An investigation: Theatre for Development- when is it successful?

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Part 1: Context for the emergence of bottom-up development

Theatre for development is a form of bottom-up development, but how did bottom up development emerge as a method for international development? This part of the study will provide the context of bottom up’s emergence by examining as well as offering critiques of the methods used in the top-down development model, the model that came before bottom-up development. Methods for top-down development include promoting national economic growth as means of alleviating poverty, industrializing developing countries, as well as diffusing Western culture and ideals as means of alleviating poverty.

According to Ben-Meir (2009), top-down development methods became mainstream in international development after the success of the Marshall Plan Post-World War 2, where the United States transferred more than 13 Billion USD to multiple Third World countries to redevelop their countries through capital investment and transferring Western advances in “agriculture, commerce, industry and health” (29). The Marshall plan was highly successful, leading to increasing foreign aid to developing countries around the world focused on modernization and capital investment as a means of alleviating poverty. Early post-war models of development were highly influenced by modernization theory, which according to Ben-Meir assumes that progression from a primitive to advanced state of free markets is universal, inevitable, and good for all societies (Ben-Meir, 29-31). The top-down development model used in post-war development featured planners and decision makers in state regimes and private enterprises identifying and developing plans for projects and programs for beneficiaries in the Third World with marginal consultation of beneficiaries (Epskamp, 22). The marginal involvement of beneficiaries in the planning process, as well as the assumptions of Western
superiority led to the neglect of the genuine needs of local beneficiaries, causing huge troubles in Third World countries (Muraleedharan, 21).

Pushing for national economic growth as a main agenda of developing the Third World was unsuccessful in promoting the growth that was intended. This method was based on the assumption that growth in per capita GNP would lead to income accumulating at the top to “trickle down” to the working class. With higher per capita GNP, it was assumed that jobs would naturally be provided, democracy would be promoted, and quality of life would be improved across all economic sectors (Black, 20). According to Jaffee (1998), it was also because of this view that policymakers have chosen an approach of “growth first, redistribution later”: redistribution policies such as taxes on the income of the wealthy were not adopted as it would stifle economic growth, as the elite would not be able to retain the funds for investment in productive technologies, thus further economic growth. Here, short-term income inequality is viewed as a precondition for economic growth, which in theory would lead to long-term alleviation of poverty (106). However, there is little theoretical analysis of the connection between higher economic growth relieving poverty in the long-run (Larrain, 98; Haq, 33). On the contrary, economic growth intended for development has been shown by figures to be accompanied by uneven growth distribution, “rising unemployment, worsening social services and increasing absolute and relative poverty” (Haq, 24-25). More importantly, under this model, the costs of growth of income inequality is burdened by the working class, who should have been the beneficiaries of this method of development in the first place (Jaffee, 106-7). A strategy aiming at social objectives was reduced to purely economic terms, and the choice to tackle social and political considerations afterwards ultimately caused the poverty problem to worsen in Third World countries (Stohr et. Al., 27)
Another main agenda of developing Third World countries was to develop the industrial sector, as the “backwardness” of developing countries was viewed as the cause of rural poverty. According to Black (2007), industrialization was also part of developers’ plan to increase economic growth to develop third world countries. With prices of exported raw materials steadily decreasing from 1870s up to the second world war, less developed countries had to sell increasingly greater quantities of their products to acquire the same export income. To push for further export-led growth, it was concluded that they had no choice but to industrialize, and sell capital goods that appealed to the international market (39). However, as the production of capital goods tends to be capital-intensive, rapid industrialization and wage-labor increased unemployment of unskilled rural workers (Black, 38; Ben-Meir, 38). Also, trying to diversify production focus from raw materials and semi-manufactured goods to capital and technology-intensive consumer and capital goods only led to “very low wages for labor, balance of payment crises and international indebtedness” (Larrain, 120), generating unemployment by creating fewer jobs than are needed for the labor it attracts into the cities (Larrain, 120). On the other hand, according to Martinussen (2005), even when capital goods were exported from developing countries, industrialized countries already had the comparative advantage in production, and was able to compete with developing countries with a lower price in capital goods. This meant that developing countries could not fully profit from exporting capital goods even after industrializing (76). It was noted that modernization theory generalized all “original situations” (Larrain, 100) of traditional developing countries, and also assumed that contemporary developing countries should all go through exactly the same stages and processes of industrialization as old industrial countries went through once (100). By neglecting the historical and social differences between old industrial countries and contemporary developing countries
while pushing for industrialization, developers utilizing the top-down model led to serious consequences in Third World countries.

