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***Discovering Participatory Development Through
Corporate – NGO Collaboration: A Mining Industry
Case Study***

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Introduction

This paper¹ examines a collaborative learning program between BHP Billiton and Oxfam Community Aid Abroad (CAA), called the *Corporate Community Leadership Program* (CCLP). The CCLP was designed to sensitise BHP Billiton managers to a participatory and human rights-based approach to development. Like other companies, BHP Billiton has embedded principles of participatory development into its corporate policy commitments, but has come to recognise the challenges of implementation. In addressing these challenges, BHP Billiton has collaborated with Oxfam CAA in the development of the CCLP, with the aim of increasing management understanding and awareness of participatory development.

The paper first outlines the principles of participatory development and sets them against the myriad of issues global resource companies (GRCs) face in applying the principles in practice. It then describes the key features of the CCLP and looks at its impact on the thinking and actions of participants. The key conclusion of the paper is that the program was highly effective on an individual participant level. However, questions remain as to how learnings will translate into improved practice at a site, company and, potentially, industry level.

Community Development Policy and Participation

Mining companies are increasingly incorporating social justice concerns into corporate policy commitments, often augmenting already established environmental policies (Dabbs and Bateson 2001). These policies are usually presented within the framework of ‘sustainable development’ or ‘corporate social responsibility’ and have two broad foci: firstly, mitigating negative impacts of core business activities on environment and society; and secondly, maximising sustainable benefits for stakeholders, including local communities.

This paper concentrates on the latter aspect, with particular emphasis on corporate activities within marginalised² host communities. These activities are often considered to be part of a mining company’s ‘community development’ or ‘local community investment’ program. Maximising sustainable benefits for marginalised host communities is particularly challenging for mining companies given the complex social, political, economic and geo-physical conditions under which mining is often conducted, and the non-renewable and temporary nature of most mining developments.

¹ The author collected the data presented in this paper during research for a Masters of Social Science degree. At the time of the research the author was an employee of BHP Billiton, and involved in developing the CCLP. The primary data sources were semi-structured interviews with nine BHP Billiton executives and eight Australian development sector professionals, and participant observation of the CCLP.

² In this paper, the term ‘marginalised’, rather than ‘poor’, is used to describe communities that are excluded from the mainstream of interest and/or power (Edwards et. al. 2001). The use of this term minimises the association with purely economic deprivation, emphasising marginalisation as a process, rather than focusing on the outcome, which is poverty. An emphasis on marginalised communities is particularly relevant in a global resources market where GRCs are increasing their already significant interface with remote and vulnerable communities.

In recent times, community groups, non-government organisations (NGOs), international agencies and others have paid increased attention to the mining industry's interface with vulnerable and marginalised host communities at site level, both in terms of impacts and benefits. This is not surprising considering investment and exploration trends within the industry. Unprecedented flows of foreign direct investment into developing countries, a significant portion of this from the resources industry (Warhurst and Lunt 1997), has meant that previously inaccessible areas of rich reserves, predominantly in Asia, South America and Africa, are becoming the 'new frontiers' of mining (Wasserstrom and Reider 1998; Warden-Fernandez 2001). These areas are often home to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised communities in the world (Carter 1999). With the continuing relaxation of political and ideological boundaries in many of these areas, opportunities for mining companies are likely to expand further (Mitchell 1998), thus increasing the already significant corporate interface with such communities.

Many mining companies have incorporated some community development principles in their policies, partially in response to the increased scrutiny of company practices at a site level. In particular, mining company policy is increasingly emphasising the notion of *participatory development* as a strategy for delivering sustainable benefits to local communities. However, there is no widely accepted method for applying these broad principles in practice. As outlined in the recent Mining Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) Report (IIED 2002), demand for sustained local benefits from mining is a relatively recent phenomenon, and companies have not been properly equipped to respond. At the same time, the MMSD Report suggests that a new relationship is beginning to emerge based on the concept of community participation in decision-making. The Report also suggests that sustaining local benefits for host communities should be a strategic focus area for the mining industry into the future (IIED 2002).

Emergence of Participatory Development

Participatory development is a multi-faceted approach that places local people at the centre of development by building their capacity to control their future. Core principles include: empowerment, local control, human rights and flexibility.

For the purposes of the following discussion, a broad definition of the concept is offered:

“...[participatory development is] an opportunity for citizens and public and private enterprise organisations to express their opinions on general policy goals or to have their priorities and needs integrated into decisions made about specific projects or programs. It allows members of civil society – particularly the poorest – a chance for involvement in development.” (Feeney 1998:10).

