substantially increase program impacts on human capital investments, income diversification and households' attitudes towards the future (p. 608). Results show that social interactions with local leaders, by setting an example and sharing their positive experiences, contributed to changes in attitudes- witnessing local success stories can be really important to "open parents and children's aspiration windows" (Macours and Vakis, 2014, p.631) and creating education demand. Thus, its success can be attributed to improvements in the communication of needs by targeting leaders who are both inspiring role models and fellow community members. A similar program in India also showed how molding aspirations works: the 1993 Indian constitutional amendment which required a random third of village council positions to be reserved for women had impacts on parents' aspirations for their children, adolescents' aspirations for themselves, and changes in education outcomes (Beaman, Duflo, Pande, Topalova ,2010). Moreover, prior to the program adolescent boys in never- reserved councils were 6 percent more likely to attend school and had a 4 percent higher likelihood of being able to read and write, while by the second cycle of female leadership, the gender gap in educational outcomes was completely erased and adolescent girls wanted a job that requires an education. These strong role model effects on educational aspirations indicate the key role of healthy, open communication of needs in successful targeting. A program that can improve this by providing sufficient tropes to enable understanding the value of, inspire and express the desire for education in the community is successful. We also see that improving communication failures is more than just targeting market failures. In developing economies, market failures are primarily considered the imperfections in information about the future based on fundamental uncertainty of discount values in dynamic development, which thus creates bottlenecks to

investment (Hayami and Godo, 2005, p.251). While better information about future reward is one aspect of improving the communication of needs, as we see with the information local leaders provided in Nicaragua, open communication of needs in community relationships entails much more- it involves the tropes and resources in communities to help individuals formulate and express one's needs to oneself (aspirations) and to others(mother-tongue instruction), which are basic to the healthy function of community-relationships and their subsequent ability to meet those needs.

## II. Improvements in Responsiveness to Needs: School,Learner and Teacher Response-Abilities

The second indication of health is the presence of responsiveness to needs: despite needs being expressed, discussed and negotiated, individuals and communities may lack the ability to expand their capacity to address needs, in terms of resources, personal skill, effort, and their capability. Moreover, existing structures or social roles may prevent individuals from being dynamic and responding to a situation, as discussed previously. Given healthy communication of needs, successfully targeting the abilities of different actors- school management, teachers and learners- to respond to each-other's needs in the community can bring positive results in education. We shall now look into the improvements in outcomes facilitated by programs that target responsiveness to needs in the school-decision making and teaching-learning processes.

Given community members can openly communicate and negotiate their needs, providing them with resources, especially when they seriously lacked financial ability to respond to needs, can bring about outcomes. A community empowerment program called Generasi launched by the Government of Indonesia in 2007 issued block-grants to communities to improve health and education in rural village which therein enabled the local school decision-

making process to successfully deliver outcomes (Olken, Onishi and Wong, 2014). The program

led to a 0.04 SD improvement across 12 health and education indicators, notably weight checks,

incidence of malnutrition and enrolment (Olken et. al., 2014). A competitive bonus and similar

income levels of villagers prevented local capture- the grant truly enabled community members'

agency to respond. Particularly, as the community now had both funds and the real freedom to

use it, it was most relevant to places with a low ability to respond- the grants had a greater

impact in areas with low income, low levels of health and education and in more remote

provinces. Thus by successfully targeting the community's responsiveness to needs in terms of

resources, agency and other capabilities, the program improved outcomes in education.

