EXPERIENCES OF SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS APPROACH IN THE ESCWA REGION

By

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Outline

I. Introduction

II. Global Experience

III. Experiences of the ESCWA Region with the Adoption and Implementation of SLA

IV. Adoption of SLA in an Urban Context

V. Conclusion
Rural Development Challenges

- Conflicts over access rights
- Pressure from changes and declining availability of the ecosystem services
- Marginalization from resource access
- Climate change
- Food Crisis 2008 (Insufficient food supplies)
- Exclusion

Rural Development Challenges (Contd.)

- Devastation, overexploitation and privatization
- Unemployment and poverty
- Limited availability of clean water, electricity, basic health and education services in some rural areas
- Land degradation and low productivity of agriculture
- Return of expatriate Labor due to the current Financial Crisis
Why SLA?

• Poverty is not just the lack of income but of human development

• SLA is a methodology and a concept to face the rural development challenges

• There is a need for:
  - A direct impact on poverty
  - More analytical understanding of the complexity of poverty and the factors that affect poverty
What is SLA?

“SLA is a method of understanding the experiences of people living in poverty and disadvantage.”

“It is also a participatory approach which is based on the belief that people experiencing poverty have abilities and assets that can be used to help them create a sustainable livelihood for them and their families.”

(Oxfam Cymru, 2009)

SLA Principles

- **Normative**
  People-centered, **Empowering**, **Responsive and participatory**, **Holistic**, **Sustainable**

- **Operational**
  Conducted in partnership, Strengths-based, Multi-level (micro-macro links), Long-term and flexible, **Disaggregated**

(Khanya-aicdd, 2006)
The SLA Framework

A- Assets, Capitals, Strengths

- Social
- Natural
- Human
- Financial
- Physical

B- Vulnerability Context

- Shocks
- Trends
- Seasonality
C- Policies, Institutions and Processes (PIPs)

D- Livelihoods Strategies
E- Livelihoods Outcomes

SLA Global Experiences, an example on Livestock Services Story
Pre-SLA Application

- Aim: Reduce Poverty
- Interventions:
  1. Provide livestock technology and modern knowledge to poor people with little land
  2. Supportive through Institutions, policies, good government and relationships
- Conclusion: The poor were not exactly reached

SLA Application

- Examined functions and relationships and their connections to poor people (Local-central linkages)
- Assessed the suitability of policies in the livestock sector in reducing poverty (Holistic)
- Challenged the government about who it was serving
- Proved the benefits of policies and actions through participating with the poor (Participatory)
- Embraced and Gave time for change (Dynamic)
Post SLA Application

- Reformed the Institution of the government’s livestock services department
- More aware and responsive to poor people and supporting their aspirations
- Working with the private sector livestock industry (Partnership)
- More decentralised becoming a model of good governance for other departments
- Founded on policies and institutions that are derived from an understanding of their impact on poor people

- A source of evidence for Policy makers
- Provided a communication tool and a learning generation for pro-poor change (Sustainability)

- Created a Channel for poor people to influence power (Empowering)

ESCWA Regional Experiences

Short Stories
Syria

Agricultural Development Project in the South

Rural women playing an active role in agricultural production in the project area. Their main responsibilities are land preparation, sowing, weeding, irrigation, fertilizing, spraying, and harvesting.

Egypt

Agricultural Development Project at El Minya

An extension worker teaching farmers how to make butter using modern machinery.
Lebanon

Smallholder Livestock Rehabilitation Project at Barelies

As a result of artificial insemination, farmers were able to increase their cattle holdings by twofold and initiate a Livestock Coop.

Jordan

Agricultural Resource Management Project in the Governorate of Kerak

Farmer fenced off the area to be used for olive plantation in the Kerak governorate. Fencing and Stone walls were employed to prevent sheep from eating seedlings and soil erosion.
Contd.

Also in response to drought, wells were built to collect rainwater and thus sustain the olive plantation.

SLA for Assessing Sudan Rural Community Resilience to Climate Change (Elasha et al., 2005)
Case Study of Sudan (Contd.)

• **Vulnerability Context:** drought poses substantial risks to people living in the Bara Province of North Kordofan State

• **Strategy Adopted:** Community development and sustainable livelihood environmental management measures built resilience and adaptive capacity to lessen the stresses of climate shocks (application of local and external knowledge)

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Case Study of Sudan (Contd.)

