Social Analysis: Epistemology, Evolution, Trajectories and the ever-changing configuration of International Development Agenda.

By

Rakiya Mamman
Department of Development Studies
National Open University of Nigeria
Email: rmamman@noun.edu.ng

Abstract

The concept of Social Analysis has become central to the toolkit with which development planners have sought to increase people participation and address the social-cultural dimension that may impede macroeconomic order and the outcome of development policy objectives (cf. World Bank, 2000:192). As a result, the practice of Social Analysis has long been established in different institutional forms within official development agencies. Social Analysis is used operationally in several ways across the field of social science, environmental management and International Development, often to ensure interventions do not generate negative human and social impact. However, the ever-changing configuration of International Development policies along with the crystallization of global commitment such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for International Development cooperation problematizes Social Analysis as a normative framework in the design and implementation of development intervention. This paper examines these issues. It evaluates the account of Social Analysis including its key practice, epistemology and methodology, it interrogates existing knowledge gaps and explores some aspects of its current place within International Development practice and the constraints to its application in the development context.

Introduction

International Development seeks above all, social development outcome and the enrichment of people- their lives, their values, culture livelihoods and advancing human well-being and their institutions. The acknowledgement of the importance of process, together with current development planning frameworks that prioritized poverty reduction and the meeting of the SDGs, carve out a central role for Social Analysis in International Development planning. Social Analysis is a normative framework used to operationalize the social and cultural dispositions and social perspective more broadly, in the design, and implementation of development policy. The practice of Social Analysis has long been established in different institutional forms within official development agencies. This paper examines and explores the account of Social Analysis including its key practice, epistemology and methods, some aspects of its current place within International Development practice. By focusing on how the International Development institutions utilized Social Analysis, its standards approaches and tools, as well as the nature of social analytical programming explore the constraints to its application in the development context.

Social Analysis: Epistemology and Evolution

Social Analysis arose as an emergent specialised form of planning instrument based on what was recognise as 'Social Development perspectives' and the 'missing dimension' in the conventional approach to development. The fact that people are social actors, and all development projects and interventions have unintended social consequences, gives rise to the unpredictability of development outcomes. Cernea's (1991) influential publication 'Putting People First' a collection of writings and programmatic statements that documents the contribution of applied social science in development and to the work of the World Bank exposed the tension between human agency and scientific determinism. Cernea conceived projects in the image of a science, in which the development of operational tools is required to understand the social organization and cultural variable that make up social dimension of planned development. Using construction analogies, Cernea 'sees' the social scientist above all as a social engineer, formulating the institutional and social scaffolding, building learning mechanisms and flexible adjustment procedures, without which the new edifice is not durable (Cernea, 1991: 24 -31).

Cernea's thesis expressed a contextual approach of 'Putting People First' in development planning through the application of Social Analysis to identify and conceptualise an understanding of the structure of social relations in which development projects comes to be embedded (Cernea, 1991:9). Social Analysis is increasingly viewed as a key ingredient in the shaping of development policy. Yet there are contending perspectives on what Social Analysis means (what it is) and does for development projects? As subsequent discussions will show there are important and substantive differences in terms of how Social Analysis is conceived and consequently, how it is carried out. Social Analysis (a) as a practice of development would make use of the analysis of social arrangements or social analytical inquiry to articulate an informed understanding of social situations, which will shape the design and implementation of more appropriate policy and development interventions (cf, Cernea, 1991, 1996). (b) As a set of policy related practices used in development and other institutional interventions that affect people's welfare. As a policy related practice, Social Analysis prioritises the understanding of societies, including social and cultural form with the aim of their manipulation to achieve predetermined development objectives (Green, 2006:111; Hall and Midgely, 2005:3).

Whether as a policy related practices or as normative, addressing local, social or cultural issues more generally, Social Analysis is viewed as being a framework of knowledge that takes due account of complex and diverse social reality and their interface with other key development dimensions (Hall and Midgley, 2005:2). Notwithstanding, the appears to be some general consensus, at least, among official development agencies, practitioners and some academics, about what it does for development projects. The first consensus, converges on the idea that an informed understanding of societies, including the social processes and the social impacts of development policies in cross-cutting areas of interests, required the application of conceptual techniques and approaches to research in social sciences. Typically, in areas such as poverty reduction, gender, social exclusion, livelihood strategies, sustainability, social justice, environment and effective programme delivery. The second, is the understanding that Social Analysis helps to ensure that people are put at the center of the developmental process (ODA, 1995). The third convergence is based on claims that social reality exists at the intersection between formal and informal rules, and differential access to these rules govern distribution and access to resources