Similarly in teacher-learner relationships, programs can target the ability of learners to

respond to the requirements of teachers by being better equipped to handle the curriculum and of

teachers to respond to needs of learners by teaching to the level. Successfully improving the

health of these relationships can bring about changes in chosen outcomes. A preparatory reading

skills program called *Shishuvachan* in the slums of Mumbai and a class- tracking program in

Kenya are examples of such improvements. *Shishuvachan* targeted reading and comprehension

skills among children aged four to five in preparation for primary school matriculation, using a

curriculum facilitated by teacher-student interactions centered around storytelling and classroom

games, and a child library (He, Linden, MacLeod, 2009). The evaluators tested heterogeneous

effect on students based on population characteristics and method of delivery, and found that all

versions of the program- as a pre-school, an in-school model, an after-school complement, and a

standalone class, are effective at improving students reading scores, but more in after-school than

in-school and most effective in pre-schools. The community based standalone class also only

shows strong gains by students who begin at the lowest baseline reading ability- in general, gains

are more robust using existing infrastructure (He et. al. 2009). The program generated large changes in students' reading levels at all competency levels, with the largest effects measured in reading words, but particularly affected low performing students, children with parents with no reading skills or with uneducated parents. All of these findings indicate that when the learner's ability to respond to teaching requirements are low- as when they have low baseline performance or parental support, a program that facilitates such an ability by furnishing skills to successfully engage in the classroom has a significant impact. Moreover, it is most effective in situations where an ability to respond to the needs of learning is most pressing and easily inculcated- before entering school. It is also more effective after school, than as an in-school or stand-alone, as the learner's ability to respond allows actual responsiveness to teachers, without compromising the ability to meet existing school requirements or substituting the relationship with school teachers all together. But even in the other cases, improved responsiveness of learners positively impacts outcomes, unlike the negative effects of substituting computers with in-class methods.

Equally important is the teacher's ability to meet the needs of low achieving students-which could be hindered in regular classroom settings. Duflo, Dupas, and Kremer (2011) thus model and test the dynamics of tracking- having performance variant and invariant classes for improved learning- and its impacts on teachers' ability to tailor instruction in Kenya. They find that after 18 months, tracking students raised scores for all students, even lower achieving peers. A year after tracking ended, students in tracking school still scored higher, indicating that teacher behavior responds to class composition and the improved ability to respond to learners of different levels provided persisting outcomes. This is because "teachers assigned to lower achievement section teach closer to median student level than those assigned to upper section, although teacher effort is higher in the upper section as civil service teachers face incentives

based on scores of students" (Duflo et. al., 2011, p.1740). So, even a median student is better off with tracking than without, whichever section (higher or lower) she ends up in. Furthermore, the lower half gained a lot from the tracking in the most basic skills, while students in the top half gained from tracking in more advanced skills (Duflo et. al., 2011, p.1740). Changing the class composition thus allowed the teachers to vary their response to the needs of different students. By improving their ability to respond, instruction level, student skills and learning outcomes improved. Thus, facilitating teachers' and learners' responsiveness to each-others needs allows programs to successfully affect educational outcomes.

It is important to note that targeting the ability to respond to needs has a broader scope than just targeting an institutional capacity or government failure. State failures result from poor investment policies or local bureaucratic capacity in communities, due to inefficient or corrupt resource allocation. While we see that improvements in the capacity of the local polity to respond that isn't distorted by perverse incentives improves outcomes, as in the case of Indonesia, addressing the responsiveness to needs involves a broader concern- it includes the ability of various actors- parents, teachers, learners- to respond to the needs of each other and of situations. It involves the ability of teachers to respond to the needs of specific learners, the ability of learners to act on the needs of the curriculum and the parent's ability to take school decisions in response to local needs. Improving political or school capacity through subsidy, decentralization, empowerment or redistribution alone has a narrow scope. Truly facilitating a community's responsiveness to needs addresses more pressing concerns hindering development.

III Improvements in Concern for (one another's) Needs: More than incentivizing Willingness

While the communication and responsiveness to needs enables communities to deliver educational outcomes, concern for one another's needs may play an important role in being able to have sustained impacts. We discussed how the will to dominate and sacrifice could denigrate communities by submerging the interests of some individuals over others. But when concern exists- the community builds healthy relationships that are able to truly nurture individuals in it and attain human development. These relationships can range from the simple willingness to do a task to active care for those who are different or less well off, and the level of concern affects the ability to sustainably meet the needs of community members. For local education, this manifests as the extent of willing concern for a student's education shown by other local actors. Here we discuss the sustainability of the outcomes of different programs that target the level of willingness of local school teachers to address education needs to different degrees.