In essence, participatory development places local people at the centre of the development process by building their capacity to control their own development. Local knowledge and perspectives are valued over and above those of outside

‘experts’. Participatory approaches are widespread and applicable across all the major development sectors including health, education and agriculture (Oakley 1995).

The participatory development approach became popular in the 1970s when the limitations of ‘top-down’ development of the post-war period began to be recognised (Cooke and Kothari 2001). Much post-war development was characterised by an emphasis on economic growth, industrialisation, centralised planning and control over the distribution of resources (Soros 1998). The focus was on creating physical infrastructure and institutions to enable ‘development’. Rural and marginalised communities were considered to be lagging behind the developed world, and urban elites within the developing world. From this perspective, the aim of development was to ‘help’ the poor out of their situation of ignorance to a better life of affluence and development (McMichael 2000). However, this one-sided, paternalistic approach was eventually called into question as the gap between rich and poor continued to widen (Heap 2000).

The search for more appropriate styles of development has been linked to several lines of thought, one of which is ‘dependency theory’. Dependency theorists argue that development is the *cause* of underdevelopment, and that de-linkage is necessary if countries and their communities are to prosper. Freire (1972) was one of the first advocates of an alternative approach to development that considered social, cultural, environmental, spiritual and political needs alongside economic needs, rather than accepting the premise of development as economic growth and industrialisation. He argued that for development to occur, people must have control over their own futures, and held ‘participation’ to be a key concept.

Participatory development has since been taken up by grass-roots NGOs and adopted, in one form or another, by multi-national NGOs, which have shifted their focus from aid and relief to tackling the fundamental problems of lack of assets and voice (Oakley and Marsden 1984; Korten 1989). Similarly, bi- and multi-lateral development organisations, agencies of the United Nations and the World Bank have signalled their adoption of the concept, along with, more recently, the corporate sector, including mining companies.

Corporate Approaches to Participatory Development

Participatory development has a high degree of acceptability within the international development sector and literature, but is a challenging idea to apply in practice, even for development and non-government organisations (NGOs). The implementation of participatory development principles in the corporate sector is particularly problematic because of the focus on profitability, competition and managerial control. The mining industry’s exposure to remote communities and its ‘hard issue’ bias further complicate the situation.

Appendix 1 outlines the principles of participatory development, drawn from development literature, and lists the myriad of challenges that GRCS, such as mining companies, face in giving effect to these principles. Key points are as follows:

- Participatory development requires that local communities influence and share control over decisions and resources that affect them. In practice, it

may be difficult for mining companies to share control given their conventional orientation towards operational and project control, budget management and internal lines of authority.

- Participatory development reverses the worldview that professionals and experts know what is best for communities. This is counter to the dominant approach within mining companies, where ‘expert’ opinions are given respect, ‘consultants’ are brought in to advise on specific issues, and employees are encouraged to be ‘professional’.
- While participatory development may be stimulated and encouraged, it is a long-term process that cannot take place through force or order, nor can it be ‘fast tracked’ - it is ‘evolutionary’, rather than ‘revolutionary’. Corporations, however, are often keen to see results, usually tangible and demonstrable, and typically operate within narrowly defined timeframes and funding deadlines.
- Participatory development is more of a people’s movement than a project into which funding is simply injected, with the approach being humanistic rather than purely technical in orientation; it is development ‘with’, not ‘for’, communities. A ‘hard issue’ bias exists in most mining companies where imperatives exist around finance, projects, deadlines, technology, markets and capital, rather than people.

One of the greatest challenges in community development is to reach the poorest, most marginalised and least vocal members of a community. BHP Billiton (2001) states in its corporate HSEC policy that:

“Wherever we operate we will seek opportunities to share our success by:

- working with communities to contribute to social infrastructure needs through the development and use of appropriate skills and technologies; and
- developing partnerships that focus on creating sustainable value for *everyone*” (italics added).

The Draft International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) Sustainable Development Charter reflects similar principles. However, in practice mining companies are used to dealing with relatively powerful sectors of society, such as regulators, governments and financiers, rather than poor, marginalised or vulnerable groups. A commitment to ‘everyone’ is commendable, but the onus is on companies to demonstrate their commitment to reach out to the powerless, as well as the powerful.