Contexteully, Social Analysis premised on the notion that even when the technical and financial aspects of a project are apparently going on smoothly, social, and cultural factors that make up the social dimension 'continue to work under the surface' hence primacy of anthropological or sociological approach (Cernea, 1991:9). Historically, Social Analysis, both in its theoretical and applied forms, is primarily associated with analytical techniques and conceptual approach to research in the non-economic social science. It brings to bear methodology for assessing social impact and clarifying the social and behavioural mechanisms of development. It is therefore not surprising that the normative approach to Social Analysis, as producing the knowledge used to support International Development planning resembles the methodology in anthropological and sociological approaches and methods, such as their primary focus and concern with people, field-based studies, and qualitative analysis of social situations (Gardner and Lewis 2015).

Early social analytical work, as normatively addressing social or local cultural disposition, which was thought could impede achievement of particular project objectives or macroeconomic order relied on anthropological and sociological inputs. Often "viewed by development organisation as a potentially valuable commodity" (Gardner and Lewis 2015:60), which being a field-based assessment "delves beneath the ethnographic surface to identify the processes happening 'on the ground' that must be addressed by development planners" (Cernea, 1991:189). Social Analysis can offer an understanding of the power dynamics, the culture, the value systems, including formal and informal norms of the societies in which development programmes come to be embedded. Often it draws from locally specific settings of development for the discovery of social processes and social issues that should influence policy design and programme implementation. As such, Social Analysis draws-out the implication of change from the perspective of people involved in, and affected by the development interventions, including the individual's potential to take charge of their lives. Much of Social Analysis is undertaken as part of professional practice.

Professionally, Social Analysis was undertaken mainly by anthropologists and related specialists such as sociologists, particularly within aid organizations (Cernea 1996, 1997, Eyben 2003). The World Bank appointed the first full time non-economic social scientist in 1974 to harness sociological and anthropological knowledge "to address the social issues of development" (Cernea 1996: v). In parallel, development organizations have steadily expanded their professional capacity to undertake Social Analysis. They include bilateral agencies such as UK's Department for International Development (DFID), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and agencies of United Nations. Many sought trainings for their staff in a number of institutes and centers of innovation for Social Development such as the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in University of Sussex or Christien Michelsen Institute in Norway, the Social Anthropology Department, Edinburgh, and the defunct Centre for Development Studies in Swansea University (Eyben, 2003:886; Green, 2002: 53). The corps of non-economic social scientists in International Development institutions includes sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists and geographers. Professionally they are employed as Social Development Advisers, Social Specialists or Social Analysts, they were "often engage[d] to provide in-depth advice on social issues in project design and implementation" (ODA, 1995:1). However, as will be shown later in this paper, not all Social Development advisory or Social Analysis undertaken confine to anthropological or sociological knowledge. Other kinds of specialisms, and professionals from social analytic disciplines also undertake social analytical work including specialist social researchers from disciplines such as human geography and political science (Eyben, 2003:876).

The functions of social specialist and social analytical work in International Development planning is concerned primarily with basic needs provision, poverty alleviation, safety nets and social policy concerns for specific categories of disadvantaged people (Thin et al., 1998, p. 10). Key areas of interest include, assessment of social processes and issues relating to poverty, vulnerability, gender and marginality (Eyben 2003, Mosse 2004).

In some agencies, social specialist or social analysts only oversee social issues of gender, marginality, and poverty. In others such as DFID, social development advisers or social analysts are institutionally equivalent to members of the other professional category and are involved the planning of all programmes across all sectors, also referred to as 'cross-cutting' advisers. Many agencies also engage Social Analyst either as long-term or short-term consultants, while many others, have yet to fully integrate social analysts as part of the professional category or core competency in institutional practice of development. In actuality, given clear focus of NGOs on many social development objectives, NGOs are more likely, to consider social analysis as integral to their work, across all sectors compared to bilateral and multilateral organizations (Green, 2002:57).

The current aim of Social Analysis is to ensure that poor and vulnerable groups benefit directly from development interventions. And, where interventions are not targeted specifically at the poor, they are not disadvantaged and made poorer as a result of their engagement with the process (UNDP, 2011:8; Eyben, 2003:890; Green, 2002:53). These policy objectives conjure up two components. The first component includes poverty alleviation and livelihoods improvement. The second component is to reduce inequities and prevent impoverishment.