When talking about the willingness or concern teachers must have for students' needs, it is important to acknowledge that they also have needs that schools and communities need to care for. Some programs thus try to create the right teacher incentives that can create willingness to address needs. But if one incentivizes school performance alone, as we see is the case in most developing countries, problems such as teaching to the book/exam and teaching high performing students only can emerge, which corrupt student-teacher relationships and do not address needs. Indeed, Glewwe, Ilias and Kremer (2010) analyze a randomized trial that rewarded Kenyan primary school teachers based on student test scores with penalties for students not taking the exams, and found that it changed teacher behavior- when teachers had figured out how it worked, scores were substantially higher in program school; but while students in program schools scored higher on exams linked to teacher incentives, they didn't on other, unrelated exams, and though exam participation increased among enrolled students key factors like

dropout rate was unchanged by the program. The findings thus suggest that addressing the financial concerns of teachers by creating a willingness to affect outcomes may not truly create a willingness to respond to the needs of students, especially those with pressing concerns. If teachers teach formulaically when an incentive is offered, can the incentive formula be altered such that they have an incentive to direct efforts to improve the quality of student -teacher relationships instead? To test this, a large RCT in Andhra Pradesh, India evaluates two types of performance pay- group bonuses based on school performance and individual bonuses based on teacher performance. Their incentive programs indicate improved performance of students in subjects that were not tied to incentives, like science and social studies, and no evidence of adverse gaming, and while the latter was more successful than the former, both were significant at the 10% level (Muralidharan and Sundararaman, 2011). Why did their design work? They find that their ratio of base-bonus pay is optimal as it balances the needs of students and teachers- setting the bonus too low would not provide adequate incentives to teachers, setting it too high increased outcome distortion/moral hazard. Moreover, teachers could not get "teach to" the formula since outcomes were vague and they had no direct control over it- there is continuous comprehensive evaluation in schools, so they just have to increase effort and perform better. Thus, the program successfully improved outcomes by inducing teacher willingness to act on students' needs rather than on performance measures. It also met teachers' concerns which facilitated increased effort- over 80% of teachers had a favorable opinion about performance pay, and the support for performance-linked pay is positively correlated with their performance.

However the outcomes of such a program may be less sustainable because it simply induces a willingness to act upon and not a greater concern for students' needs. Since gains were focused on the reward or reward formula, outcomes may not persist after the program, as it was

observed in Kenya and the school-based bonus in India. Only true concern for students' needs

may bring about sustained improvements in performance, especially for low performing students

from marginalized backgrounds. This is seen in the case of Balsakhi, a remedial education

program in India which hires young women from the local community who finished secondary

school to teach third or fourth grade students lagging behind in basic literacy and numeracy

skills. The program increased average test scores of all children in treatment schools by 0.28

standard deviations, mostly due to very large gains by children at the bottom of the test score

distribution (0.6 SD)"(Banerjee, Cole, Duflo, Linden, 2007). The authors suggest that "students

share a common background with a Balsakhi but not with the teachers, who may not take time to

help students who are behind catch up, as the social attitudes and community prejudices may

limit teachers' effectiveness, who feel as if "they were doing a big favor by teaching from

erstwhile communities or very poor migrants" (Banerjee et. al., 2007, p.1262). Thus having been

shown the necessary concern, student outcomes improve and persist for one year after leaving

the program too. In recruiting immediate local graduates, the program also maintains a persistent

supply of *balsakhis* at a relatively low cost, (Banerjee et. al, 2007, p.1240), which allows it to

sustain the outcomes. And therefore, programs successfully targeting the willingness to respond

to needs can improve education outcomes, but the level of concern that they facilitate in student-

teacher and other community relationships will affect their ability to sustain those outcomes and

continue to meet the needs of the persons-in-community in the long run.

