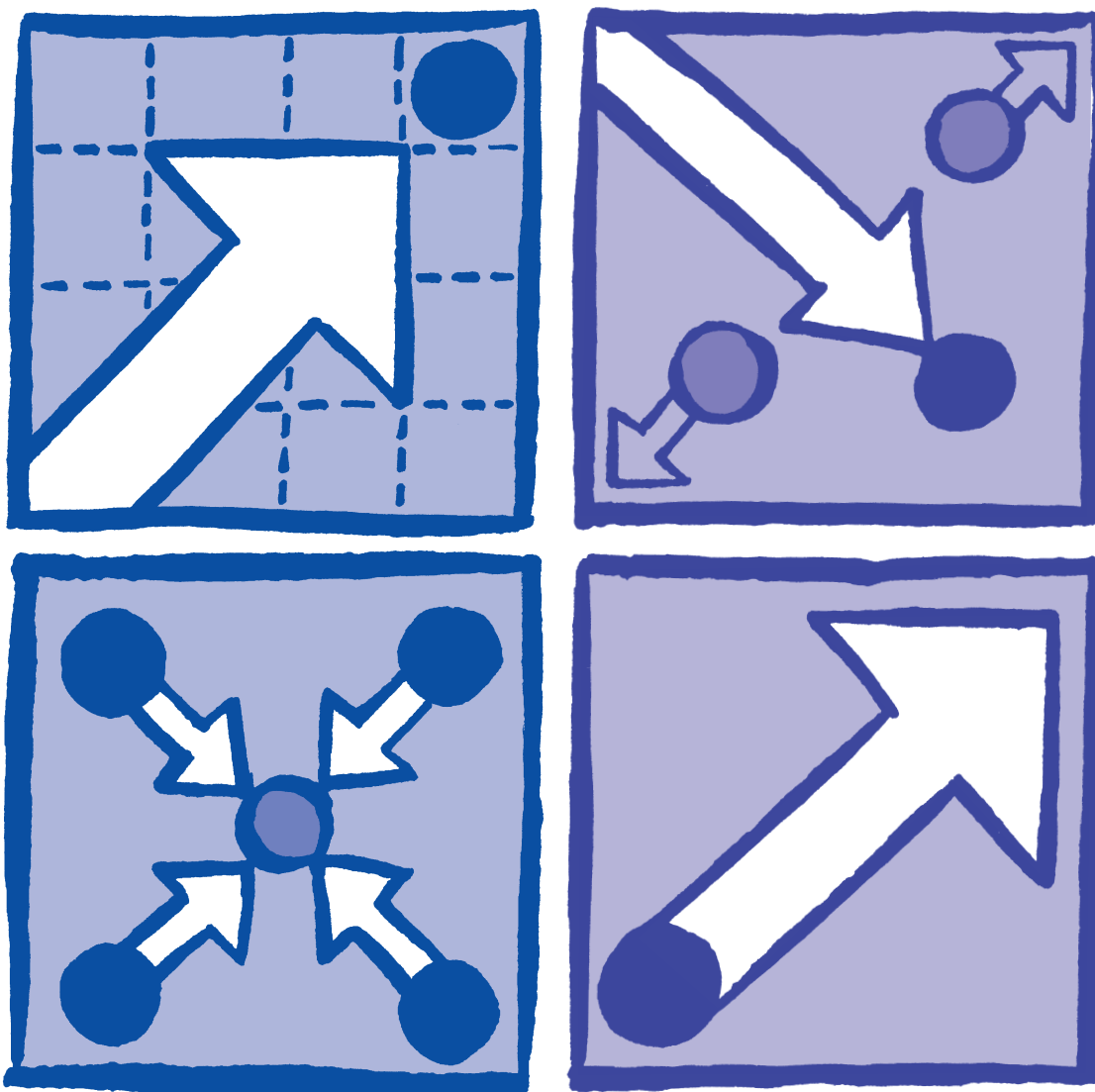


GETTING TO KNOW PEMT



SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SDC)
EVALUATION SECTION · CH-3003 BERNE

BROCHURE IN THE SERIES, WORKING INSTRUMENTS FOR PLANNING,
EVALUATION, MONITORING, TRANSFERENCE INTO ACTION (PEMT)

AUGUST 1996

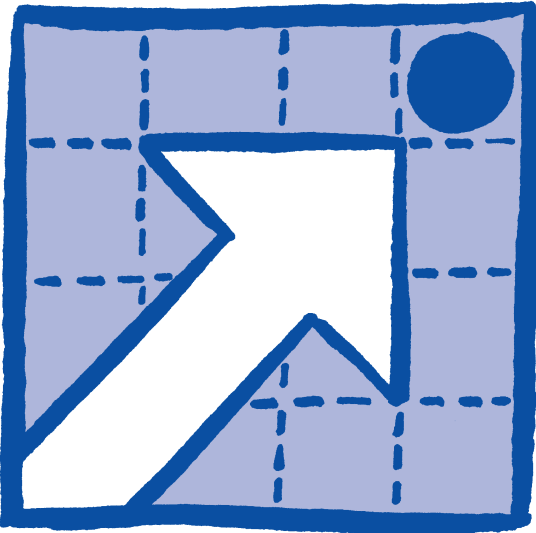
IMPRESSUM

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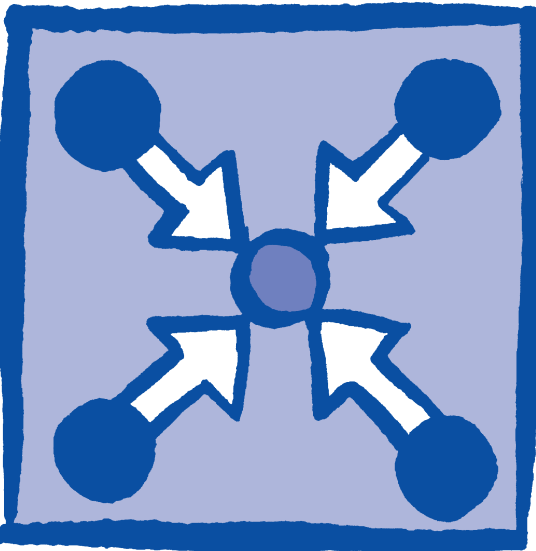
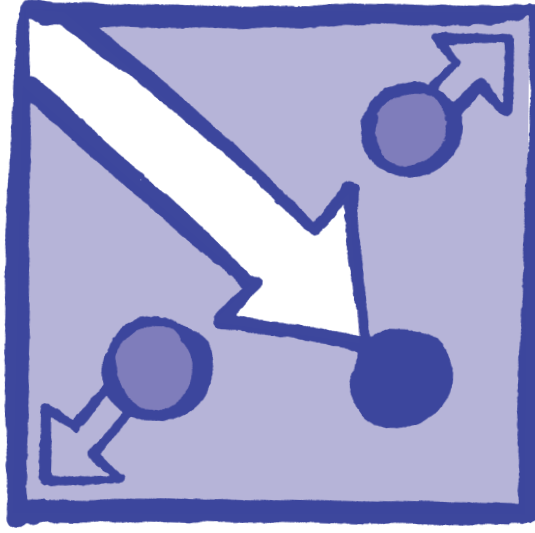
This brochure was written by Malte Lipczinsky as his final «legacy» at the end of his many years of work in the Evaluation Section. Editing and production was done by Jean-François Bürki of the Evaluation Section.