Institutional Context: Social Analysis, Issues and Approaches.

Shifts within institutional settings and practice of International Development, since the late 1990s onwards, transformed the nature of Social Analysis and the practices they draw out in development. By far the most fundamental shift came from the current International Development policies that prioritise the reduction of poverty along with the crystallization of global commitment such as the International Development targets (IDTs), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for International Development cooperation. The framework for knowledge production on which Social Analysis depends, once associated with anthropological and sociological methods have become subsumed in practice and within institutional settings of development. In addition, most methods of Social Analysis that emerged from the 1990s onwards centered on the notion of interdependence of economic and human development. There is also the increasing "need to produce instrumental knowledge that can be made to work, at least in the ideal, in serving a distinct policy agenda" (Green, 2006:111). The following discussions explore in more detail, some aspects of this shifts, and a range of changes and factors within the structure and practice of International Development, and within Social Development practice itself in particular, that have impacted Social Analysis, including its potentialities and its limitations.

Knowledge Production and Policy-Determined Focus of Social Analysis: Social Development within the institutional setting of development presents as a technical discipline in which, whilst acknowledging inclusion of Social Analysis as a major prerequisite for more successful development, predominantly, "adopts the perspectives of social policy, and of a particular sociological tradition that has prioritised understanding society with a view to social improvement" (Green, 2006:111). This instrumental perspective of Social Analysis in contrast with the normative

perspective which is premised on anthropological and sociological methods, prioritises understanding of social, organisational and cultural variables rather than their manipulation, but as ends in themselves. It is aimed to inform development outcome, and to design effective and appropriate interventions. Hence, it focuses "on the processes of social transformation, both positive and negative" (Green, 2006:113).

The orientation of Social Development practice towards social policy perspectives, within an increasingly professionalised and evolving field of Social Development and International Development practice, constrained by expectation of what counts as technical knowledge have serious implications for practices of Social Analysis. Inevitably, it makes Social Analysis more likely to be determined by the need to meet policy priorities in relation to a specific problem rather than aiming at production of locally specific knowledge. In addition, Social Analysis has become increasingly focused on producing knowledge that can be applied in diverse settings.

The role of development agencies in commissioning Social Analysis and the documents on which the studies are based further compromise the potential contribution of Social Analysis to an evidence-based social policy. Like the knowledge it operationalises in International Development practice, normative understanding of Social Analysis as addressing politically constituted artefacts and key areas of interest, such as poverty, vulnerability, gender, social exclusion, and participation is explicitly political. Selecting areas of research interest or analysis of specific social issues that should influence policy design or the choice between policies, Social Analysis is explicitly making political choices. However, given the role of agencies in funding Social Analysis, and in determining its focus, together with the need to produce knowledge that can be operationalised within the particular institutional settings, also means Social Analysis has to appear more as technical knowledge and less as politically determined (a frame of analysis on which it depends). This, along with the thrust to produce knowledge that serves predetermined policy agenda, and that can be applied in more than one setting, paradoxically limits the potential impact of Social Analysis to radically alter development orthodoxies, and this perhaps contributed to its marginalization within development organisations (Green, 2002:69, and 2006:111).

The Narrow 'Social Sector' Focus of Social Analysis: Development agencies in so-called 'social sector' restrict the focus of Social Analysis to narrowly defined issues and of specific social categories. The absence of a clear commitment of practitioners to prioritization of social issues beyond the boundaries of social sector to becoming truly cross-sectoral, has serious implications for institutional location of Social Analysis as a practice within development planning and for the effectiveness of the analyses that inform them. Such that it remains marginalized within agency structures and within the content of policy (Thin et al., 1998, Green 2002, 2006).

Lack of Theories or Bodies of Empirical Research

It is often argued that the lack of theories or bodies of empirical research that provide the foundation on which to base Social Development practice limits the effectiveness of Social Analysis and the knowledge it operationalized in International Development practice (Green, 2002:55). A similar critique was made by Cernea who argued that institutionally, Social Analysis suffers from an absence of a comprehensive theory of induced Social Development (Cernea, 1991:6). In actuality, much of Social Analysis knowledge in practice draws from locally specific studies to hypothesise causality based on "the premise that certain kinds of social outcome are

globally achievable" (Green, 2002:53). Usually, it is derived through representational devices, as opposed to evidence-based studies, and are often based on what is perceived as universally desired and implementable, for example, participation. This approach, on one hand, consists of normative approaches to research in the social sciences from which Social Analysis draws that rely on people-centred data, and qualitative analysis social situation. On the other, it differs from the normative approach to Social Analysis, which is premised on anthropological and sociological methods is generally based on extensive field studies, often lasting for several years and are locally specific.