Development Sector Views

Eight Australian development sector professionals were interviewed for this study. Most interviewees agreed that the capacity of mining companies to apply the principles of participatory development was limited, despite the commitments made at corporate level to local community participation in the development process. There was general agreement that although the current approach of mining companies in relation to community development and human rights was improving, it was still inadequate. Interviewees perceived that mining companies generally approached community development in an instrumental and functional way, using it primarily as a means to an end, rather than considering it an end in itself. Interviewees observed that companies tended to operate via a pure economic rationalist framework that puts profits first, rather than incorporating a humanistic framework. These issues were seen as creating inherent tensions for mining companies in adopting participatory development.

Interviewees believed it was entirely appropriate that mining companies undertake community development. However, they emphasised that policy positions often lack credibility and tend to reflect rhetoric rather than reality. They advocated further discussion and debate to determine ways forward. Some suggested that companies need to consider 'hybrid' models of development that satisfy the dual mandates of maximising profits for shareholders and benefits for marginalised host communities, rather than trying to claim credit for an approach that they cannot implement in practice.

BHP Billiton, Oxfam Community Aid Abroad and the Corporate Community Leadership Program

BHP Billiton's policy commitments around community development echo the principles of participatory development. The three key policy documents include: the BHP Billiton Charter; Health, Safety, Environment and Community Policy; Management Standards; and Guideline on Community Development. Collectively these policies reflect each of the principles outlined in Appendix 1, in particular: transparency, accountability, human rights, communication, collaboration, sharing of power and control, reversals, capacity building, learning orientation, local considerations and self-reliance.

BHP Billiton faces many challenges in putting its policies into practice, as does the mining industry more generally (IIED 2002). This lack of capacity has been recognised by the company, and it has collaborated with Oxfam CAA to begin addressing this deficiency

Oxfam CAA is part of the Oxfam International network, one of the world's largest confederations of NGOs. It is committed to working for social justice and ending poverty. It works with communities by applying the principles of participatory development through a human rights-based approach, and supports innovative and imaginative development projects in Indigenous Australia and overseas. It also aims to mobilise the Australian community and inform and influence government, global and regional institutions and the private sector. Oxfam states that it is neither anti-

mining nor anti-development and acknowledges the benefits that responsible mining and development can bring to countries, regions and communities.

For the past eight years, Oxfam CAA's Community Programs Unit has hosted Community Leadership Program visits to both India and Bangladesh. These programs are intended to give paying members of the public direct exposure and first-hand understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects of Oxfam CAA's approach to development. This well-established program has provided the model for the development of a *Corporate* Community Leadership Program specifically tailored to the mining industry. Two programs have been trialed in February 2002 and 2003. The author of this paper was a facilitator and participant observer on both of these programs.

For Oxfam CAA, conducting the CCLP is part of an explicit agenda to achieve change within the resources industry more broadly. The organisation has campaigned against BHP³ in the past, so collaboration was not necessarily a 'natural' fit for either organisation. The two had been adversaries on high profile issues, such as Ok Tedi, rather than collaborators. However, Oxfam believed that BHP Billiton, as one of the world's largest resource companies, could provide an avenue for achieving broader industry change.

The two pilot CCLPs have enabled a total of 26 BHP Billiton employees to gain practical experience in examining complex social and environmental issues in a developing country context, in this case India. The program was conducted over a two-week period, under the guidance of Oxfam CAA facilitators and an educator from the University of Queensland. The focus of the program was on a participatory and rights-based approach to development.

In educational terms the CCLP is an *exposure* program, designed to sensitise participants and enhance awareness to community issues relevant to the resources industry. The program had three key components: 1) field exposures; 2) de-briefing sessions; and 3) input sessions. The CCLP relied on Oxfam's extensive web of local knowledge in India to gain access to local people and organisations for the field exposures. During the exposures, BHP Billiton participants interacted with people's organisations and community-based organisations⁴ to hear local 'stories' and see first-hand how development, from large-scale infrastructure through to small-scale projects, impact on rights and livelihoods – both positively and negatively. Structured de-briefing sessions allowed participants to share their experiences and learnings, while input sessions covered key theoretical frameworks of community development in order to provide a deeper understanding of development issues.

For each CCLP, BHP Billiton nominated participants from operations around the world, including Australia, Chile, Peru, PNG, Indonesia, United Kingdom, and South Africa. The groups comprised middle to upper-management from external affairs,

³ Prior to its merger with Billiton.

⁴ The development sector differentiates between 'people's organisations', which are first-party organisations in the sense that they base their legitimacy on serving member interests and are self-reliant in that continued existence does not depend on outside initiative or funding. A community-based organisation is a third-party organisation that acts in the service of a neglected need for others in the community (Korten 1990).

engineering, social/community affairs, Indigenous affairs, environment, management and occupational health. There was only limited prior exposure within the group to development and human rights issues.