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PLANNING



EVALUATION



MONITORING



TRANSFERENCE INTO ACTION

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INTRODUCTION

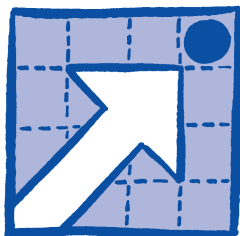
This brochure, although conceived as the synthesis of the topics in a series of brochures, but being, in fact, more an introduction to the concept of PEMT, is addressed both to the protagonists concerned, particularly those working in the South, and also those in the head offices of development organizations in the North.

The framework conditions and the environment of development cooperation sometimes undergo dramatic changes. Some of the more rigid methods have therefore less and less chance of covering the many needs for ideas and tried and tested procedures in order to work even better. For this reason we prefer and encourage those flexible working instruments which can be adapted to the various conditions and needs of the users.

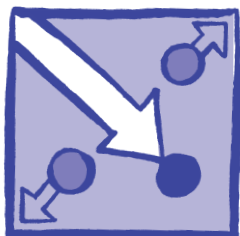
As the publisher of PEMT publications, we try to encourage your own creative formation and adaptation of the working instruments - not only in the head offices of the development agencies but also, and more particularly, in the local projects and programmes themselves. And is it a foolish whim to want to suggest to our friends in the South only such procedures as we ourselves in the head offices in the North are ready to accept and use?

This brochure «Getting to know PEMT» presents the framework of the PEMT concept, should help in getting a general idea of the basic principles of planning, monitoring, evaluation and transference into action, and with this introduction, provide a stimulus for the study of specific working aids (see Appendix).

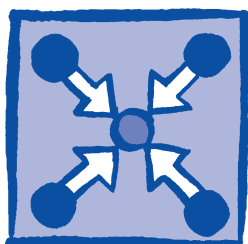
In addition, wherever the necessary energy can be found, or such courses are available, we suggest a deepening of your understanding of the PEMT concept in workshops.



1. PEMT - SDC'S CRASH-BARRIER



Planning, evaluation, monitoring and transference into action are integral parts of any development activity. They require a climate of cooperation in which each individual is ready, together with the partners, to look critically at the work done and to take appropriate steps in the course of later activities and behaviour. If taken seriously by all those involved, they become an essential part of organization practice.



PEMT are instruments which, by a learning process, improve the quality of work of SDC and its partners.



1. PEMT as a whole seeks to bind together the individual elements of planning, monitoring, evaluation and transference into action, to regard them as an entirety, and to apply that which is learned practically.
2. PEMT is comprehensive and can/should be used everywhere, from projects, programmes and coordination offices to the Head Office of SDC in Berne.
3. Since the responsibility and competence in use of PEMT should be distributed among all levels, projects, programmes, coordination offices or executing agencies all have wide competence regarding PEMT.
4. PEMT instruments are partly designed or adapted by users themselves. Expert knowledge from outside should, as a first priority, support and promote individual efforts, especially in planning, monitoring and evaluation, whereby the last-named becomes a self-evaluation. Training programmes in countries and regions support these individual efforts.
5. SDC coordinates its efforts regarding PEMT with its partners in Switzerland, in industrial countries (DAC) and developing countries.

PLANNING

EVALUATION

MONITORING

TRANSFERENCE
INTO ACTION

2.1 THE HUMAN BEING AS PIVOT

Human beings are central to development cooperation. The same is true for the working instruments PEMT, which means that those involved and responsible form the working instruments according to their needs and objectives.

The closer they are to the population aimed at (the target group), the clearer it is that this central advice, that «human beings are the pivot», also means co-determination and participation. The people concerned do not then only carry out, but also help to construct their PEMT working instruments planning, evaluation, monitoring and transference into action. Whoever already participates in such constructive work finds it easier to participate in decision-making. Putting the human being at the centre, turning beneficiaries into participants, and increasing their rights of disposal regarding matters which concern them, is, therefore, not only a humanistic but also a political duty - for which we nowadays often use the term «empowerment».

People's actions are directed by their values. Particularly when people of different cultures meet each other in order to accomplish something together, it is important to bring these values into the open and to discover if they provide a common basis for development plans. On this basis of shared values, objectives can be devised together.

Human activity is often pursued at the same time, and often to the same degree, with both logic and feelings, with the right and left-hand sides of the brain, with the head and the guts. Such integrated action and thinking should be our guideline when choosing and structuring PEMT methods. Besides logic and the «Accurate», we must also concern ourselves with the «Mighty» and the driving forces in the background, trying to find out what important roles they play, and, despite the difficulties involved, making them more lucid and comprehensible.

2.2 LEARNING

Without learning, there can be no development. Conscious learning takes place first in the head and must then be applied in practice. What does this mean in the case of development? By analogy, this means it also happens first in the head, with the knowledge and identification of possible ways to improve a situation, together with ways of realising this. Thus, development (in the sense of improvement of a situation) must mean first of all creating the opportunity for learning and training, and further, attempting to apply and improve the knowledge attained.

The sooner it is possible to give the opportunity to learn where development in its real sense takes place, that is, by the benefitting population, the greater are chances for success and sustainability of development efforts. Those with influence and power must, however, also take part in this learning process.

In this sense, we would like to encourage development programmes which give access to learning. Our PEMT instruments can be of help in this. Accordingly, planning, monitoring, evaluation and transference into action should be so structured by their users that they can be used as aids in an improvement of quality of their common development efforts.

In the same way learning should also enable our PEMT instruments to be further developed and adapted to changing surroundings.

2.3 PARTICIPATION

What do we mean by participation? What it does not mean is that a part of the population is allowed to take part as onlookers or as bit-players in something designed and decided on elsewhere.

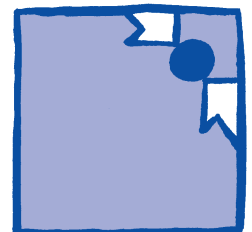
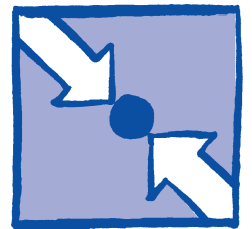
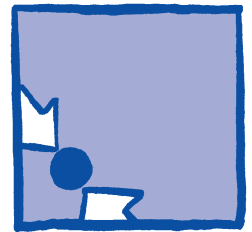
Participation means taking part in preparation, structuring and carrying out of development activities. It includes, therefore, both participation in planning and decision-making and in sharing in the results of development efforts.

Participation is the more valuable the earlier, more intensively and directly the real beneficiaries, or their legitimate representatives, take part in and have a part in the development activities.

The sooner participation begins, the better it can be practised. As far as the project cycle is concerned, this means participation begins by the initiation and planning of the development activities.

Who should take the initiative thereby? Basically it can be any of the actors involved. Members of development agencies from the North, though, must ask themselves how far they are ready to act against home-made constraints which are an obstacle to the development of consistent participation: for example, one's own wish to steer matters, a rigid following and interpretation of guidelines, and, most of all, time pressure, so that no genuine participation is allowed to develop. Furthermore, participation is all the easier to implement the more it is practised in the own institution.