As the discussion below on the toolkit and approaches to Social Analysis shows, in practice, Social Analysis tends to adopt the techniques of social research methods, which are designed for use in shorter time frames, and is accessible to non-specialist (Green, 2002). Despite the absence of comprehensive theory of induced Social Development (Cernea, 1991:6), or bodies of empirical research and theories that provide the foundation for Social Development practice (Green, 2002:54), Social Analysis has moved ahead and has multiplied and expanded in practice.

In assenting to the absence of an overall theory and empirical research that provides the foundation for Social Development practice (cf. Green, 2002; Cernea, 1991), this dissertation argues that the bodies of empirical research, from Amartya Sen's works offer adequate normative and theoretical argument for an alternative model of development that starts with the social determinants (Sen, 1999). Of worthy note is Amartya Sen's human capability framework, in which the social actors are the key element and the central purpose of development around which all other resources shall be organised for action. In his book, Development as Freedom (1999) Sen theorises how the processes of development must expand the freedoms people can enjoy. He highlights how deprivation, poverty, victimization and oppression constrain people from contributing to economic development and rob them of the freedom to function within their full potential.

Sen argues that people identify and seek what they value and pursue their respective interests when their capabilities, which in turn are determined by wider opportunities, freedoms and entitlements, are assured. Clearly, his works provide a conceptual foundation for thinking about development that proceeds directly from people and embeds Social Analysis within the framework of development analysis and intervention across all sectors. Sen effectively introduced a social institutional element into development thinking and planning to which Social Development perspectives make significant contribution. Indeed, Sen's work provided much of United Nations conceptual basis on social development thinking and practice (UNDP, 2010).

Therefore, any discussion about translating the prerequisite of people's participation and centrality into specific project strategies and development interventions must on the one hand consider people's abilities to influence their individual context and choose what they want to do and be. On the other, is the need to enhance their capabilities in order for them to realize their functioning. These principles include political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security as key freedoms for the attainment of human development determinants. Therefore, they should be of equal or even of greater importance in development planning. While an overall theory of induced Social Development has not yet been articulated (Cernea, 1991:5), the overall principles expounded by Sen as a means to development can be seen to provide a starting point and a new basis for socially oriented approaches to development.

Theoretical underpinning for Social Development can also be drawn from the significant work of Paul Farmer - a Liberation Theologian, - on the 'social' dimension of public health intervention. His thesis on structural violence a term he coined, chronicles how the social structure - including economic, political, legal, religious, and cultural - prevent individuals, groups and communities from reaching their full potential (Farmer, 2003). He noted in particular how these social arrangements put individuals and populations in harm's way (Farmer, 2003:143). According to Farmer et al., (2006:1686), "the arrangements are structural because they are embedded in the organisation of our social world" in which political and economic activities are rooted. In particular Farmer chronicles how the poor and vulnerable are subjected to deteriorating health and premature death and how these are intimately linked to social arrangements, social condition and forces such as racism, gender and poverty such that those structures often determine who will suffer and who will be shielded from harm, who will fall ill and who has access to medical intervention. Farmer's emphasis on the importance of the concept of social organisation and Sen's human capability reflects a concern for more holistic ideas of human development (epitomised by the work of Amartya Sen), rights-based development, or notions of human well-being and happiness. Both provide a multidimensional model for identifying an appropriate social development model to address the specific needs of diverse groups in low-income countries.

Transitions in Perception of Social Analysis: Imported Frameworks from Non-Social Science.

Participatory Planning: New insights derived from formal social science techniques have also contributed to current institutional configuration and transition of Social Analysis. One of the most significant transitions in the configuration of Social Analysis came with the promotion of bottom-up approaches, and the subsequent emergence of participation in the 1990s as an essential component of programme planning. Emerging out of Robert Chambers' 1983 publication Rural Development: Putting the Last First (shortly before Cernea's 1985 'Putting People First'), Chambers highlighted the alienation of beneficiaries of development in International Development planning, particularly people and rural communities. In it, as well as other subsequent publications such as Whose Reality Counts: Putting the First Last (1997), he challenged development professionals to unlearn much of their expertise and condescending attitude to local knowledge that comes along with it to 'put the last first.' The last include the poor, physically weak, rural, vulnerable and powerless people.