The diffusion of Western cultural values from the developed to developing world was also seen as a way of developing Third World countries. According to Black (2007), with Third World countries’ poor land use, primitive infrastructure, and fragmented social and political organizations after emerging from colonialism, it seemed to make sense that the direct transplantation of “superior technologies…institutions and ultimately habits and values” (16) from First to Third world countries could be the quickest, most efficient solution to Third World’s poverty (16). The expansion of communications media in the Third World was one result of transplanting “superior technologies” (16). However, communications media has facilitated the dissemination of Western ideals of consumerism, which could be seen as a serious threat to development goals as it could hinder the development of the collective discipline and sacrifice needed for “the capital accumulation and investment necessary for launching the development process” (38). It has also been noted that Western “consumption-oriented values” (Jaffee, 35) may stimulate excessive demands among the public that cannot be satisfied, or strain existing resources that could be placed in investment (Jaffee, 35). Moreover, the exposure and adoption of Western tastes, material needs, and attitudes by the privileged “modern man” in a developing country, could alienate him from the majority of “traditional” people in his country, and cause him to “protect his lifestyle at whatever cost to the nation as a whole” (Black, 39). For example, it has been shown that Third World individuals who have had the greatest exposure to Western values of consumption have historically exhibited behavior “bordering on fraud, corruption, co-optation and conspicuous consumption” (Jaffee, 35). Moreover, while it has been argued that dismantling of traditional cultural systems, attitudes and values, and social
relationships is necessary for underdeveloped countries to move along the Western Economic development path (Ben-Meir, 28), it has also been noted that “ideology and the revival of some aspects of tradition” (Black, 38), rather than attributes of modernity, have been the main factors in contributing to development. This is because “ideology has served to justify the sacrifices required, and retention of tradition has contributed to legitimation of wide-ranging transformation” (38). All in all, promoting Western cultural values and the dismantling of traditional cultures and systems in the Third World may discourage the collectivism that is needed for development (39), which then would undermine the aim of developing these countries through cultural diffusion in the first place.

All in all, the methods that top-down, modernization model of development utilized has been shown to advance rather than alleviate poverty in developing countries. The focus on promoting national economic growth has led to the worsening of income distributions as well as the lives of the poor, industrialization of developing countries has led to unemployment and international indebtedness, and cultural diffusion has led to the erosion of a sense of self-sacrifice and collectivism necessary for development. It was under this context where alternative development movements advocating for a bottom-up approach emerged, and where participatory development inviting beneficiaries to be a huge part of development planning became mainstream.

Part 2: Theatre for social change

Theatre for development is used as a mechanism for social change in developing countries, and is under the category of applied theater. According to Landy et. al. (2012), applied theatre is essentially “a theatre for change that exists to question and challenge the given order” (130), and aims at raising awareness of how the individual and community may make changes
towards the community (130). It relies upon the ideas and aesthetics of Brecht and Boal, whose work is both “anchored in the politics of the left, influenced by the sociological ideas of Marx and the pedagogical ideas of Freire” (131). This part will present a literature review of the ideas of theatre practitioners Bertolt Brecht and Augustus Boal to present a historical context for theatre as a tool for social change in communities.