• **Livelihood Assessment:** analyzed the coping and adaptive strategies pursued by the community to understand the role and impact on enhancing and securing local people’s livelihoods

• **Tools:** sustainable livelihood impact assessment methods for assessing project impacts on the community within an ecological agricultural system (data collection methods, qualitative and quantitative indicators and application of SLF)
Case Study of Sudan (Contd.)

• **Outcomes:**
  - Community institutional structure
  - Rangeland rehabilitation measures (sand dunes revegetated, windbreaks sheltering, Livestock restocking)
  - Community development (revolving fund, pastoral women’s groups focused on livestock value-adding Activities, new irrigated gardens and wells, and a grain storage and seed credit program)
  - Effectively combined participatory planning, capacity building and access to credit
  - Diversified production system and established drought contingency measures
  - An enhanced capacity of the community to withstand drought

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The SLF can be a **useful tool** in understanding the impact of sustainable livelihood measures in increasing communities' resilience to climatic stresses from local people’s point of views.
Rehabilitation & Upgrading of the Manshiet Nasser Informal Settlement in Egypt

(*El-Gebaly, 2009*)
The Case of Manshiet Nasser, Egypt (Contd.)

Objectives

- Improve the living environment of 0.5 million inhabitants
- Provide access to affordable housing options and finance
- Mobilize resources of residents towards sustained livelihood systems
- Maintain the social capital of residents

Vulnerability Context

- Occasional collapse of rocks coming down from upper parts of the Muqattam mountains due to terrestrial movements
- Lack of basic infrastructure services, health and social care facilities, and access roads for emergency services
The Case of Manshiet Nasser, Egypt (Contd.)

**Adopted Strategies**
- Transparent dialogue
- Effective community participation
- Public and private partnerships in financing and managing services
- Enhanced community organization
- Institutionalized and innovative entity of participatory urban management
- Socio-economic survey conducted earlier to planning, using participatory methods of research

The Case of Manshiet Nasser, Egypt (Contd.)

**Major Outcomes**
- Affordable housing options to the poor
- Empowered civic engagement at early stages of decision making
- Institutionalized a long-term participatory urban management
- Maintained and enhanced livelihood systems of inhabitants
- Preserved *Social Capital* of original residents
- Sustained socio-economic development
Lessons Learned

- Gradual development of TRUST between the society and the state is possible through transparent and constructive dialogue and demonstrated credibility of government agencies.

- Empowerment of local inhabitants to participate in decision making can reduce the scope of conflicts and enable mobilization of resources for effective implementation.

- Political support and Will are a must for introducing participatory urban management.

- Coordination among government agencies, civil society entities and external support program, although challenging, is necessary for effective and sustainable urban development.

- Gradual progress towards Attitude and Behavior Changes of senior executives is more effective than raising slogans of good governance.

- Importance of utilizing modern techniques in data acquisition, processing and analysis (GIS).

- Availability of Accurate and Comprehensive Database of demographic and socio-economic features of the area was critical in upgrading and proper planning.

Recommendations

1- In case of Replication, the initial survey should:

- Collect information about people's assets to understand the residents' potentials as partners and beneficiaries and enable better knowledge about livelihood systems of inhabitants.

- Gather more gender sensitive data to help make subsequent strategies, objectives and programs more gender-balanced and aware.
The Case of Manshiet Nasser, Egypt (Contd.)

2- Innovative mechanisms:

- Involve government agencies, interested international support programs and religious leaders in the area

- Establish an in-situ coordination office to 1) organize public consultations with residents, 2) disclose relevant information, and 3) prepare meetings of the partners group

- Create an NGO that represents the local inhabitants to take an active role in communication, implementation and management of the project

- Enable private and popular sectors to participate in the project

- Empower private sector and local NGOs to participate in urban management

SLA Added Value?

- The ability of SLA to link Macro Policies to Micro Realities
- Understanding of livelihood groups and their assets
- Predicting responses to different policy options
- Managing cross-cutting issues
- Highlighting the long-term
- Building the capacity of local actors to participate in planning processes
- Promoting a more decentralized approach
- Setting targets and monitoring them
- Providing a checklist to assess Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
The way forward

1) Provide support to dryland development processes

2) Emphasize on mainstreaming land tenure reform and local governance of natural resources

3) Build partnerships and making markets work for poor of the drylands

4) Promote knowledge management in support of sustainable livelihoods and natural resource management in drylands