Naturally, not everyone can participate in everything at the same time; this would be both cumbersome and even demotivating. To avoid this, the key words are: participation according to level and the tasks, competence and roles of the various participants.



PARTICIPATION
INCLUDES TAKING
PART IN PLANNING,

DECISION-MAKING
AND

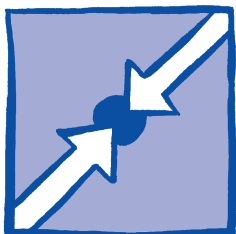
RESULTS OF
DEVELOPMENT
EFFORTS

2.4 INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY

These terms are closely linked up with the central idea that the human being is at the centre, and, at the same time, they strengthen the idea of participation.



Independence means that the beneficiaries themselves make decisions on their life, and can also decide in which areas they wish to act independently, and where outside influences will be consciously accepted.



The terms are based on the values of the beneficiaries and the participating population. They depend on the conviction that development can only be sustainable if borne by independently thinking and acting people. This is tied up with the right to one's own opinion and to make independent decisions. Supporting the implementation of these decisions can be described as «empowerment», which is a highly political matter.

IN
SOME AREAS
ACTING
INDEPENDENTLY

Independence and autonomy concerns individuals, groups in society, and also whole countries or nations.

IN OTHERS
CONSCIOUSLY
ACCEPTING
OUTSIDE
INFLUENCES

In each case, it must be asked how much independence and autonomy are possible and make sense in a time of global interconnections. Care should be taken with regard to unrealistic autonomous ideals, which can mobilise initial efforts but can later turn into discouragement, resignation, passivity, or even uncritical adoption of that which comes from outside once the strength of externally regulated influences has been experienced. Here too, gradually and with perseverance, frontiers must be expanded.

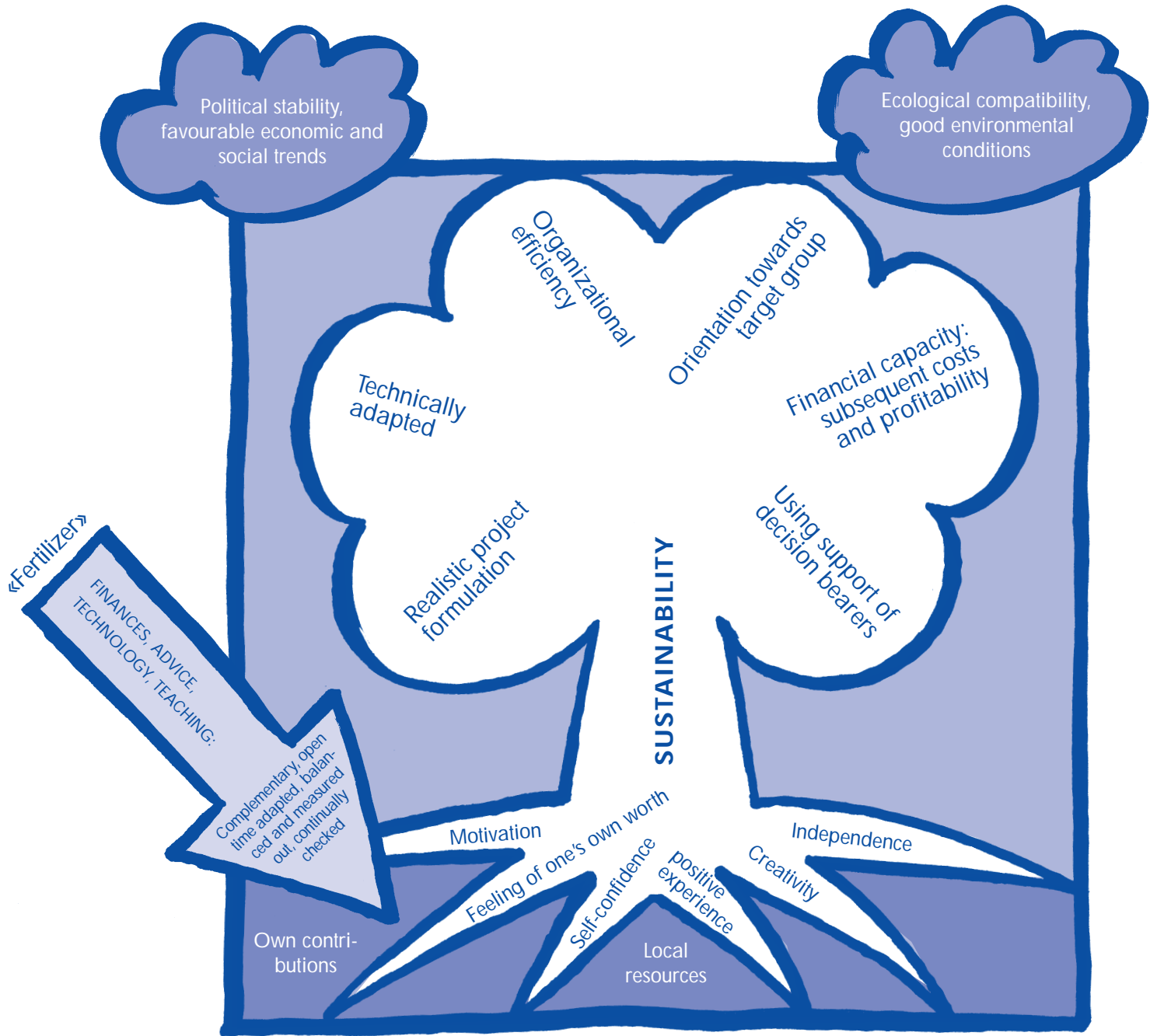
2.5 PROCESS ORIENTATION

Situations change very quickly in both the South and the North. These changes affect our behaviour. At the same time, we development protagonists, influence with our actions a lot, to a lesser extent even the development as a whole. It is, therefore, imperative to compare our aims, objectives and actions, step by step, with the changes taking place in our surroundings, and to adapt them whenever necessary.

This means that we do not once and for all design PEMT instruments for a project or programme, but are ready to adapt them to new requirements in a series of steps. Furthermore, this also means that our PEMT instruments, like an antenna, must be able to pick up important changes in our surroundings and be able to help in deciding what our reactions should be.

A consistent confrontation with the manifold processes of change around us may help us to experience the boundaries of our cognitive and perceptive faculties, that is, to realise how complex our environment is, and how often we deceive ourselves in our perceptions and miss what is important. How would it be if this recognition of our limitedness taught us to formulate more cautious and modest objectives in our common development plans?

THE TREE OF SUSTAINABILITY



2.6 SUSTAINABILITY

Out of a whole wealth of definitions of sustainability, we choose that which most takes into account the changes which take place (process thinking): accordingly, a development activity is sustainable when the participants are able to continue that activity after the end of support in such a way that it can also be adapted to changing basic conditions (keyword: «capacity to solve problems»).

Understood thus, sustainability also takes into account cultural, social and ecological compatibility and adaptability.