According to Epskamp (2006), Brecht’s ideas and techniques of “epic theatre” were developed in 1920 and 1930s, and are supremely influential in discussions around creating social change. His aim was to increase the audience’s awareness of the political situation during his time (13). According to Over (2001), Brecht’s theories were developed in the context where Aristotelian drama was popular. The audience would be very involved in the play, and would empathize with the main characters of the play. Brecht considered this empathy to be obstructive towards the audience’s awareness of and critical reflection towards the issues of broader society, as the protagonist of the play in many ways represents dominant ideologies of European society. Here, “audience response was carefully controlled to validate existing relations of power” (Over, 15). To alienate the audience from empathizing too much with characters, Brecht created multiple theatre techniques including “play and performance structures with frequent and short sequences, quick changes of location, time or action, the use of songs and very simple set pieces, and an ‘epic’ acting style in which the actor is aware of the audience…instead of ‘forgetting them as is the case in ‘fourth wall’ theatre” (Epskamp, 13). It is notable that Brecht’s Learning plays particularly reflected his desire contribute to the end class struggle, which pays homage to Marxist philosophy (Landy et. al., 131).

According to Epskamp, Augustus Boal was also another practitioner who developed a wide range of dramatic strategies and games to make theatre a laboratory and platform for
conscientisation, awareness raising and problem solving. He developed the “Theatre of the Oppressed”, where he combined the teachings of Paolo Freire that emphasized education requiring communication between learners and teachers, and empowering people to take charge of their political and social environment, as well as theatre techniques that he personally developed (Epskamp, 10). According to Landy et. al., Boal also developed Forum theatre to help the masses question and ultimately overcome oppression. He “sought to provoke audience members out of their safe passivity as viewers” (132), where an audience member would directly switch roles with the protagonist of the play and enter directly into action, play out a new ending for the play, and also propose alternative solutions to problems manifested in the play and reflecting those in real life (132).

It is noted that other practitioners have also carried on the ideas of Brecht and Boal to influence communities as well, where Jerzy Grotowski created para-theatrical forms with his actors in 1960 and 70s, and theatre groups such as Open Theatre and the Bread and Puppet Theatre “deconstructed classical dramatic elements of form, space and text” (Landy et. al, 132) to present a critical view of politics and culture (132). Theatre has been used as a tool for creating change within communities, and will hopefully carry on to raising awareness and solving issues that are essential to communities.

Part 3: Arguments for theatre for development

This part will provide a literature review of the broad arguments for the advantages of theatre for development, and showcase how it could help participants come up with strategies in solving their own problems, empowers local participants for further action, and could be an effective way of disseminating developmental messages. According to Epskamp (2006), Theatre
for development uses participatory theatre as a means of rural development defined as “a developmental intervention tool that supports the processes of change” (Epskamp, 9). Two pioneers were important in its development: Paolo Freire, who “experimented with participatory learning methods in the context of adult education and literacy training” in the 1960s, and Augustus Boal, who was inspired by Freire to ‘experiment with applied forms of drama” which stimulates audience members’ active participation and also supports them in problem solving at the community level. While theatre for development does not yield “concrete, measurable results in socio-economic terms, it focuses on strengthening beliefs and attitudes that are important factors of sustainable human development (Epskamp, 61). This essay will provide a literature review of the broad arguments for the advantages of theatre for development, and showcase how it helps participants come up with strategies in solving their own problems, empowers local participants for further action, and is an effective way of disseminating developmental messages.

TfD is instrumental in helping participants come up with strategies in solving their own problems. This is particularly important as participants are the ones who understand their own situation the best. According to Epskamp, in TfD workshops, participants improvise on their ideas and life experiences during drama improvisation sections (Epskamp, 50), and issues and problems experienced in real life situations are projected into dramatic scenarios (Epskamp, 47). It is noted that role play and simulation games in workshops can support workshop participants in facing their own problematic situation, supporting problem analysis, and coming up with group solutions (Epskamp, 50), as participants are less self-conscious while looking for root causes of their problems since it is merely a drama-making process (Chinoywa, 16). Also, according to Chinoywa, the “dual effect” of theatre where the player reflects upon his own situation while simultaneously empathizing with the role he is playing makes workshops more
effective, since real life situations are projected onto theatre rehearsals. The interplay between the fictional world of drama and the actual world causes participants’ heightened awareness of their own situation, assisting the development of analysis of problems as well as solutions to them (Chinoywa, 15). According to Epskamp, this makes rehearsals a laboratory situation or opportunity for participants to explore problem solving strategies. (Epskamp, 47). Throughout this process, participants are encouraged to analyze and discuss the dilemmas and difficulties that are raised, agree upon what they consider to be the most important issues within the community, and establish a common action plan together. Here, multiple experiences of a similar issue may be congregated, and the analysis goes beyond the individual testimony (Epskamp, 50), making the analysis and conclusion more valid for further action to be based upon. In theatre performances that are put on for the community, the audience is also asked to consider the message carefully as well as brainstorm alternative actions and potentialities. Performances allows a public dialogue, where all stakeholders in the community are able to express their views on issues during and after a performance, engage and recognize perceptions of others through group discussion, examine issues critically and implement solutions to their localized problems (Epskamp, 53).