Despite the similarity of their slogans, Chambers' thesis is different from Cernea. The latter calls for the involvement of social analysts and institutionalisation of noneconomic social science knowledge (sociological and anthropological) as a legitimate discipline in development planning. Whilst for Chambers, interventions are instead formulated based on local knowledge, joint learning experience, decision-making and participatory planning, with a commitment on all sides, rather than the application of technical principles to externally defined problems. Premised on actor-oriented research (Long and Long, 1992) and based on the idea that people in poor countries are far from being 'irrational'. They are open to change if they perceive it to be in their interest, and are far from being the homogenous, passive recipients of interventions portrayed in the early International Development orthodoxies.

During the 1990s, Participatory planning became widely institutionalized through successive incarnations of Participatory Rural Appraisal, (PRA), adopted from Robert Chambers and increasingly 'professionalised by a self-regulating cadre of experts. PRA or the facilitation of participatory planning is now a standard toolkit of development planning and implementation (Green 2002; 2006; Mosse, 2004, Gardner and Lewis, 2015). Whilst emphasising the importance of the qualitative analyses, PRA draws from populist action research approaches of the 1980s, combining Freirean action, learning and Social Analysis. As shown in the discussion of Social Analysis toolkit below, in actuality PRA tends to replicate existing social divisions that exclude women as well as other poorer and marginalized groups (Mosse, 2004).

There is also the risk that it will be captured by the elite, and lead to the creation of parallel structures for participation and de-politicization of the development process The fact that participatory planning does not equate to representation has implications for the quality of planning instruments that uses participatory techniques as well as for the credibility accorded to Social Analysis as a framework for the production of knowledge used to support policy instruments such as in the case of Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPA), vis-à-vis commitment to transparency and accountability as the essence of good governance (Green, 2002:60). This is true for development planning and implementation whether at the community level, at the national level, or at the project level for governmental and nongovernmental organizations alike.

Consultation and Beneficiary Assessments: Another influential non-social science insight to transfigure Social Analysis, in the form of understanding the disposition of the poor and project beneficiaries that may hinder sustainability and undermines effective programme implementation draws from LH Selman's Listen to the People (1987), based on his time spent living among the people whose lives are affected by two World Bank-supported development projects in Latin America (Selman, 1987:51). Selman 's criticisms of professionals who plan development interventions as often far removed from the people for whom these activities are intended, ighlighted what he calls the 'gap' between 'two worlds." People at the grassroots of society who are the ultimate beneficiaries of loan programs have a point of view distinct from that of executing agencies or loan agencies. Yet their voice often does not reach administrators and managers, who could use the beneficiaries' perspective in the design, execution, and monitoring of projects [Emphasis added] (Salmen, 1987:2).

Salmen's thesis which promotes systematic inquiry into the intended project beneficiaries' perceived needs, hopes, and frustrations (ibid:6), drew heavily upon the methodology of market research as opposed to sociological and anthropological insights in what has come to be known as Beneficiary Assessments (BA), which is a blend of qualitative and quantitative information (Ibid: 111-112). Beneficiary Assessments stimulated influential changes within social analytical approaches, particularly in World Bank-supported health and population projects in urban and rural areas Of Africa And Latin America.

New Keys to Poverty Alleviation: Another transition International Development practice to transfigure Social Analysis came with the attempt to integrate holistic analysis of poverty in International Development planning, along with its causes and appropriate solutions. The integrative thinking-methods or holistic approach, such as the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) discussed in Chapter 2 is the most obvious example of this kind of transition in the changing perception of interdependence of economic, social and human development. Its emphasis on the

importance of social categories and class in the analysis of poverty, gender relations and the evaluation of development, highlights the issues of power relationships in development planning and implementation in particular, the issue of 'who benefits in comparison to who contributes'. It also highlights the differences between men and women and other marginal groups, which allows interventions to be targeted at the (usually male) head of households (Kothari, 2002:42-43). To design projects that will address poverty and development programmes to be analysed within their wider socio-economic context, including livelihood resources at the local and global levels, entitlements, social divisions and gender and for a solution to be devised based on local need capacities (Chambers and Conway, 1992:7). To help understand the patterns of impoverishment and improvement and the processes that determine them.