This term is of central importance for us. It can be used with regard to the development of a region but also for a programme. Even when creating our PEMT instruments, we should be asking ourselves how these should be composed so that they remain viable.

Sustainability can actually only be tested years after the end of a project or a programme. To improve sustainability, it is especially important to ask, as early as possible, that is, when planning and implementing, which factors promote it, and which could hamper it.

Sustainability, by following these principles, promotes:

- Orientation towards the target group (the human being at the centre)
- Organizational capacity
- Low subsequent costs
- Profitability
- Technical adaptability
- Supported by political decision-makers
- Realistic formulation of projects and programmes



THE HUMAN BEING
AT THE CENTRE

2.7 RELATIONSHIP TO REALITY

In order that project and programme formulation is realistic, the environment in which the development activities are to be launched must first be studied. This means that we must take time to get to know and to analyse what the reality is in the partner country.

This reality is often controlled by a different logic from ours, so that we must first of all be receptive to this difference and let go of what we are used to - unless of course our development aims are a hotchpotch of Hamburger, Cola, Hollywood and Technobabble! A feeling for reality is a mixture of feasibility and desirability, whereby both elements concern both partners, and both, too, must define the limits.

It is our experience that typical project and programme concepts (and at this point, we would like to invite our readers to put this question in their own area of work) are almost inveterately unrealistic. We often formulate aims and results which are too ambitious, and which could usually not be reached even under the most favourable conditions.

Why is this? Apparently it is difficult for us to differentiate between what is desirable and what is feasible. In addition, it seems that the weightier the purposes and objectives, the more important we feel ourselves to be. How about taking the pressure off our oh-so-important objectives? Being more modest could protect us, and the development purposes, from being overtaxed. Let us dream up concepts that take limits and resources into account in such a way that they can actually be realised.

Concerning the PEMT concept, this means that the plans, monitoring and evaluation systems must be only so big and so far-reaching that sufficient energy remains to use the P, M and E results for transference into action (project/programme steering). Our measure and our limits (which cannot be exceeded without producing frustration) are transference into action; whereas our aim is to reach that quality which sustainability means in all its dimensions.



THE TRANSFERENCE
INTO ACTION

3. PEMT WITHIN ITS NETWORKING

P, E, M and T are instrumental aids for the better guidance of projects and programmes, or, more widely speaking, our work as a whole.

The aim of this guidance is always goal-oriented, whereby it concerns ways and means of reaching this goal, but also the validity and relevance of the goal. In this sense, steering also always needs consciousness, self-criticism, self-control and, if necessary, outside control.

Planning, monitoring and evaluation try to grasp, depict and consider the realities of the project or programme at different points in time and from different points of view; at the same time, it has to be decided how much guidance must, or should, be given.

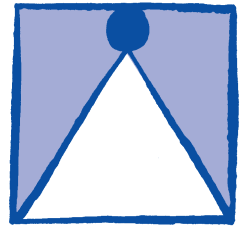
The following keywords concerning the assessment of projects and programmes, also in connection with PEMT, are continually used:

Effectiveness is the most important term, concerning the extent to which results and effects of activities help to attain the development objectives.

Efficiency compares the use of means with results achieved through activities (so-called input/output relationship).

Impact describes the entire direct and indirect, expected and unexpected consequences for the population, region or sector of a project/programme.

Relevance at project/programme level means the extent of (or how important) the contribution in fact is to improvement of the situation, in a region, a sector or among the population or the beneficiaries.



THE AIMS

Projects and programmes have a life cycle with various phases:

- the commencement, with the development and negotiation of visions and concepts; further details worked out in plans.
- implementation of development activities, accompanied by monitoring and evaluation, and transference into action of results of M and E in order to guide implementation.
- a post-project/programme phase, with a careful withdrawal of outside support, in order to stabilize the effects achieved.

The individual PEMT elements form a unity. Their contents and time factors are bound up with each other. These are steps which can only be tested with disadvantages.

The plan, as orientation for action, lays down indicators (particular characteristics) or figures with which the development of the implementation can be followed, i.e. monitored.

The information supplied by our monitoring system flows into the evaluation. From this, conclusions are drawn to enable an improved implementation of projects and programmes.

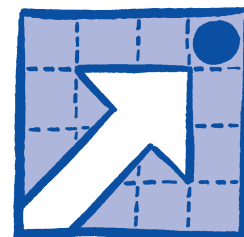


INFORMATION
FLOWS
INTO THE
EVALUATION

The transference into action of results of P, M and E for guidance and implementation is the decisive yardstick for the relevance and effectiveness of our PEMT instruments.

Because we see the individual PEMT elements as part of the whole system, it is a good idea not to spend too much energy on individual elements, e.g. a plan or monitoring. Thus, sufficient energy will remain for the other parts of PEMT. Furthermore we can also make sure that they are networked.

4.1 PLANNING



A plan is the future anticipated, linked with the avowed wish that this picture of the future is actually realized by our efforts. Whether a plan can actually be implemented depends on the realistic thinking (see Chapter 2.7) of its authors and the development of its environment.

Starting points for planning are the shortcomings and potentials, needs and hopes, hindrances and energies of the population of a region or a sector. The various protagonists, having got to know and listened to each other, begin to talk about their common visions. By comparing opportunities and risks, they arrive at realizable objectives.

In so doing, they use their experience, the orientation at their disposal and the knowledge of outside persons. In addition, however, the unconscious and the subconscious play a strong role, so that the participants are well advised to realise this consciously and to try to a certain extent to bring these forces out into the open.