Empowering local participants is also noted to be a key advantage of theatre for development. Empowerment here is defined as allowing primary stakeholders to gain “the strength, vision, and confidence to work for positive changes in their lives, individually and together with others” (Epskamp, 70). Theatre empower people to enact change in their lives. Drama is a particularly effective means of this, as theatre creates an encounter between imagination and reality, and participants recognize that they are able to change reality through action (Prentki, 2011, 46). In theatre workshops, participants select events and characters from
real life, substitute the unfavorable circumstances they find themselves in with a better reality, and bring their aspirations alive on stage (Chinoywa, 17; Prentki a, 45). This in turn “enables the emergence of changed social formations” (Prentki b, 198), where “theatre participants realize the freedom to speak for themselves” (Chinyowa, 14), and that they can influence their own situation for the better. This motivates participants to question the existing order in reality, and influences change for the better (Chinyowa, 14). Through the workshop process, the marginalized are liberated from relying on what others with differing interests tell them on what to do about their own problems, and are given the confidence to join discussions about their local issues (Epskamp, 50), participate in decision-making processes in rehearsals, which motivates them to take positive action in changing their own world. (Nogueira, 105). According to Prentki, repetition of action that occurs in rehearsal not only prepares actors for putting on the play but also acts as a way of rehearsing for action. Mimesis is not just an act of copying or reproducing, but also a source of transformation; by creating new patterns based on emulation, participants could “transfer the same patterns to other contexts” (Prentki a, 20) such as advocating for change.

TfD performances are also a particularly effective way of disseminating messages and acting as political advocacy among the community, as performing arts are already integrated into the cultural life of the community. According to Epskamp, live theatre performances that are message-oriented act as teaching material to inform, and is used as political advocacy or mobilization campaigns. Performances inform people of important national and local development issues, and persuades them to change their behavior (Epskamp, 51). The success of performances in promotional activities is due to performances being accessible media for all audiences where “oral traditions is still the most important channel of communication, and where
performing arts enable face-to-face interaction between actors and audience”. Performing arts are also fully integrated into the culture life developed by the community. It fulfils various functions within the community such as “to entertain…to make or foster community…to teach, persuade or convince”, and is disseminated and consumed among broad layers of society. For example, performing arts add a festive note to the feasts and festivals that are regularly organized by most local community networks, and are noted to “have the power to make people curious” by way of storytelling, plays and drama. Performances that utilize the traditional practices of local communities are popular and useful as learning instruments, since they ‘consist of scenes, sounds and sights which are familiar” and often entertaining. For example, puppetry “has a proven capability to motivate people or to inform them of governmental services” (Epskamp, 54-56).

Through utilizing the existing forms of information spreading, theatre for development can disseminate information about developmental issues, raise awareness of local community members, and ultimately effectively assist the processes of change.