Particularly with development projects whose objectives are often determined by economic priorities, unless such structural differentiation and social arrangements are considered, it is possible that the project will fall into existing pattern of impoverishment with the already impoverished will be made even poorer (ODA, 1995:37-39). Since the 1990s, the DFID for example, promotes the Sustainable Livelihoods framework' as a social analytical and operational tool to facilitate a more integrated approach to dealing with poverty and deprivation. The livelihood framework and related social capital dimension are criticized, particularly for assuming the 'poor' as "tight-knit, culturally bound rural communities in which women are marginalized and people have a natural propensity to act collectively in a bid to seek solutions to local development problems" (Green, 2002:62).

Social Analysis: Tool Kits and Mechanisms

In line with the present International Development goals set out in the policy of major development organisations, Social Analysis as an operational framework alludes to translating the prerequisites of people's centrality in planned development interventions which translates to a commitment to specific toolkits and techniques for the analysis of social relations among target groups. It consists of growing and evolving sets of instruments, mechanisms and techniques for planning, appraisal, monitoring and evaluating social impact as well as providing safeguards against adverse or unintended social consequences. Some of the methodological approaches and current techniques promoted for Social Analysis can be broadly distinguished as follows: Stakeholder Analysis, Social Assessment, Beneficiary Assessment, and Gender Analysis. Others include Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), Participatory Poverty Assessment and Participatory Learning and Action (PLA). More approaches that are recent include Social Determinants of Health (SDH) logic, Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Poverty and Social Impact Assessment (PSIA), Poverty Analysis, Political and Social Analysis, and Power Analysis.

Many of the instruments listed above are neither new nor exclusive to Social Analysis. However most have become standardised toolkits in the repertoire with which major development organization sought to engender participatory planning, bottom-up approaches and to ensure that interventions benefit the poor and vulnerable groups. However, some of the tools are more suited for specific development context than others. (For example, SDH and public health interventions). Yet others are more appropriate for addressing key areas of interests for Social Analysis particularly in areas such as poverty, gender, social exclusion, livelihood strategies, sustainability and effective programme delivery like social development thinking current key approaches of Social Analysis, and the body of knowledge that informs them are implicitly ideological, based on

what is perceived as processes that may facilitate or hinder the achievement of development objectives (Mosse, 2004; Green, 2002).

Analytical Framework: Key Approaches and Tools for Social Analysis (SA): While alluding to the dearth of Social Analysis in practice, it is worth noting that some of the key approaches and methods of Social Analysis are deeply problematic. These include their assumption of the community as a homogenous group and a flawed assumption that local people's attitude to development programmes can be accessed via participatory exercises such as the PRA. The critics of PRA and other participatory techniques have pointed to the danger of its ritualistic and manipulating nature that can harm those who are supposed to be empowered. Secondly, by giving an impression of participation it allows ID planners to believe that their intervention is inclusive and participatory (cf. Cleaver, 2001:38-40; Mosse, 2001:19-21; Cooke and Kothari, 2001:1-7). The stakeholder's analysis which is another key Social Analysis instrument routinely used by International Development organizations has come under criticism for 'static representation of social relations' (Green, 2002:64-65). In the words of Green, "stakeholder analysis takes the form of a diagrammatic representation of stakeholder groups in relation to projects, as opposed to each other, at a fixed moment in time." As a result, it "fails to capture the social context of which the project will become part" (Green, 2002:65).

These shortcomings will necessarily have implications for the quality of data that is gathered to inform policy formulation and programme implementation. As a result, the extent to which Social Analysis can be expected to transform International Development planning and produce a more equitable development outcome will often be constrained. Having said all of that, the argument is not a suggestion that methods of applied Social Analysis are completely problematic. Rather, the point is aimed at highlighting the concerns over some of the key tools for Social Analysis. As Cooke and Kothari (2001: 7), conclude in their critique of participatory approaches in International Development planning, "their application lies not with the methodology and techniques, but with the politics of the discourse". With this in mind, the next sections examine the contemporary development discourse.