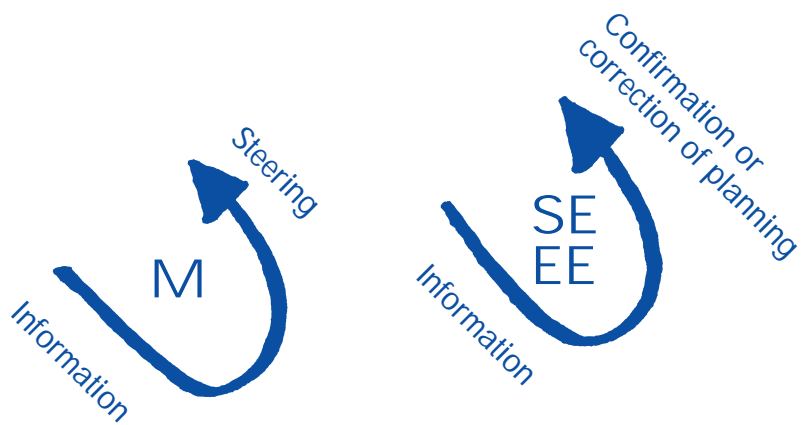
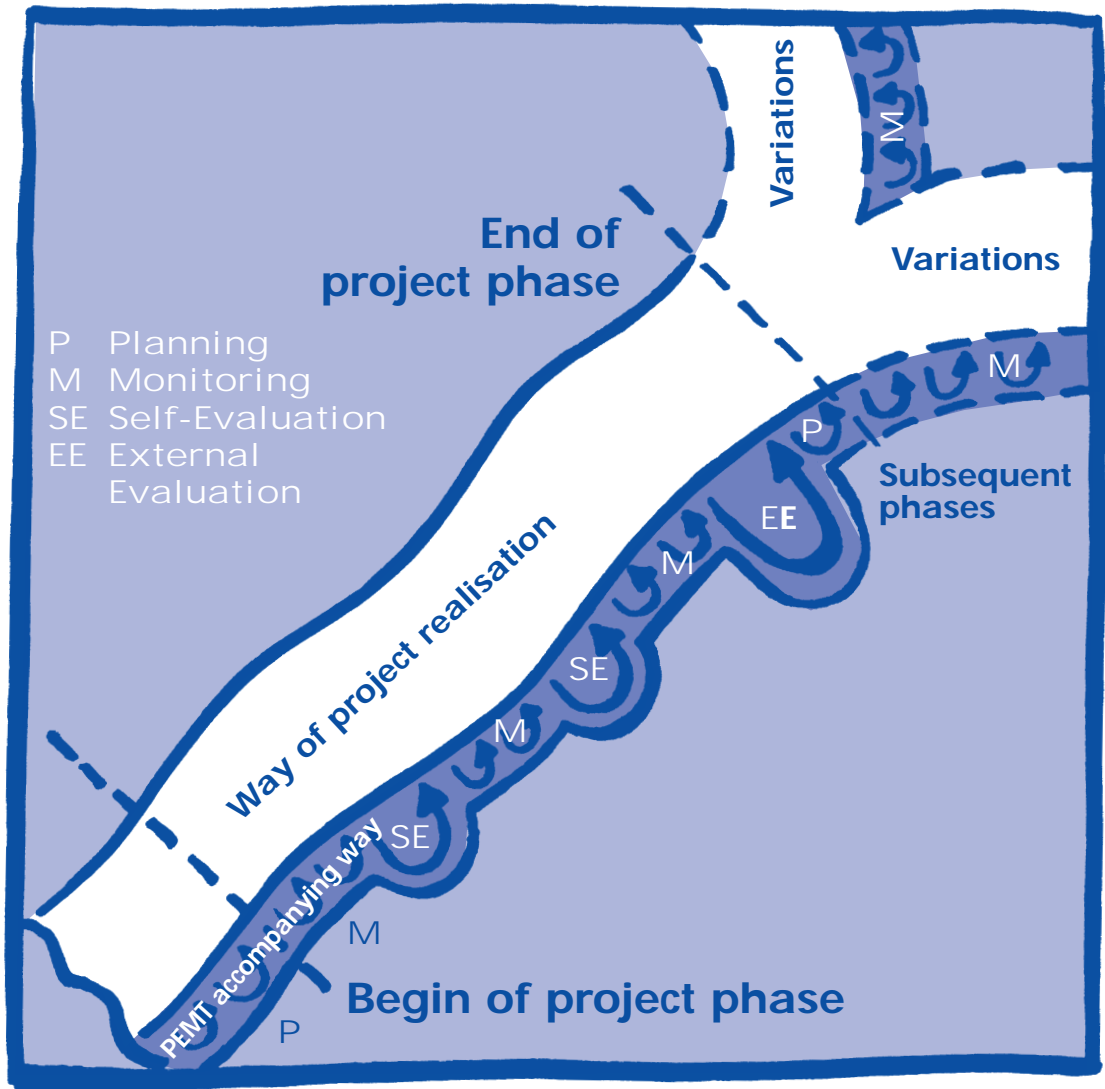
In a further step, the participants put aims, results, activities and means into a more concrete form.

Participatory planning is, therefore, the working out together of visions and a common platform for planning.

Planning must be done on a small as well as a large scale, i.e. from sectors or part-areas within projects and programmes, from regions to country programmes, and planning of institutions and their units.

First we allow visions to form, then, more concretely, strategies and concepts. These are then embedded in mid-term perspectives which are later further defined in one or two-year operational plans. Finally, out of these, small organizational structures (working groups) formulate plans.

THE PROJECT OR PROGRAMME WAY OR FLOW



Common Problems:

- We plan too much, too exactly and in too much detail – or we do not plan enough.
- We plan with insufficient participation, regarding it as a job for specialists.
- A plan is hardly used as a guide by the person implementing the programme, either because of not wanting to, or not being able to. The transference into action is lacking!
- Planning methods are used mechanically and not adapted.
- Plan seldom adjusted in the course of time.

Keymessages:

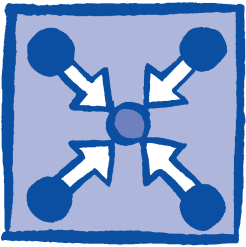
Working out a plan is the opportunity for setting the course of a project or programme.

We choose a degree of detail in the plan suited to the size of the project/programme (being careful not to make too far-reaching a plan).

A plan is based on the experience of those immediately participating, as well as on orientation and procedural knowledge from the outside. The forces which work unconsciously should not be forgotten.

There is not one unique, superior method. Plans live from the variety of methods and procedures and the adaptation to the situation, especially that of beneficiaries and participants (social and cultural adaptation). Each plan, however, should at least state its aim, results expected, activities foreseen and means to be used.

Let us overcome our resistance and adapt a plan if the situation has clearly changed and some of our more important assumptions no longer hold good.



4.2 MONITORING

Monitoring is the system of continuous production and collection of data and information during implementation of a project or programme.

Monitoring picks up aspects which were sketched out in the plan. Indicators have thereby a central place. They provide information on how, and to what extent, our activities, or also outside influences, bring about changes and results. They are measurements which are interpreted on a surveying rod in the light of our norms and values.

With monitoring, we aim to be informed in time of any changes of a qualitative or quantitative kind; in addition, we observe, collect impressions, data and information. This includes factually comprehensible, written and also personal, orally given, impressions.

The background of values of the protagonists influences the orientation and form of the monitoring. In order to act exactly in the spirit of the background idea of putting human beings at the centre (see 2.1), monitoring must be aware not only at the level of factual changes (head) but also of feelings (heart). Only if these two levels, and their influence on each other, are observed, can we succeed in grasping the relevant changes and the motives behind them.

Basically, everything can be monitored which is fixed in the plan: aims, results, activities, processes and means. One must be alert for deviations from the plan.

There could be a conflict between an all-inclusive, exact monitoring, and being limited to the most important points. Too much and too ambitious planning means a proliferation in our monitoring as well.

The significance of our monitoring depends on the usefulness of the product for outstanding decisions. In order to obtain high relevance in monitoring, the most important changes must be recorded, and information and impressions put at our disposal at the right time so that they can be used in decision making. This information, on the one hand, flows into the everyday steering decisions, and on the other, in a processed and condensed form, into periodic, conceptual, basic decisions by way of evaluations.

In the sense of an early-warning system delivering relevant information so that a reaction can follow in good time, monitoring of rapidly changing basic conditions gains importance. Further, not only should the planned effects be followed up, but any unplanned effects caused by development activities should also be recorded sensitively.

Who should carry out monitoring? In principle, all hierarchical levels and areas practise monitoring, according to their tasks and roles. Handing over this task to specialists holds the danger that they monopolise the work and that, as a consequence, other participants neglect their monitoring.