Incorporating the Lens but not Addressing Relationship Failures: the case of WSD

So far we have discussed the positive impacts that the successful targeting of programs to

improve the health of community-relationships can bring about. To finish up the discussion of

the importance of targeting improvements in relationships, we complement the above discussion by looking into why a program cannot improve outcomes if it fails to address key relationship failures, even if its design incorporates a community lens. An example of this is Gambia's Whole School Development, a comprehensive school based management/ capacity-building program.

Blimpo and Evans (2011) evaluate a large field experiment in Gambia randomly assigning 237 Gambian primary schools to be treated with the Whole School Development program, where school committee members received training in a variety of areas (school-related decision making, managing curriculum and teacher development, teaching and learning resources (e.g., textbooks and libraries) and the school environment) through which the stakeholders (including the community) developed a school management plan addressing short-term and long-term goals in each of these areas. The Ministry of Education provided a 500$(approx.) grant. The functioning of the community in which individual functionings are met was thus duly considered and incorporated by this program design. Moreover, it seems to have targeted important institutional incapacities (state failures) and lack of information through training (market failures). But while the WSD intervention led to a 21% reduction in student absenteeism and a 23% reduction in teacher absenteeism, no impact on learning outcomes was found (Blimpo and Evans, 2011). Pressing relationship failures had thereby gone unaddressed-

i) <u>There was no healthy communication of needs between schools and community members:</u> Fundamentally, there was a lack of clear understanding between schools and parent councils as to what was considered success- Whereas evidence from student tests reveals poor performance, over 90% of parents are satisfied with the schools and their children's performance and a sharp inability of the parents to understand performance remained even after the intervention. The authors show that if well informed, parents will try to hold schools accountable for their

children's learning outcomes since most parents, including in the rural areas, have very high aspirations for their children's professional future and educational achievements (Blimpo and Evans, 2011, p.27). Thus, without facilitating open communication to parents of the relative performance and current needs of the children, and the schools, the program failed.

ii) <u>The ability of community members to respond to learner and teacher needs was low</u>: Because, the effect of the WSD program on learning outcomes is strongly mediated by the baseline adult literacy and share of School Management Committee (SMC) members with no formal education (Blimpo and Evans, 2011), the program fails to target parents' inability to properly attend to, manage and respond to the needs of schools, thus not targeting the responsiveness to needs.

iii) <u>The ability of schools/teachers to respond to student needs went unaddressed</u>: In low income countries, because teacher quality and content knowledge might be low, it prevents policies from functioning well, and in Gambia, teachers took a sixth-grade level content knowledge test and showed overall poor outcomes. In addition, "large number of schools function in double shifts and total instructional time is 20% below recommended"(Blimpo and Evans, 2011, p.5). Thus, the low ability of teachers and schools to respond to student needs and the situation of increased enrolment wasn't targeted by the program, preventing impact on learning outcomes.

In Conclusion: Towards a better focus on Relationship-Health and a Measure for sustainable
Community-Based Development in Program Design and Evaluation

In chapter 2B, we briefly discussed how most of the programs we surveyed measure

outcomes in a way that may not directly focus on the healthy functioning of community

relationships, and the narrow breadth and depth of indicator may reduce the scope of designing

and implementing programs in a way that successfully targets these relationships and focuses on

improving them. As a guide to the direction that future development program design and

evaluation can take, this project concludes by presenting a way that programs can pay mindful

attention to outcomes that better reflect key aspects of community-health and how they can

incorporate a flexible, long-term understanding and model of community based development.