Discovering Participatory Development

Both Programs were considered by BHP Billiton and Oxfam CAA to be ‘groundbreaking’. BHP Billiton participants demonstrated an increasingly enlightened perspective towards community development and human rights as the program proceeded. For example, half way through each trial, after the first exposure, the groups collectively identified many of the inherent tensions between the operating framework of BHP Billiton and participatory development. Participants were able to articulate many of the challenges of participatory development discussed above, particularly in relation to: the privileging of expert over local knowledge; the prioritising of ‘hard’ engineering issues over ‘soft’ community issues; operating according to corporate rather than community timeframes; and working within legal contractual arrangements rather than arrangements based on relationships and trust.

This level of critique, insight and understanding was remarkable, particularly given participants’ limited prior exposure to these issues. There was a strong indication, very early in both programs, that the CCLP encouraged new ways of thinking and conceptualising community development and human rights. The program appeared to create a ‘safe space’ for learning and discussing complex and dynamic development issues. As the CCLP progressed, participants became more open with Oxfam CAA and community members about the challenges of adopting a rights-based approach and applying the principles of participatory development. To some extent, the degree of understanding and engagement appeared to parallel the degree to which participants were personally affected by what they heard and saw in communities.

On the final day of each program, participants collectively articulated their key learnings. These included:

- We have seen mining through the perspective of NGOs and the community.
- There is more substance and rigour to community development work than we had thought.
- We recognise communities as people with rights.
- Community development is about people, not things and building human capacity within the boundaries of a sustainable society.
- Development is a political process and politicised communities will be one outcome of development work.
- Interaction with communities needs to be tailored to the local context and conditions – there is no one-size-fits-all for community development, even though the principles remain the same.
- Relying only on powerful and elite members of a society or community is inadequate for achieving a ‘social licence to operate’ in the future.
- Community development will not provide a quick fix for reputation – it’s a longer bottom-up process that can provide long-term benefits.
- Community development can’t be squeezed into project timeframes for predictable outcomes.

- Community sustainability is integral to organisational sustainability for the long-term.

Participants also said that they better understood:

- The difference between equity and equality
- The human rights-development approach
- “Generations” of development
- The difference between consultation and development and thus between community relations and community development
- The need to see through the eyes of the people
- That best-practice community development was people-centred and process-driven

Several of the statements made by participants prioritised community considerations, rather than those of the corporation. Participants also recognised that community development is not a quick fix for reputation, but a bottom-up process that can provide long-term benefits. Their words had distinctly humanistic and reflective overtones and displayed non-binary logic, recognising the complexities of community work.

At the same time, however, participants remained heavily influenced by instrumental managerialist thinking which privileges economic considerations, organisational priorities and the need for control. This was evidenced by the comments made in debriefing sessions, conversations out of session and during breaks. This reflected the influence of a number of factors, internal and external to each individual, such as professional socialisation and experience and/or the culture of BHP Billiton or the resources sector.

Follow-up

BHP Billiton and Oxfam undertook an informal joint research exercise six months after the first CCLP to determine whether participants were applying learnings from the program within the context of their work⁵. Questionnaires were distributed to each participant and also to two other people who knew the participant professionally. The questions sought feedback on learnings shared, applied and/or implemented post-CCLP.

Overall, participants responded positively to their CCLP experience six months after the trip. Most participants said they were able to share their learnings within their workplace through presentations, written accounts, informal discussions and photo presentations. However, some indicated that once back in the workplace, other priorities had got in the way of spending time communicating what they had learned from the program. A few reported that some colleagues were not responsive, and did not understand the relevance of the CCLP to the organisation. Most participants said the value of what they had learnt had not diminished since the conclusion of the CCLP. One participant believed that the CCLP added more value than any other professional training/development activity in his 11 years with the Company.

⁵ A similar research exercise is planned for six-months post the second CCLP.