If those who ascertain the changes are not the same as those who use the product of monitoring, linking and co-ordination have to take place so that what is collected is what the users need. Furthermore, the users should determine and explain what the observations and information will be used for.

Common Problems:

We are too exact in our monitoring. Therefore we collect too much quantitative information. Our excessive monitoring system produces a graveyard of data! Quantitative indicators are available in abundance, whereas quality must first be worked in a participatory way. Overwork, lack of fantasy, and a preference for the seemingly exact and objective, increase the imbalance to the extent of producing data graveyards and a disregard of decisive phenomena.

This kind of monitoring is too slow. Information might not be available when it is needed for decision-making.

It is not at all clear how information is to be used. This can lead to being half-hearted in the collection of information, especially when the producers of information and the users do not belong to the same department or sector.

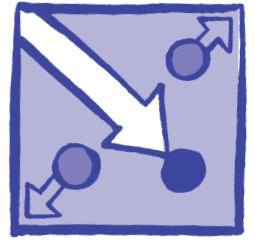
Key messages:

Use common sense in the design of a monitoring system, so that it does not become too complicated and unwieldy in use. Concentrate on what is most important; setting clear priorities helps to produce «lean monitoring». It is better to be approximately right but quick than exactly right but too late for decision-making.

Create openness over the aim of information collection. The production of information and monitoring must definitely be tied in to the existing decision structure.

Try to achieve a balance between quantitative and qualitative information. Build on the plan, let beneficiaries participate and do groundwork for evaluation. The criterion is whether transference into action is possible, the quality is defined by sustainability, appropriateness and adaptability (see p. 10).

4.3 EVALUATION



Evaluation means to compare what is foreseen and planned for a project/programme with the implementation and its results. According to this comparison, possibly adaptations may then be concluded.

Thus, evaluation uses the guide lines of the planning together with the information collected by monitoring during implementation.

Optimal evaluation procedure consists of three parts or steps:

- Firstly, a summary of comprehensible information on the past work and up to the time of the evaluation (analytical part).
- Secondly, a personal opinion on the analysis of the past history (assessment);
- Thirdly, using the analysis and assessment of past work, conclusions or recommendations for the future.

4.3.1 SELF-EVALUATION – SE

A self-evaluation is carried out by members of a project or programme themselves. Thus the analysis and assessment, on the one hand, and the transference into action on the other, is carried out by the same persons, whereby there are better chances of the evaluation results being well applied. The drawback is the lack of distance. A self-aware and self-controlled subjectivity, however, is always more objective and less dangerous than an objectivity that is merely assumed.

Basically all questions can be dealt with by means of self-evaluation. It is especially suitable, however, for internal matters, e.g. questions of communication and interpersonal relations.

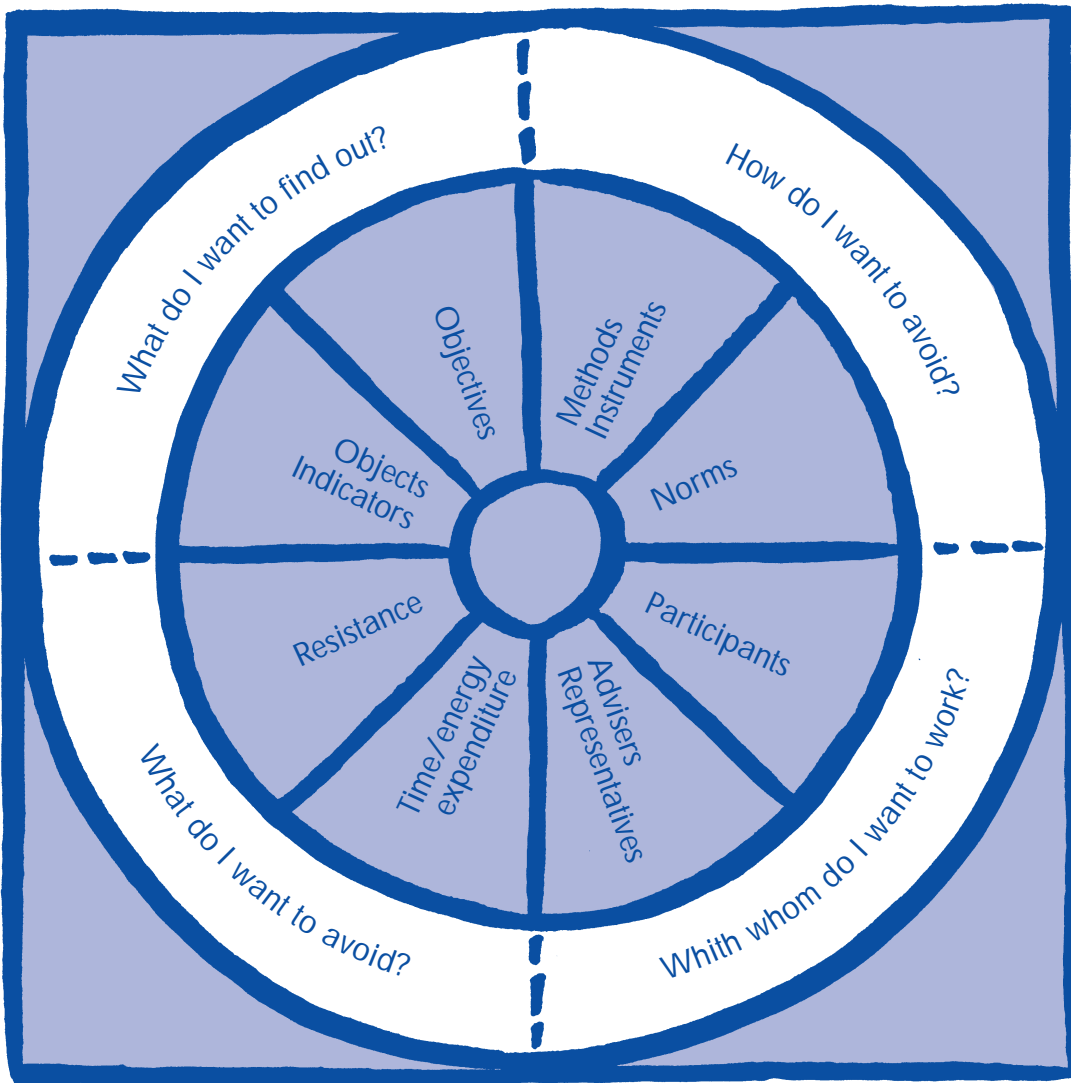
As a clarifying, internal process, self-evaluation is important but difficult at the same time.

Self-evaluation can be carried out individually or in a group. In the case of a group, the composition must be considered. The participants depend on the object of the evaluation. These may be members of a section, the entire personnel of a project/programme, or even a larger group including the beneficiaries. The number of persons is then only a question of method and organization.

Requirements and energy of the participants determine the frequency of self-evaluations. In order to have some kind of rhythm, this should be at least once a year in the form of a workshop.

There are no limits to inventiveness where methods are concerned. For short exercises, we recommend the SEPO method and variations thereof.

Whoever prefers to be more exact can turn the SE wheel.