All in all, theatre for development not only can be utilized as a practical way of coming up with local solutions and empowering communities for further action, it can also disseminate information among the community effectively. However, it is also vital to consider the downsides of theatre for development as a method. What would happen if facilitators of theatre for development carry a superiority complex or lack experience, and fail to facilitate discussions around solutions as a result? What if community members are not given the resources to implement their action plans after workshops? Before determining theatre for development as a developmental method that valid and can stand on its own, it is important to do thorough research on the disadvantages as well as case studies of theatre for development.
Part 4: Theatre for development - the conditions for its success or failure

This final part will examine the different factors or conditions leading to the success or failure for theatre for development (TfD) projects: the genuine involvement of participants in the TfD workshop processes and performances, the incorporation of government officials into the TfD performance audience, and the implementation of a proper follow-up procedure by TfD initiators. It will use three TfD case studies, a project by Save the Children UK (SCUK) in Bangladesh illustrated by Munier et. al. (2006), a project by Living Earth Nigeria Foundation (LENF) in Cross River State, Nigeria illustrated by Betiang (2010), and the case of Makerere-Kikoni theatre project illustrated by Benge et. al. (2000), to demonstrate how these conditions are vital to a TfD project’s success with concrete examples. The LENF case study is considered successful, engendering local empowerment, mobilizing local participants to articulate and express local problems using community theatre, and ultimately successfully passing on the skills of TfD to the community itself so that the community can utilize theatre for change without the facilitator’s help (Betiang, 76). The Makerere-Kikoni project could also be considered a success, where community involvement was high in both workshop processes and in the performance, and government officials were also notably involved and made accountable during performances. SCUK could be considered both a success and failure. While the project contributed partly to bringing “children’s rights issues to the fore in their community” (Munier et. al., 178), causing more boys and girls to attend school, and also fostering confidence and negotiation skills among participants, the project was discontinued due to the lack of follow up on the community’s progress from the project’s initiators and facilitators (178).
One striking factor in leading to the success of TfD projects is the genuine involvement of participants in investigating their own problems. Involving community members in the community development process is crucial, even though social problems may be created by external stakeholders such as the government, as the community knows their problems best and is best positioned to discuss, analyse and make resolutions for their problems (Benge et. al., 113). Both LENF and Makerere-Kikoni project have emphasized this in the workshop processes.

In the workshop processes, both LENF and the Makerere-Kikoni project have emphasized genuinely involving participants in TfD workshops and performances. According to Betiang, in researching the community’s problems, LENF used participatory learning methods such as focus group discussions and rapid response sessions, allowing local participants to define, analyze and prioritize the problems of the community, and the most relevant and important problems of the communities to be addressed. It also used the local community’s pre-existing methods of doing research, such as talking to elders and using eye-witnesses. This not only enhanced the sense of project ownership among community membership, but also forces contributions towards the investigation of community problems to truly be grassroots. During LENF workshops, participants were also highly involved in the direction of the play addressing local problems itself, where play scenarios at all stages were open to “additions, suggestions, and adjustments from the local participants” (Betiang, 67). Similarly, according to Beng et. al., “there was a collective involvement in directing and shaping the performance” of the successful Makerere-Kikoni Project. Community members identified the problems themselves, and were asked to formulate a skit out of one of the problems identified in groups of four or six. Some performances were even “collectively written”, where “a performance would stop at a certain point, and the spectators were asked how it should proceed” (114). This method’s ability in
engaging community members and providing a space for them to actively analyze community problems is shown by the suggestions among members, and even arguments involved, before a consensus was reached about how the performance should proceed (114). Here, the involvement of participants in the play development section of workshops was not only crucial to making the play relevant to the community’s issues, but made sure community members were actively analyzing their community’s issues continuously.

The LENF project also took measures to make sure as many community members were included as possible in both workshop and the performance’s audience as well. As Epskamp mentions, attending TfD workshops or performance demands participants’ time investment. A high degree of flexibility must therefore be utilized in scheduling workshops, and must be sensitive towards the target group’s work schedule (72). According to Betiang, the LENF was sensitive to this fact, and was also aware that a larger cast would generate more community interest towards the programme, and more audience members would help include more voices from the community in analyzing problems. It therefore made sure rehearsals themselves followed a flexible schedule to suit community members’ agrarian way of life. Curtain-up time was also designated to be late-evening to also suit this kind of lifestyle (68). Moreover, with regards to publicity, folk media such as “town criers, announcements at local churches and age-grades’ meetings, as well as local acrobats and masquerades” (69) were used to recruit as many audience members as possible. The effectiveness of utilizing local methods is shown by the performance reaching a full capacity audience (69). Ultimately, these measures would assist in making the community more invested in the project and community solutions generated out of discussions during performances, and also making the solution itself truly grassroots. This example also illustrates the importance of having community members involved in many stages
of the performance production process: without their input, it would be unlikely that the publicity team would know about publicity channels specifically catered towards the community itself, and lead to the performance reaching full capacity audience.