Significantly, all participants reported that they had been able to apply what they had learnt in the workplace, although some had been able to do so to a greater extent than others. Examples included:

- Communicating with colleagues in a variety of ways, including: informal discussions; PowerPoint presentations; and preparation of discussion papers
- Reviewing Community Relations Plans
- Reviewing donations policies
- In the toll-gating process⁶
- Planning a community workshop
- Providing advice to HSEC Advisors and colleagues on community issues
- Conducting in a due diligence exercise
- Scoping how learnings from the CCLP might apply in Aboriginal Australia
- Establishing a development foundation
- Discussing the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with work team
- Improving approaches to community work

Respondents also put forward various suggestions about how to increase the impact of the CCLP Program within BHP Billiton. These included:

- Key policy makers/decision-makers need to also participate in the CCLP
- Participant nominations need careful consideration e.g. nominations should reflect assets with high community risk profiles
- A full presentation to BHP Billiton's Executive Committee would underscore outcomes and build commitment to change
- Participants need support in taking learnings back into the workplace.
- Participants need clearer understanding of how to apply learnings
- Progress from the CCLP needs to be tracked e.g. as a key KPI

Although findings from the follow-up study are encouraging, the self-reports of participants are not being formally tracked to determine the extent to which they are continuing to apply what they learnt. Thus the impact on thinking and behaviour over the longer term cannot be determined.

Future Directions

Suggestions for improvement made by program participants and others will be considered by BHP Billiton and Oxfam CAA in the context of deciding how, and whether, the CCLP will proceed. BHP Billiton and Oxfam CAA have also indicated that they will evaluate the merits of extending the CCLP to other mining companies that have made similar policy commitments to participation and human rights. Expanding the CCLPs in this way would assist in creating a larger 'pool' of people with an understanding of participatory and human rights based approaches to community development.

⁶ The toll-gating process is BHP Billiton's internal capital approval process.

Broader Implications

In summary, it was clear that the CCLP was a worthwhile undertaking for both BHP Billiton and Oxfam CAA. In particular, it led those who participated to a new way of thinking about community development, and highlighted the potential for a participatory and human rights-based approach to development. However, it was also apparent that several factors limited the impact of the Program. The more significant obstacles, and suggestions on how they might be addressed, are outlined below.

Practical constraints

Issues

- The Program requires a significant investment in time and revenue from both BHP Billiton and Oxfam CAA, without a clear set of outcomes once participants return to the workplace.
- Only a small number of employees can participate. For real change to be effected, more participants would need to be involved.
- The Program raises awareness and understanding, but does not build skills or provide ‘answers’.
- The involvement of one company may not be sufficient to effect industry change.

Suggestions

- Clarify post-CCLP expectations to consider application of the principles back in the workplace.
- Ensure that ‘critical’ participants attend the program, that is, employees from high-risk areas, locations with local community issues or employees in positions of power who make decisions that affect local communities.
- Develop follow-up material that points participants to resources that can help in skills development, either of participants or their staff.
- Eventually, roll the Program out to other companies to effect broader change.
- Continue the debate about ‘how’ principles can be applied in practice within the industry, NGOs and other relevant organisations.

Organisational constraints

Issue

- Participants continued to be influenced by a mode of thinking that embraced instrumental management, profits and control. This suggests that unless other measures are taken to reinforce the learnings from the program, it will be difficult to achieve permanent change.

Suggestions

- Companies that aim to build awareness and understanding at an individual level must also consider making changes at an organisational level, so that individuals return to an environment that is open to application of learnings. If organisations are not committed to investing in the required organisational changes they should not be seeking credit for an approach at a policy level that they are neither able nor committed to putting into practice.

- To get real value out of development programs such as the CCLP, organisations must develop more general strategies to change organisational settings so as to allow participants to apply their learnings on return to the workplace.

Conclusion

The CCLP has been a positive initiative in terms of participant learning and relationship building between BHP Billiton and Oxfam CAA. Oxfam's partner organisations in India have also responded positively in relation to the interaction with BHP Billiton employees. However, the evidence suggests that it will be difficult to translate the newly gained awareness of CCLP participants into significant and sustained improvements at a site level, unless there are also changes at the organisational level to enable and support different ways of thinking and operating.

Realistically, there will always be dynamic tensions in GRCs applying the principles of participatory development. Given the structure and dynamics of these companies, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect full implementation to the same level as an NGO. However, exposing companies to alternative ways of working with communities may lead to better outcomes. The program demonstrates that NGOs have the potential to engage at a hands-on level to influence policy and practice. With further engagement and discussion, a 'hybrid' approach may emerge that better integrates commercial and community considerations.

