

Participatory Planning

Addressing the Disconnect between Local and External Stakeholders

A Case Study on *Health in Harmony*

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Executive Summary

Participatory approaches are being increasingly utilized in conservation projects. The idea stems from critiques of previous practice being too exclusionary resulting in poor outcomes. A broad theme in these critiques relates to a disconnect between the local and external stakeholders. This disconnect emerges from the differences in the epistemological foundations of the different stakeholders and manifests itself in the form of poor practice with inequitable outcomes for local communities.

Today, a variety of approaches to participation are utilized in environmentalism, depending on what they are motivated by and what they are trying to achieve. One such approach is Radical Listening, developed and utilized by Health in Harmony (HiH). HiH is an NGO working in Indonesia, Brazil and Madagascar with rainforest communities. Informed by a Planetary Health approach, HiH works towards protecting rainforests, providing local communities with access to healthcare, education and livelihoods. Through Radical Listening, HiH implements projects that are designed by the communities they will impact.

This research explores the extent to which HiH's Radical Listening approach to participation addresses the disconnect between the local and external stakeholders; as informed by themes derived from a study of past practice, their justifications and their shortcomings. This research studies HiH through 5 main themes; (1) **learning**, whereby open-mindedness, empathy, interdisciplinary approaches, and an iterative culture of learning are emphasized and perpetuated by HiH; (2) **nature of support**, through which the extent to which Radical Listening is truly participatory is considered alongside the types of interventions they carry out; (3) **relationship with communities**, which are explored in relation to the importance given to building trust, sharing power, aligning goals and having an open, honest, direct relationship with the communities; (4) **other stakeholders**, such as local government departments, other NGOs, donors and the community beyond HiH's target communities are considered; and (5) **reporting activities**, are looked at in relation to the consideration given to reporting failures, reporting broader, more abstract, outcomes, and learning from reporting.

With a few exceptions, I found that HiH's practice is conscious of and reflects the first four of these themes. However, they did not seem to represent the nuance required in reporting adequately.

I provide the following key recommendations for HiH with the aim of informing their practice so that it can better serve to address the disconnect between the local and external stakeholders in conservation projects:

1. To reframe the questions that they ask the community so as not to influence the outcomes of the Radical Listening sessions. The initial question that HiH asks the community starts with "You are the guardians of this precious rainforest...", which imposes upon local communities' ideas about what their relationship with nature should look like.
2. To represent better what currently seems contradictory; namely that the involvement of communities in decision-making is justified by their perceived expertise as opposed to the idea that it is their right to have a say in the design and implementation of projects that will impact them.
3. To acknowledge and operationalize ideas about entrenched systems that perpetuate inequity on a global scale. While HiH considers and is sensitive to the impacts of colonialism on the communities they work with, I suggest that they should be more reflexive about the degree to which older 'colonial approaches to conservation' continue to influence this work.

Abstract

Participatory approaches are now being broadly implemented in the environmental field as a response to the perceived inadequacies of previous exclusionary approaches to produce positive environmental or social outcomes. By including local communities in decision-making processes, participatory approaches aim to account for and adapt initiatives to local contexts, thereby closing the gap between the local and external perspectives and ambitions at play. Today, a variety of approaches to participation are practiced. This raises an important question; how do we know how effective a particular approach is in addressing the disconnect between

the external and local elements of environmental projects? By conducting an extensive literature review on environmentalism and critiques of practice, I developed a set of criteria to use in assessment. I then conducted semi structured interviews of directors and managers at an organization, Health in Harmony (HiH), practicing a new approach to participation. I analyzed interview transcripts and documents from HiH by coding based on these assessment criteria. Results demonstrate that HiH pays great attention to learning, providing inclusive and holistic support, building meaningful relationships with their communities built around trust and shared power, and ensuring that other stakeholders are not negatively impacted by their work and that those stakeholders do not in turn negatively impact their work. about and sharing power with local communities; still, some practices required deeper analysis. HiH does not, however, lay a lot of emphasis on the importance of holistic reporting practices that include reporting failures, reporting outcomes beyond what is easily measurable (e.g., well-being), and learning from reporting practices. HiH utilizes approaches for which there is some criticism, yet accounts for many of those critiques. This research concludes with 3 primary recommendations. Firstly, that HiH reframe the questions they ask communities as these may not be entirely culturally sensitive and may not sufficiently account for the potential variance in how different communities perceive nature and their relationship to it. Secondly, that HiH look towards some of their published works and ideas that exist within their operational procedures as these may be contradictory. Finally, I recommend that HiH adds more to its considerations of historical causes of inequity with commensurate expressed concern for injustices brought about by modern systemic problems on a global scale. This all makes for an interesting discussion that calls for evaluations of organizations to be conscious of the nuances of practice and to use research methods that highlight the degree to which they are able to account for potential pitfalls.