Strictly speaking, we turn our wheel three times:

- we plan the self-evaluation
- we deal with the object of evaluation = implementation of the self-evaluation
- we formulate the agreed transference into action according to the self-evaluation results

Common Problems:

- Self-evaluation is shirked (fear of proximity and openness, suppression)
It is carried out but only because of outside pressure (one condition is that it is a free choice).
- It is tacitly agreed not to deal with the most important problems (intuitive deletion)
- The process becomes too broad and over-abundant (perfectionism)
- The daily round dampens enthusiasm for self-evaluation and good intentions regarding application (artificial and protected time and space)

Keymessages:

- Reserve time and energy for self-evaluation, and carefully choose the right moment.
- Get away from everyday matters and choose pleasant and stimulating surroundings.
- Do not intend to do too little or too much; energy is also needed for application.
- Formulate resolutions for transference into action, and follow up implementation.
- If really necessary, engage a facilitator rather than a dominator!
- Tie-in self-evaluation with previous or post-external evaluation.



4.3.2 EXTERNAL EVALUATION – EE

The external evaluation is an examination and judgement and an assessment from the outside. It is carried out, therefore, by experts from outside the project or programme.



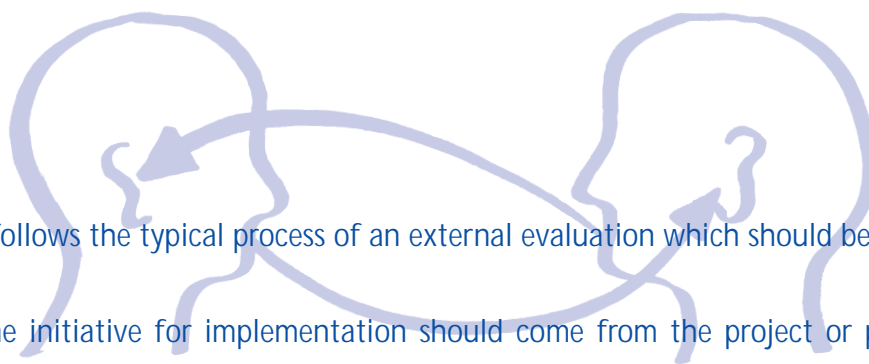
Basically, anything that needs looking at from outside can be the object of an external evaluation. External evaluation is rather for factual aspects, more complex contents and total assessments.

The external evaluation is carried out if possible on the initiative of the project or programme, and, if necessary, as a need for control originating from the outside. It presents an opportunity for a critical review in order to make decisions on a possible further phase. From the point of view of learning, application and sustainability, an imposed and prescribed evaluation is always inferior to one self-initiated, since it always produces resistance.

Generally, external consultants are engaged for the implementation. It is wise to look for these in the partner country, the region, or, if the desired competence cannot be found there, in Switzerland or another Northern country.

Whenever possible, mixed teams should be assembled wherein precise local knowledge can be complemented by additional expert knowledge. These are called «Joint Evaluations». In order for these teams to be able to function under the stress of an external evaluation, a long preparatory period and careful selection of personnel is needed. A gender-balanced team usually has significant advantages over the usually male-dominated one.

In general, the quality of an external evaluation depends on the profile and choice of suitable team members. This means persons who do not merely come up with harsh criticism, but who can also, from their practical experience, judge what is realizable in the given circumstances (see 2.7). Alongside expert competence, social competence is also needed if, in the course of a learning process (see 2.2), the ground is to be prepared for improvements.



There follows the typical process of an external evaluation which should be aimed at:

- The initiative for implementation should come from the project or programme itself.
- The tasks (TOR = terms of reference) are set down by discussion between the partners.
- The search for consultants locally and, if necessary, also abroad, begins and ends with the assembly of the team.
- Start organizational preparation and possibly also content.
- The main part of the external evaluation takes place in the field.
- Feedback (also during implementation) on results is passed on by evaluators to those concerned.
- The team prepares its report together in the field in the internationally-used language of the partner country.
- The sequence of events should allow those being evaluated a chance to comment on the report.
- The decision-makers apply parts of the evaluation (watch out for division of tasks: evaluators analyse and recommend, the operational side takes decisions).

Common Problems:

- The external evaluation is imposed from above and therefore comes up against the resistance of those concerned in projects and programmes.
- The participants project their own unsolved problems into the evaluation and overload thereby the terms of reference.
- Decisions on the future of projects or programmes have already been made before carrying out an external evaluation.
- In the daily round, the results of an evaluation are «forgotten», that is, not applied.
- Local participation is too weak, either in the formulation of TORs and/or because the evaluators assigned are unprepared.

Keymessages:

- Is an external evaluation really necessary? Let us forget token exercises – too much effort is involved.
- Prepare, implement and assess external evaluations with the largest possible participation of the project/programme.
- Formulate feasible TORs: do not be afraid to curtail and to prioritize.
- Distil key questions (that which is essential and fundamental).
- Dovetail with a self-evaluation (whether made prior to or following the external evaluation). This helps to reduce resistance to the external evaluation and raises the chances of transference into action of the outcomes of evaluation.
- Find the right moment through dialogue.
- Careful choice, preparation and introduction of consultants are part of the organization of an external evaluation.



4.4 TRANSFERENCE INTO ACTION

Transference into action means using the results of planning, monitoring and evaluation as the basis for orientation in decision-building during the implementation of projects and programmes.

Decisions are made thereby at two levels:

- On the one hand, at the level of daily decision-making (everyday steering)
- And on the other, at the level of conceptual decision-making from time to time.

Our working instruments planning, monitoring and evaluation are only justified if they are used and applied. They can and must be of help in improving quality of decisions made within projects and programmes.

In the case of plans, this means that those implementing them must continually refer to them in order to ascertain whether the projects or programmes are developing according to the plan. Transference into action cannot happen if the plans lie quietly in a drawer and are only brought out on the occasion of important visitors from head office. This is a sham and a pure waste of energy.

In the case of monitoring, this means that the information produced is actually used as orientation in decision making. There is no real transference into action if this information is allowed to pile up in a data graveyard.

In the case of self-evaluation and external evaluation, this means that their results are actually applied by those concerned in future project or programme adaptation.

Perhaps these remarks seem self-evident to the reader. Nonetheless, in practice, it seems that the biggest weakness in the use of planning, monitoring and evaluation is in fact a deficit in transference into action. This is why SDC stresses its importance and to document this has added the term «Transference into Action» (T) into the concept, thus: PEM + T = PEMT.

What are the reasons for our deficit in transference into action? There are many different reasons, just as there are many different facets in the microcosm of a project or a programme.

It may be that the instruments of planning, monitoring and evaluation are not sufficiently adapted to the needs of implementation. In this case, it would help if, for example, monitoring and evaluation results were delivered more punctually to assist decision-making.

A further reason may be found in the decision-making climate of the project or programme. How are decisions made? What role does expert information have? In what way does decision-making in practice promote or hinder the instruments planning, monitoring and evaluation? If there are deficits in this sector, attention must be paid to the way in which decisions are arrived at. Keywords in this respect are more participatory decisions. Their structure and process must be organized systematically and must use comprehensible information.