If social development is to fulfil its potential as a key to understanding and achieving socially beneficial transformation it must refine its analytical tools and adopt a more holistic approach to the interpretation of social processes. However, issues are likely to remain, as long as the actual processes - social, political and economic - that drive development-oriented change are so little understood. This policy-determined content of social development practice has transformed SA essentially into an adaptive instrument, constantly evolving in response to changing policy concerns within development organisations, and within the institutions funded to produce their knowledge (Green, 2002).

 Institutional Context of Social Analysis (SA) United Nations & Bretton Woods Institutions.

Institutional settings of development and policy environments in determining the location, focus and effectiveness of Social Analysis, both in terms of content or analytic approach. Some of the dynamics of Social Development and Social Analysis both as central concept and operational frameworks within the institutional practice of development are explored more fully in this section. It would appear in the development literature that ID is driven by all the numerous multilateral, bilateral and donor aid agencies, practitioners or national governments. However, it is the U.N

agencies and Bretton Woods institutions: the World Bank/IMF that often act as the avant-garde of ID. Both institutions have been particularly noted for their influence in shaping the way of thinking about development and the dissemination of development ideas. Using their normative and legal authority, both institutions have had a substantive impact on shaping practices in planning and implementation of development programmes worldwide particularly after the widely acclaimed success of the Marshall Plan aid. Subsequently, international development planning has become central to their mandate.

Much of contemporary development (for at least four decades) follows the practical agenda set out in the programmes of both institutions and official development agencies albeit with a combination of old and new. It includes economic growth, poverty reduction, institutional reforms, international debt reduction, decentralisation, democratisation, environmental issues (sustainability), gender, and social development. promoting human rights, equity, gender and social justice and poverty reduction. Other more recent priorities owe more to the overemphasis of contemporary development thinking on political economy and economic growth as well as, to the political collapse of socialism than to clearly thought-out intellectual perspectives (cf. Kothari and Minogue, 2002). This includes the neoliberal reforms agenda for good governance, democratization, privatization, promoting home-grown policies, social protection and environmental sustainability (UNDP, 2012, DFID, 2009, Holland, 2007)

The agenda, however, appears to be articulated and implemented within an ID framework that in terms of planning at least remains diametrically opposing. However, the consensus once held within both the World Bank/IMF and the UN agencies in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s that saw a central role for an activist 'Interventionist State' has worn out. Today, there is a significant gap between the two camps. Thus ID planning remains deeply embedded in conflicting and competing epistemologies. One is based on the human and social development approach promoted by UN agencies and the other by the World Bank/IMF representing neoclassical economics. However, the fact that the World Bank and the

UN agencies differ in the metric of development (conception, approach and how to assess progress), is a testament to the complexity in ID planning today. The UN agencies draw on the HDI as the measure of development in terms of measuring human well-being - measured as a composite of life expectancy, years of schooling and per capita GNI in US Dollars. Although the human development concept incorporates economic aspects of development, it is based on social aspects of human well-being and non-economic determinants of development (UNDP, 2000). On the basis of this interpretation of development, the countries in the world are divided into those with high, middle and low human development.

The World Bank and the IMF measure development primarily in terms of growth and GDP per capita income. In this context, development planning is underpinned by the assumption that material and economic progress in richer countries of today means that people enjoy high levels of economic and social well-being (cf. WB, 2005). This line of reasoning is problematic. Measuring a country's level of development in terms of GDP per capita is the first step, but it does not show how income is distributed across the country. Secondly, like poverty, development is multidimensional. Thus, it cannot be right to analyse it in monetary terms in the poorer countries of the world.

Most actors in International Development remain focused on narrow economic development goals. Comparatively few have genuinely shifted their policies and missions to reflect a concern for more holistic ideas of human development (epitomised by the work of Amartya Sen) as well as rights-based development, or notions of human well-being (Chant and Sweetman, 2012:518). In light of these debates, it is worth noting the comments by Kothari and Minogue (2002) that: The role played by 'the World Bank and other major players in the development industry … should cause us sleepless nights now, since while they appear to accommodate different views of what constitutes development, they give active support to a particular, capitalist-friendly, neoliberal version' (Kothari and Minogue, 2002:2).

On reflection, sustained critique of development practice has shown that development alternatives including people-centered approaches such as gender and participatory development have not remained alternatives for long (cf. Kothari and Minogue, 2002). It is argued that many of the approaches have been co-opted and often rapidly absorbed into the mainstream. Moreover, leading scholars and practitioners of people-centered approach who for many years have been trying to bring people onto the policy agenda (cf. Chambers 1997; Cernea, 1991: Eyben, 2003) have had to bend over backwards in order to overtly 'put people first' (Hall and Midgely, 2005).