On the other hand, the lack of community involvement was noted to cause the failure of most government-sponsored programs. For example, the identification of community problems by bureaucrats or donors without the consultation of the benefitting community could lead to the apathy of the host community towards the projects and ultimately a lack of community involvement, as the most pressing issues of the community are not prioritized (Betiang, 13). Similarly, in some circumstances, projects that foreground priorities of the local community, such as cultural expression and self-determination, but do not have clear development objectives such as political and economic progress are less likely to be funded (Prentki, 36-40). Ironically, in these cases, while TfD is a response to the failure of the North’s top-down strategies imposed onto local communities, the agenda of these “theatre for development” projects may still remain to be top-down and set by donors from the North (Joseph, 190-191). In cases where donors insist on only funding projects that are in line with what they themselves think is the most suitable agenda for local communities, TfD projects will fail to encourage grassroots involvement in tackling their own issues. Also, according to Betiang et. al., in cases where bureaucrats who deliver government rural development programmes without being sensitive to the rural communities’ work schedule and needs, and where community-based projects are “taken over and directly implemented by government agencies, politicians and their surrogate-contractors on behalf of the people” (13), TfD projects will fail to achieve their goals of empowering the community. Community members will not have time for participating in the TfD project processes, and will not experience the empowering hands-on process of developing solutions to
their own problems (13). Only with genuine community involvement will TfD projects succeed in empowering communities and creating grassroots solutions.

The measure of placing the TfD product or performance after local assemblies could lead to ideas and solutions generated being adapted into the governmental decisions, as officials present in these assemblies could be held accountable immediately for their decisions, and could jot down the ideas generated by the community during the performance. This is evident in the Makerere-Kikoni theatre project, where the final performance took place immediately after that Village council attended by council executives. According to Benge et. al., this method made sure that everyone in the council meeting stayed to contribute to the debate of local issues during the performance, and more importantly, the council executives were present to take note of the community’s suggestions and were held accountable for decisions they had made relating to issues raised in the theatre production. For example, in the first performance tackling the problem of sanitation, the “General Secretary was asked then and there to take down the people’s resolution” (115) after the audience debated the issue and arrived at the resolution that “each household in the area must have a toilet or at least a pit-latrine within a specified time limit” (115). In the second performance highlighting the problem of house-breaking and theft in the area, an actor was able to directly ask the vice-chairman, who was in the audience, a question, forcing the vice-chairman to stand up and respond with “what he was doing as a leader to ensure the security of property and life” (116) for the community. The third performance illustrated the issue of road accidents that was pervasive in the area, and the Secretary for finance was asked then and there to account for the money he had been collecting from the residents of the area to put up speed bumps on the road, to which the Secretary responded in a serious manner. During performances, audience members also aired views that they would not have been given time to
do during general meetings chaired and controlled by executives (116). With the examples above, it is evident that the TfD performances that are performed right after local assemblies could provide a space for communities to hold officials accountable, and articulate their thoughts and solutions to local issues to the government, increasing the possibility of these grassroots solutions being implemented.