In a forthcoming evaluation by Ashraf, Bau Low and McGinn (2016) in Zambia, a

dramatic decline in female enrollment from primary to secondary school years is being countered

by a program that is providing negotiation training for girls in addition to current school

curriculum. The entire focus of the program is turned towards key aspects of healthy community

relationships- it analyzes whether negotiation skills that allow a girl to reshape her understanding

of a conflict and her communications with others can result in more favorable resource

allocation. The study isolates the impact of teaching information versus teaching negotiation by

layering the two interventions on top of a "social capital" program, which involved time with other girls in a safe space- an information intervention, where girls meet after school to learn about HIV and the importance of schooling, and a negotiation plus information intervention, where the girls receive negotiation training in addition to information (Ashraf et. al., forthcoming para 4). The Negotiation Curriculum is structured by four principles: "Me" - identifying one's own interests and options in conflict situations; "You" - identifying the other person's interests, needs, and perspective; "Together" - identifying shared interests and small trades; and "Build" - developing win-win solutions. The curriculum lays out certain situations in which it is necessary to be patient, or "Take 5", as well as those in which the only outcome to keep the girl safe and healthy is to walk away and not negotiate (Ashraf et. al., forthcoming, para 5). Moreover, the program will not just measure the size and source of impact on education, but also capture transformations in a girl's capabilities, her interaction with others, and the outcomes of those interactions: it includes measures of self-perception, outcomes of arguments and discussion, and intra-household allocations. It also will assess the impact on the family through parent and sibling surveys to see if gains in participant well-being come at the expense of other family members, and survey behavioral measures such as willingness to engage in child-parent negotiation and altered willingness to pay for schooling by parents. By incorporating the complexity of the relationships-space and targeting measures of development that truly reflect the conditions for healthy community relationships, this program becomes exemplary for the kind of mindful designing and the attentive focus on community health that program evaluations can adopt to address the needs of persons-in-community.

Ultimately, we should avoid going on a quest for a standardized measure that applies across all contexts or insist on a particular outcome or success of a program as a reflection or

guarantor of well-being, because this well-being is always determined within relationships-space

that can be improved or weakened in terms of their health, but this health does not manifest only

in one way across different community relationships. Program evaluators who seek to understand

the problem field and resolve issues must thus have a flexible tool that incorporates an

understanding of the situation and what matters, i.e. the context of the community and the

pressing relationship-failures that can't meet local needs. Marc Lindenberg (2002) elaborates an

evolving attempt within the international development community to measure progress like this

at the family and community level- the household livelihood security approach. Piloted

extensively at CARE, one of the world's largest international relief and development non-profit,

"this approach helps provide systematic and integral approaches to basic family and village

needs in more than 50 countries" and many other nonprofits, and bilateral and multilateral

organizations like USAID and UNDP, use it today as well (Lindenberg, 2002, p.302).

The objective of this approach and the experimental household livelihood security index

is not national or even large-scale sub-national cross-comparison but to provide a participatory,

rapid community assessment technique that identifies and helps communities and their partners

develop a profile of constraints to member well-being, as well as their assets and opportunities. It

also helps communities and their partners develop, discuss and jointly design effective programs

to overcome barriers to better health, housing, education, and livelihood security (Lindenberg,

2002, p.302). The index is an eight-component measure focused directly on the constraints to

family and community wellbeing: it has one aggregate measure of the eight basic elements of

livelihood security- income and assets, food and nutrition, education, participation, water,

sanitation, primary health, and reproductive health. The elements are then ranked for availability,

accessibility, quality, use and status on a five-point ordinal scale whose ranges are pre calibrated

based on the context by CARE staff, (local) academics, government and NGOs. Some elements have their own composite measure, like health or educational security (Lindenberg, 2002, p.307).

In practice, to "identify intra-household economic and social dynamics and the coping mechanisms families use to combat poverty and scarcity", it "uses about eight hours of 'on the ground' survey team assessment time to help produce a community baseline photo (Figure 3) of the constraints to household livelihood security". The community and the team can use the photo to ensure a focused discussion to connect community status, symptoms and causes of livelihood security problems and specific poverty alleviation programs (Lindenberg, 2002, p.206).

