SP.723: D-Lab III: Dissemination: Implementing Innovations for the Common Good
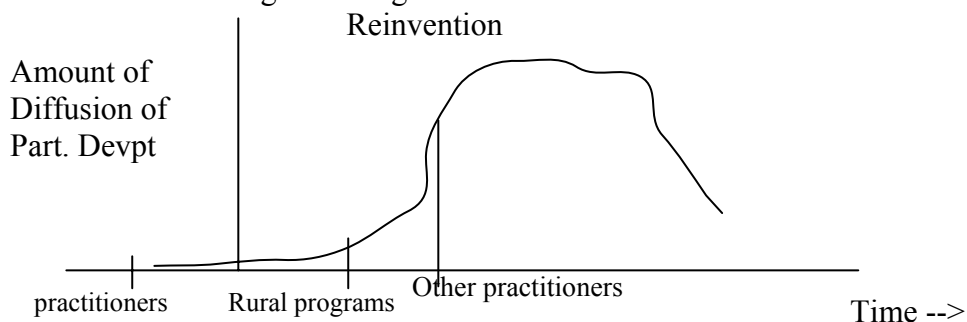Susan Murcott
Lecture Notes

Session 11, 3/15/07

Student-Led Case Study - Participatory Development, also known as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

- The Innovation: people (subjects) do it, make their own measurements, data collection
- What is point of data?: So they can identify their own local problems and their own local solutions
- Rapid rural appraisal: Try to get data quickly but also to offset biases

- Methods: - ranking – want to identify the "poorest of the poor", have different standards than the locals do for who is wealthiest/poorest (honor? Family?) socioeconomic status
   - self-criticism
   o - visuals: honest and more powerful than words. Also, observability (Rogers)
   o you get to see where the data is going, what's being done with the info
   o Visualizations don't require literacy = Equalizer
   o Example from Professor Murcott: local children who spoke English could tell her the depths of specific wells in rural Nepal
   o - Groups versus individual - groups allow you to get rapid information
   o - Community mobilization
   o - Can track progress – Sequencing

- What are some of the uses of PRA?
   Children (e.g. Nicaraguan children with cameras)
      o - health
      o - education
      o - water and sanitation

- RRA – (Rapid Rural Appraisal): Chambers calls it Rural Development Tourism (1980s)
- Participatory Research (PR) to involve the people (1970s)
- RRA and PR came together to form PRA: involve people in order to implement their own projects. Local people still own process and information (late 1980s)
- Then came Participatory Development – a "buzz word" in development, generally meaning "including the people." This is an umbrella term under which PRA exists as well as all sorts of other applications, such as urban settings, health, and education. World Bank uses Participatory Development to rank the poor. Problem is that it becomes too vague, and has been abused as a "buzz" word to get funding.

Reinvention

Amount of
Diffusion of
Part. Devpt

practitioners   Rural programs   Other practitioners

Time -->

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- Participatory Development seems to have been a 90's fad, which no longer is being used at all
- What was wrong with it? What was it replaced with? Perhaps modern successful projects had business models. In PD, why do local people want to take ownership of project? Were there monetary incentives?
- Origin of PD is sociology. What are sociologists doing post-2000 with respect to PD?
- PD is a good idea, but it's a sacrifice villagers have to make, and hard to get them to follow through on this intensive method of development.
- Also in 1990s was demand-driven development. Need to see economic benefit of this concept. Newest fads, Social entrepreneurship. New classes at Harvard and MIT on these. PD perhaps isn't dead, just evolved. Or perhaps it was too hard to do and follow through with. For early adopters, it was a labor of love, but for newest ones, like World Bank, hard to adopt this policy.
- No discussion about how you get people to participate.
- Cultural differences can't be understated. Here it is very fast-paced, but in other places abroad, mentality is relaxed and slower.
- Also, success is a hard thing to measure for PD. Can't measure with money. Can't measure percentage of participation. Muhammad Yunus and Grameen Bank definitely involves people. Also Dr. V. in India. What kinds of people are participating? Gender equality?

Guest Speaker: Dan Dardani, MIT Technology Licensing Office. Intellectual Property, Patent Basics

- Technology Licensing Office: takes MIT technology and transfer it to public
- Before, universities couldn't take proprietary ownership over research that was government-funded. Used to have to do a per-contract basis and ask government.
- Then Bob Dole helped pass law that said universities could take control of these technologies.
- Thought it would give a boost to economy. Also time of biotech, recombinant DNA. No coincidence.
- Privatization and commercialization of universities' basic research which fueled projects to be continued.
- At MIT, for D-Lab, half of the projects ended up filing intellectual property in the public domain
- Open source versus keeping it private.
- Licensing office believes IP is a good thing and tries to protect ideas of faculty and students
- No other way for the ideas to be realized without patenting them and then getting companies to pick them up with major funding
- What is the nature of the license? Exclusive vs. Non-exclusive licenses.
- Patent (of 20 years) gives little guy a chance
- Software or anything can be copyrighted.
- Exclusive rights to patent is that only one company has right to a certain patent.
- If medical, has potential to do much good, want to make it non-exclusive so many people can try to use it
- Hi-definition TV technology has MIT licenses, which was made available to many companies so they can compete with different technologies
- Patent is a way of recouping money for 20 years and preventing others from practicing your

invention. Actually in original Constitution.
- Patents take a long time to get granted. Clock starts ticking once you submit it. So usually ends up being 17yrs total.
- Improvements can be patented separately. Processes can be patented. Ideas are not patentable. Expression of ideas are.
- e.g. Oil-eating bacteria, originally denied patent because bacteria are technology. But Supreme Court reversed it because these bacteria were engineered, not naturally occurring.
- Cost of patenting process: for MIT, costs about $15-20K. For overseas patents, costs ten times more.
- Trademarks not in Constitution, but in Federal Law. They establish distinguished goods, jingle, names, symbols (Nike Check), etc. Can be fanciful ("Exxon"), arbitrary ("Apple" computers), suggestive marks ("Coppertone"), etc.
- Apply to patents in country in which you plan to sell.
- Rules for Patents: New, not obvious, and useful. In US, have only one year to file patent after you disclose idea (publish it in slides, journal, website, etc.)

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