Last but not least, the implementation of a proper follow-up procedure by TfD initiators to ensure the successful transferring of project management skills to community members is crucial to the success of TfD projects. Many people who complete TfD workshops may forget what they have learned as they need more practice to “consolidate and further develop their skills” (Epskamp, 69). According to Munier et. al., the transfer of skills related to theatre as a tool for analysis and problem-solving to local participants needs extra steps on the facilitators’ part. Audience members also need to “be stimulated and guided to take action” (Munier et. al., 182) on issues discussed in performances. Here, the thorough preparation for fully handing over the project to community facilitators is essential, and this would take the form of initiators and field workers of the TfD process being committed to long-term engagement and supervising the continuation of the project. The withdrawal process has to be gradual, and it needs to be clear that the community group is ready and has acquired organization skills such as “membership regulations, skills in representation leadership and constituency-building” (Munier et. al., 182) before the development agency fully withdraws. However, many planned follow up activities fail to follow through, as the international NGO that funds the initial training workshop usually fails to fund the planned follow-up (Epskamp, 69). The SCUK’s TfD project is an example of how the lack of follow up led to the failure of a TfD project. According to Munier et. al, the girls who were involved in the TfD training workshop said that “they had not done much TfD in the five
years since the workshop” (177), and didn’t have time even if they wanted to. They articulated that if they were to teach and assist other young people in starting up another TfD process, an external agency and outside facilitation would be needed (177). However, facilitators of SCUK did not follow up, but rather moved on from the organization to other work, and participants (181). It is clear that “it is too great of a burden for a poor, marginalized community to follow up on their own” (181), and for participants to volunteer to be social agents of change, as impoverished communities face bigger problems while struggling in their daily lives. Ultimately, without the encouragement of external organizers, local communities are unable to continue with the TfD processes, and “were now prioritizing other means than TfD to improve their lives, or at least to sustain the bare minimum” (183).

On the contrary, with the detailed follow-up process involved in LENF’s project, officials of LENF and consultants from external funding bodies reported in the post-evaluation report that “some communities have truly adopted drama as a tool for community development; they are picking up topics relevant to themselves on various fields of life—not only forestry. Theatre is not only an awareness raiser but a tool for mobilization” (Betiang, 66). According to Betiang, follow up initiatives were clearly identified in this case. For example, a script development workshop was added to the program after the performance to further empower community-based troupes. This workshop identified the problem of the “inability of troupes to develop their own locally relevant plays using local materials and folklore” (72), which was assumed to be solved in light of “the burst of local performances that followed in various communities” (72) that illustrated. The importance of this follow-up workshop is clearly illustrated here: with areas of improvement being identified and the participants being furthered empowered, more productions are carried out, and more issues are addressed. Moreover, LENF provided another important
follow-up initiative of “sustainable Troupe Management training” focusing on “the role of the troupe manager, management processes and the troupe as an organization” (72). Areas ranging from “seasonal/annual theatre planning within the milieu of rural communities, diversification of troupe’s cultural activities” to “marketing of troupes’ cultural activities and products were included in this training (72). This was vital to developing the local community’s ability in continuing their community theatre practice after the development agency departs. Moreover, action committees were formed to follow up on the decisions arrived at during post-production sessions, and most of these committees delivered in the terms that were set (Betiang, 2010, 70).

A follow-up process was also implemented in the Makerere-Kikoni project, where the initiator and some participants followed up by moving around the area to see whether messages and resolutions coming out of the performances had impacted the community. Long-term follow-up action that involved implementing the people’s resolution was planned to be executed by council officials and the people themselves (Benge et.al., 117). Here, successful projects were all noted to have a follow-up process, with the LENF project detailing more of the process in its literature.

In conclusion, factors that influence the success or failure of TfD projects include implementing measures that promote and allow genuine participation from the community, such as ensuring genuine participation from the local community in workshop processes and scheduling of workshop rehearsals and performance times in accordance with the community’s work schedule, placing the TfD product or performance after local assemblies, and implementing a proper follow-up procedure by TfD initiators. This essay has illustrated the importance of these factors with three case studies: the Makerere-Kikoni Project, the project by SC UK, and the LENF project. The question now is, why are some projects able to implement these factors, or ensure that these conditions are in place, while others are less able to? What are factors
preventing TfD workers from ensuring that these conditions are in place? These are all important questions if TfD were to continue to be used as a participatory development method, and stakeholders of TfD projects such as participants, field workers, and donors must be made aware of them.

**Bibliography:**

**Part 1:**


**Part 2:**


**Part 3:**


**Part 4:**