Motivation

In Pakistan, after studying Political Science at university, I graduated and started working in environmentalism. I first worked with a large conservation NGO on projects with fishing communities across Sindh. I quickly saw many of the limitations in outcomes for local

communities as caused by the obstacles and challenges NGOs in the Global South operate under. Later, I would work with a creative agency specializing in grant writing and networking with USAID, the US Department of State and several US-based donor agencies and consultancies. Here, I saw much of how international aid operates and is distributed. Finally, I would work with a small, community-based, snow leopard conservation NGO in Baltistan among the Karakoram mountains. Here, I had the opportunity to spend a great deal of time with remote communities and began to define the crux of my professional and now academic area of interest; that there exists a variety of key differences in the cultural and philosophical foundations, the economic and ethical interests, and the goals and ambitions of all stakeholders involved in internationally funded environmental efforts. These differences manifest themselves in the form of an ideological and practical disconnect, and as such result in poor outcomes for local communities.

In each of these organizations I wore multiple hats, working closely with local communities, designing and implementing projects, applying for funding, managing teams, maintaining relationships with government departments and donors, among a host of other responsibilities varying across organizations and projects. This was not due to any exceptional eagerness on my part; rather it was a consequence of a shortage of skilled labor in the country combined with the limited capacity of many of these organizations to hire more people. This unfortunate combination allowed for me to experience the practice of environmental and development projects in the country through numerous lenses.

In this time, I witnessed many of the challenges and pitfalls of foreign-funded, non-governmental environmental and development services in Pakistan. Local organizations work towards finding a balance between designing projects that are likely to be selected and approved for funding by foreign donors, and designing projects that create positive outcomes for local communities and the environment.

Through my career, it became increasingly apparent that this balance is not easily achieved. Conceptually, however, the distinction between appealing to foreign donors and positively impacting local communities should not exist. Yet, after four years of this work, what became

most clear was that there exists a significant disconnect between the local and external stakeholders involved in executing internationally funded environmental projects.

Introduction

Participatory processes (participation) emerged as an outcome of the failures of different approaches to development and environmental projects (Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2019). Participation has been interpreted in a variety of ways from a variety of philosophical, and even epistemological standpoints. The idea may seem straightforward, in that it calls for the involvement of local communities in the design, implementation, or both, of environmental projects. However, how it is interpreted varies greatly. Some scholars argue that participation should be considered from a neoliberal perspective revolving around ideas of how 'power' is distributed amongst various stakeholders and between humans and nature (Bixler et al., 2015; Khan, 2013). One definition is as follows:

... a current form of participatory development, popularly known as co-management based conservation. This is desirable because contemporary nature/forest conservation practice has led to the inclusion of a range of state and non-state actors (e.g., states, donor organisations, business organisations, NGOs, communities, academic institutes, think tanks etc.) in resource governance, making human-society-nature relations more complex and dynamic.

(Khan, 2013)

Some also recommend a more interdisciplinary approach that observes power through the lens of political ecology (Bixler et al., 2015; Khan, 2013). In practice, these ideologies culminate in the aforementioned variety of types of participation; some of which is referred to as "superficial participation" by competing perspectives (Morrison et al., 2005). Complicated and dynamic as its manifestations are, Campbell et al. describe 'participation' fairly well.

There is no one definition of participatory development, but there are two keys to describing the concept: the actor and the meaning of participation. In terms of "actor," the literature refers to "people's participation" (McCall, 1987), "community participation" (Midgeley et al., 1986), "people's own development" (Swantz, 1986), "community development" (Gow and

Vansart, 1983), and “self-help” (Verhagen, 1987). Use of these categories reflects a variety of political and sociological epistemologies. The important commonality is the shift from a passive voice (such as in “basic needs development”) to an active voice. The second aspect, the meaning of participation, refers to the positioning of participatory initiatives on the continuum from manipulating participation for the achievement of externally identified project goals to the empowerment of the actors to define such goals themselves, as well as the actions required to achieve them. Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969) is perhaps the best known and often-cited continuum. The difference is that of viewing participation as a means to project implementation and viewing participation as an end that, when achieved, will result in long-term engagement by those involved in the process of solution finding.