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Appendix 1

Principles of participatory development and corresponding challenges for mining companies

Principle	Challenge for GRCs (Global Resource Companies)
<p>1. Control Participatory development allows people to influence, and share control over, decisions and resources that affect them.</p>	<p>It may be difficult for GRC employees to relinquish control, given their conventional orientation towards operational and project control, budget management and lines of authority.</p>
<p>2. Power Participatory development enables shifts of power from the powerful to the powerless, and also ‘empowerment’ of the people, including provision of resources, opportunities, knowledge and skills to increase people’s ability to determine their own future.</p>	<p>The notion of ‘power to the people’ may threaten established power structures, as GRCs take an instrumentalist view of power. Bureaucratic structures are, by their nature, obstacles to participation. Transfer of power for the purposes of participatory development requires a humanistic approach.</p>
<p>3. Reversals Participatory development requires ‘reversing’ the worldview that professionals and experts know what’s best for the poor.</p>	<p>Within GRCs, ‘experts’ are commonly given respect, ‘consultants’ are brought in to solve specific issues, and employees are encouraged to be ‘professional’.</p>
<p>4. Flexibility As participatory processes are unpredictable, they must take place at a pace suitable for local people.</p>	<p>GRC organisational structures are predominantly hierarchical, bureaucratic and inclined to be rigid, rather than flexible</p>
<p>5. Self-reliance In participatory development people utilise their own resources wherever possible, rather than relying on external support.</p>	<p>GRCs may tend towards paternalism that creates dependency.</p>
<p>6. Sustainability Participatory development considers intra- and intergenerational equity, and consideration of economic, environmental, social and cultural issues.</p>	<p>Achieving sustainability is usually problematic, not only for an operation, but also in a community.</p>
<p>7. Capacity building Participatory development requires long-term investment in people and their organisations, and a commitment to processes that allow them to shape the forces that affect their lives.</p>	<p>GRCs have a tendency to want to see physical results. They are sometimes expected to spend revenue, but capacity building requires investment in people, rather than money.</p>

<p>8. Learning orientation Participatory development requires learning on the part of communities and also on behalf of the development organisation.</p>	<p>GRCs may perceive they have no time, space or room for mistakes</p>
<p>9. Time Participatory development is a long-term process and cannot take place through force or order. It can be stimulated and encouraged, but it cannot be sped up. This is 'evolutionary' change, rather than 'revolutionary'.</p>	<p>GRCs are often keen to see tangible and measurable results and are used to working within narrowly defined timeframes and to funding deadlines.</p>
<p>10. Approach Participatory development is more of a people's movement than a project into which funding is injected. The approach is humanistic rather than technical in orientation, and is focused on development 'with' not 'for' the people.</p>	<p>A hard issue bias exists in most GRCs where imperatives exist around finance, projects, deadlines, technology, markets and capital. Participatory development needs to be incorporated as an overall philosophy, not just as a tool or technique to achieve a set outcome.</p>
<p>11. Purpose Development organisations must articulate their purpose in a way that will engender trust, dialogue and participation, rather than a welfare mentality.</p>	<p>GRCs tend to define their purposes in narrow economic terms.</p>
<p>12. Accountability Participatory forms of monitoring and evaluation should be considered. Organisations must be able to demonstrate their claims to participation.</p>	<p>GRCs may find it difficult to demonstrate that governance mechanisms are participatory and equitable.</p>
<p>13. Local considerations Communities are not homogenous, and various and specific contextual issues should be incorporated into the development process. It is important to be aware of the economic, social, cultural and political differentiation that characterises many communities in developing countries.</p>	<p>GRCs may find it difficult to be sensitive to the local context, do not usually have an intimate knowledge of local people, processes, relationships, not the traditional domain of GRCs.</p>
<p>14. Communication Communication must move beyond tokenism. In participatory development, communication must be two-way, where the voices of ordinary people can be heard, especially the voices of those people whose voices tend to be stifled by more powerful groups in their societies.</p>	<p>GRCs may find it problematic to communicate in ways and means not used in mainstream businesses.</p>

<p>15. Collaboration Involvement of a cross-section of interest groups for the purposes of collaboration as partners in development is fundamental to participatory development.</p>	<p>GRCs may find it difficult to collaborate or partner with organisations that they are relatively unfamiliar with and may not implicitly trust.</p>
<p>16. Human Rights Human rights should not only be protected in the development process, but should also be promoted, particularly consideration of gender equality. Development must not reinforce the oppression of marginalised groups.</p>	<p>GRCs may be unaware that development may reinforce oppression of marginalised groups, therefore contributing to the violation of human rights.</p>
<p>17. Outreach Participatory development reaches the poorest, most marginalised and least vocal members of a community.</p>	<p>GRCs are used to dealing with the powerful sectors of society, rather than with the poor, marginalised or vulnerable groups.</p>

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