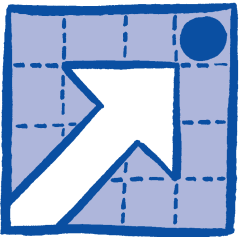
An important aspect which can help improve application is by use of agreements, that is, at the end of a self-evaluation, for example, it is agreed who should apply which results and in what period of time. Such agreements are then included in the regular monitoring so that the group periodically checks whether transference into action has actually taken place. The group must be careful to use a method which motivates each individual involved (keyword «learning climate»).

Being aware of the deficit in transference into action, the means used in preparing plans and carrying out monitoring and evaluation, must be kept in proportion to their possible and realistically probable actual use.

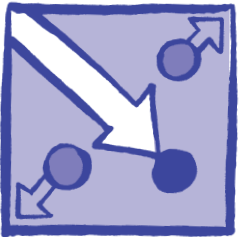
Besides transference into action within projects and programmes, there should also be application at a policy level. In the process of analysing experience, findings are summarized so that they can flow in synthesized form into formulation and adaptation of development policy.

Common Problems:

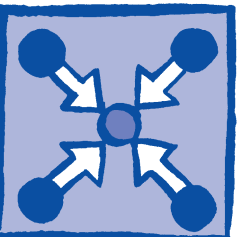
- We do not apply, or only inadequately, the results of planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Those directly concerned do not want to transfer into action.
- The decision-making climate weakens the benefit to be gained by using the results of planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Everyday problems occupy participants to an extent that prevents complying with an orientation allied with planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Lack of regard for cost-benefit relation in setting up PEMT and use of results.
- Those formulating policy do not take into account lessons learned from experience.



Keymessages:



How can we make transference into action more attractive? By making it the measure for PEM, and not merely regarding it as an irksome post-assessment of a creative process.



Smaller PEM instruments, of which the results are actually put to use, are preferable to high-flown systems which are not implemented. Transference into action must be practised right from the start.

P and its T, E and its T, M and its T: opting for PEM means opting for T as well. Commitments should be clearly formulated, responsibilities agreed, then carefully followed up and sufficient time allowed.



Stress the relationship between commitments, their fulfilment, and the learning process.

The use of PEMT instruments in decision-making is the acid test!

EXIT

Having reached these lines, it can be assumed that you have struggled your way through this brochure!

Basically, there are now two possibilities open to you:

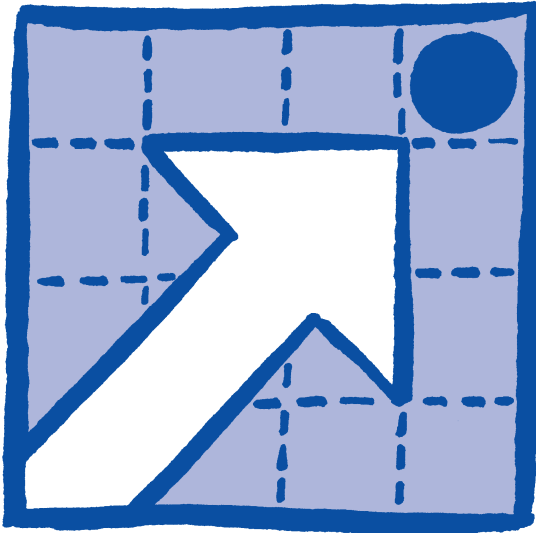
- One would be to translate what you have learnt – following our precepts – into your own work, and to find out if one or another of our ideas can be put into practice.
- The second possibility – for those eager to know more – would be to widen your knowledge by referring to our special brochures.

And if neither of this appeals to you at the moment – then we just wish you a good time!

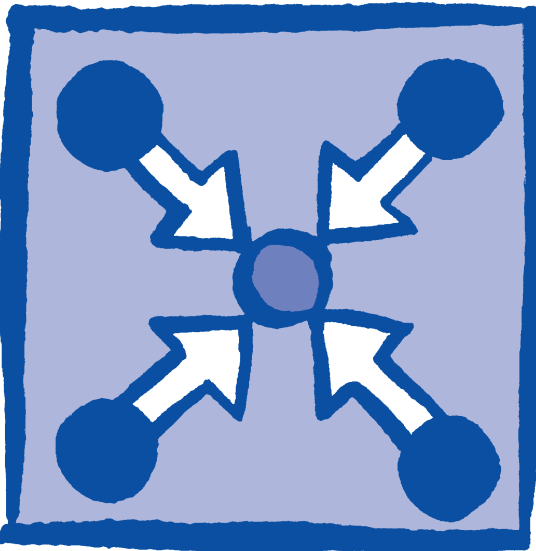
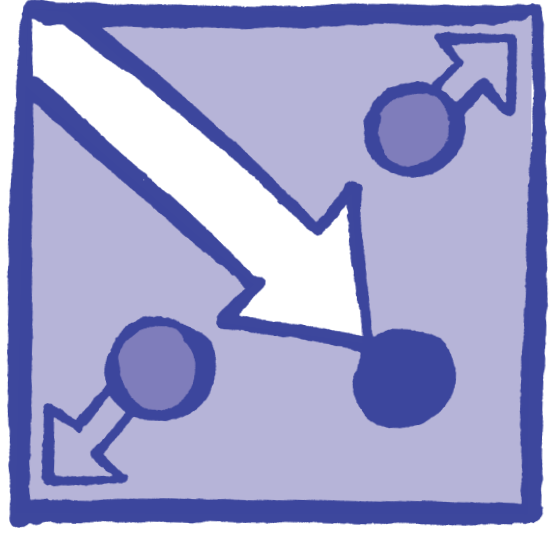
Berne, October 1996



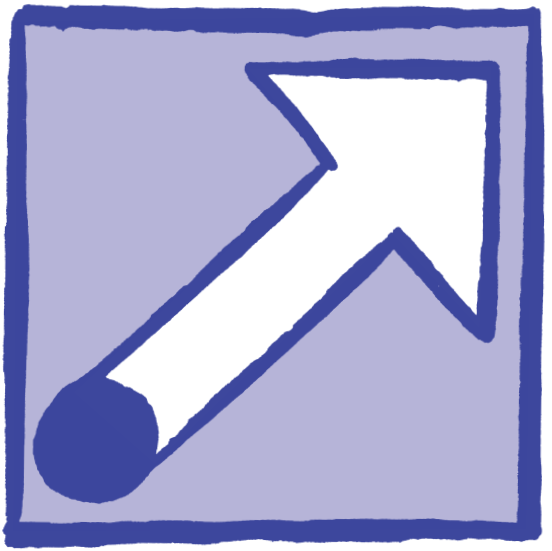
PLANNING



EVALUATION



MONITORING



TRANSFERENCE INTO ACTION

LIST OF PENT WORKING INSTRUMENTS

- Mirror, mirror on the wall... (Self-Evaluation) (1991/70 pages)
- Manual on Self-Evaluation (1994/100 pages)
- External Evaluation in Development Cooperation (1991/40 pages)
- Cooperation Planning (1993/120 pages)
- Sustainability of Development Projects (1991/30 pages)
- SWPO (KEK/CDC) (folder)
- Photography in Project Work (1992/50 pages)
- Day and Night Realities in Project Planning (Nepal) (1991/80 pages)
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) (1993/folder)