Conclusion

When the concept of Social Analysis (SA) pervaded ID discourse and practice as a central analytical and operational framework in ID planning in the 1980s, it was seen as a key to improved effectiveness and sustainability of projects Sadly too many development interventions are still being designed today that neglect SA. The evidence suggests that while policy and practice are assumed to glean from a multidisciplinary perspective, much of development work is still carried out in a technical manner. The social dimension in development is largely ignored in development planning and implementation (cf. Gardner and Lewis, 2015). Despite the increasing attention paid to social development issues the concentration of technocratic and economistic interpretations of development ideas through dominant discourse, dislocate social development perspectives from contemporary development thinking. As a result, it problematizes the link between Social Analysis and ID planning. This problem and the knowledge gap it creates in planning may not be wholly accountable for the persistent unevenness in the development process. However, it is the major contributory factor to the growing inequalities and uneven development outcomes For Social Analysis to be effective in enhancing the positive social impact and effective programme delivery, it must be de-marginalised. In other words, it must be integrated into policy environments and institutional planning procedures from where it can make a contribution to the formulation, design, planning and implementation of ID programmes

References

Cernea, M. (1996), Social Organization and Development Anthropology at the World Bank Washington, DC

Cernea, M. (1993). Sociological Work within a Development Agency: Experiences in the World Bank.

Cernea, M. (1991). Sociological Variables in Rural Development. In M. Cernea (ed.), Putting People First (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press World Bank. New York:

Chamber, R, (1995). The Origins and Practice of Participatory Rural Appraisal   World Development, 22(7), 953-969.

Chamber, R, (1997), Whose reality counts: putting the last first. Intermediate Technology London

Cleaver, F . Institutions , Agency and the Limitations of Participatory Approaches to Development In Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. (eds) (2001) Participation, the New Tyranny? London: Zed Books.

DFID, (2009), 'Political Economy Analysis - How to Note: A DFID Practice Paper', Department for International Development, London Assessed on 03/03/2014 http://www.odi.org.uk/events/2009/07/23/1929-dfid-note-political-economy-analysis.pdf

Eyben, R. (1998) The Role of Social Assessments in Effective Development Planning Social Development Division, Department for International Development DFID UK

Farmer P. (2003), Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on   the Poor. University of California Press. USA.

Gardner, K. and Lewis D. (2015) Anthropology and Development Challenges for the 21st Century. London: Pluto.

Green, M, (2002). Social Development: Issues and Approaches In Kothari, U., and Minogue, M. Development Theory and Practice: Introduction. In Development   Theory and Practice.

Green, M, (2006). International Development, Social Analysis and Anthropology Social Applying Anthropology in and to Development in Sarah Pink   Application of Anthropology Development Berghahn Book Oxford

Green, M (2009) Doing development and writing culture exploring knowledge   practices in international development and anthropology Vol 9(4): 395–417   London Sage Publications.

Hall, A., and Midgley, J. (2005). Social Policy for Development. London Sage

Holland, J., (2007), 'Tools for Institutional, Political, and Social Analysis of Policy
Reform: A Sourcebook for Development', the World Bank, Washington, DC

Kothari, U., and Minogue, M. (2002). Development Theory and Practice: Introduction.   In
Development Theory and Practice: Critical Perspective. Palgrave.

Mosse, D (2001) Institutions, agency and the limitations of participatory approaches to
development In Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. (eds) (2001) Participation, the New
Tyranny? London: Zed Books.

Mosse, D (2004) Is Good Policy Unimplementable? Reflections on the Ethnography of Aid
Policy and Practice Development and Change Volume 35, Issue 4 p. 639-671

ODA, (1995) A Guide to Social Analysis for Projects in Developing Countries   Overseas
Development Administration Publisher: London: HMSO..

Sen, A. (1999). Development as Freedom. London Oxford University Press.

UNDP, (2010). United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report: The
Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development OUP Oxford.

UNDP, (2012) National Human Development Report. New York: United Nations.

UNDP (2011). A Social Determinants Approach to Maternal Health: Roles for Development
Actors, Discussion Paper. Bureau for Development Policy. Nations Development
Programme

World Bank (2005) Better Projects Empowering People By Transforming Institutions:Social
Development in World Bank Operations. Oxford University Press. USA