Figure 3: A "photo" of a community in India. Lindenberg (2002), *World Development*, 311.
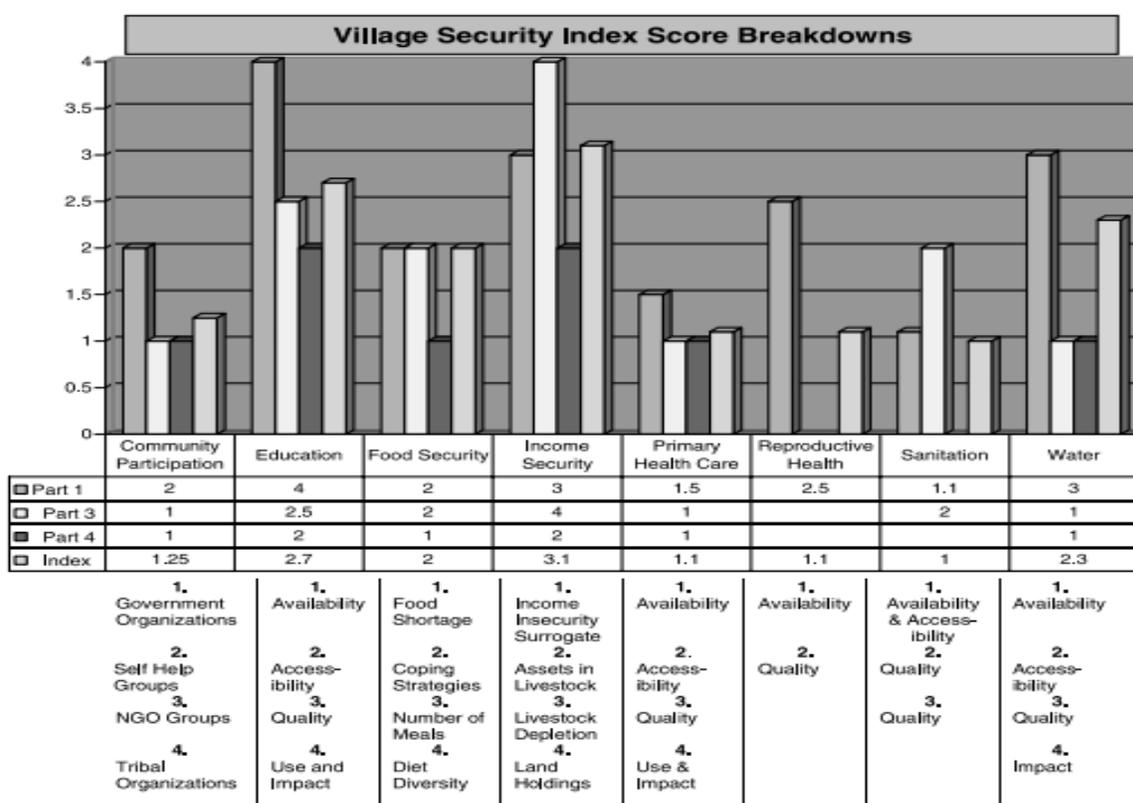


Economics is, after all, a study of the ways to provision for our needs. In developing countries, the needs we seek to provision are far more pressing. As Lindenberg notes, "while macro policies and national programs are important, such efforts rarely translate easily into

family and village based improvement"(Lindenberg, 2002, p.315). The growth of RCTs to find

micro-solutions is thus an important step ahead. However, the design and targeting of

development programs must look at the actual status or health of community livelihood and

address the needs of people who are constituted in the community- the place and set of patterned

interpersonal relationships they exist in. By focusing on adapting to the community context and

targeting the sustained ways of improving outcomes through healthy community-relationships, a

program can improve its design and solutions thinking to effectively and sustainably address

problems. The implications of moving in this direction are enormous-

> If we can measure the household livelihood status of families and communities we can
> set global goals for improving the lives of the poorest people on the planet and evaluate
> whether we are being successful. To be successful we need to partner with these families
> and communities to help them achieve their aspirations which include personal safety,
> clean water, adequate sanitation, basic shelter, freedom from hunger and participation in
> decisions which affect their lives…..(we need to) both understand the constraints to
> poverty alleviation and design very specific, highly focused programs to help make the
> world a better place for the global majority (Lindenberg, 2002, p.315)

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