(Campbell et al., 2003)

Regardless of the avenue one takes in including participation in their practice, there are important and increasingly relevant moral underpinnings to the ideation of participation; as expressed by Robyn Eversole, “Participation is ultimately a discourse: a way of speaking, signaling (in an implicit binary) that we-as-professionals believe that they-as-communities have something important to contribute to the process of social change” (Eversole, 2012).

Similarly complicated are the overlaps and distinctions between the terms, ‘environmentalism’ and ‘conservation’. The literature showcases a lack of clarifications regarding these definitions; instead most researchers tend to take the terms and their implications for granted. Jane Elder looks towards public opinions and suggests that an ‘environmentalist’ is seen as having an ideological stance, centered around an intrinsic goodness of nature that is threatened by humans. Meanwhile, a ‘conservationist’ is fueled by pragmatics, a recognition that nature is useful to humans and that is why it warrants protecting (Elder, 2003). This is unconvincing as it is based upon public opinion. For a more concrete set of definitions; *Britannica* defines them as follows:

environmentalism, political and ethical movement that seeks to improve and protect the quality of the natural environment through changes to environmentally harmful human

activities; through the adoption of forms of political, economic, and social organization that are thought to be necessary for, or at least conducive to, the benign treatment of the environment by humans; and through a reassessment of humanity's relationship with nature. In various ways, environmentalism claims that living things other than humans, and the natural environment as a whole, are deserving of consideration in reasoning about the morality of political, economic, and social policies.

(Environmentalism | Ideology, History, & Types | Britannica, n.d.)

conservation, *study of the loss of Earth's biological diversity and the ways this loss can be prevented. Biological diversity, or biodiversity, is the variety of life either in a particular place or on the entire planet Earth, including its ecosystems, species, populations, and genes. Conservation thus seeks to protect life's variety at all levels of biological organization.*

(Conservation | Definition, Examples, & Facts | Britannica, n.d.)

Via this, environmentalism is a more holistic pursuit. It can be assumed from this that concerns like climate change are relevant to environmentalism and not conservation. However, what is now changing are ideas of the interconnectedness of biodiversity conservation with broader environmental concerns, such as climate. This raises questions such as, “if an organization dedicated to conserving biodiversity, reports on its broader environmental impact, such as carbon sequestration through tree plantations, does it qualify as an environmental and not a conservation organization?”

Despite not being adequately discussed in the literature, these terms are used in specific contexts. For example most approaches that are designed to be community-centric tend to use ‘conservation’, for example; ‘community-based conservation’ and even ‘participatory conservation’. In matters regarding philosophy, advocacy, and even holistic considerations, ‘environmentalism’ is used, for example; ‘environmental ethics’, ‘environmental studies’, and even Greta Thunberg is referred to as an ‘environmental activist’ (*Greta Thunberg | Biography, Climate Change, & Facts | Britannica, n.d.*).

This research will therefore use the terms interchangeably, while accounting for 'environmentalism' as a more holistic endeavor and using both terms according to common usage where possible.

A further set of terms also needs to be discussed here. The difference between 'local communities' and 'indigenous people' is also seldom acknowledged. 'Indigenous people' are groups that are recognized by the United Nations and other local and international bodies as 'indigenous', they are subsequently offered increased protections such as the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN General Assembly | *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2007). This is made increasingly complicated by the United Nation's establishment of the *Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform* which collectively represents a defined, recognized set of indigenous peoples with a completely amorphous, group of local communities (*Homepage | Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform*, n.d.). To this end, this research will utilize the term, 'local communities' as a more overarching and, therefore, appropriate term to use. The literature does tend to refer to communities as 'indigenous' without clarifying if this refers to the dictionary definition of the term or the legal definition.

At the center of this research is the idea that in the contemporary practice of environmentalism, as an international, multidisciplinary, phenomenon that is being increasingly conflated with the practice of 'development', is subject to a disconnect between local communities and external stakeholders. This disconnect emanates from the differences in the philosophical foundations of stakeholders which manifest themselves in the form of poor outcomes in practice. Participatory planning, as the literature explores and justifies, is proposed as a solution to the shortcomings of past practice. Some of these shortcomings are linked directly to the practical manifestations of the differences in the philosophies and ambitions of different stakeholders. This research is a means to explore the effectiveness of a specific approach to participation in addressing the aforementioned disconnect.

To this end, this research first explores the nature of this disconnect through an extensive literature review that looks towards the entire history and evolution of environmentalism (as

an international practice) leading to the inclusion and increasing normalization of participatory processes (Berkes, 2003). Then, an organization, *Health in Harmony* (HiH), with a unique approach to participation, called 'Radical Listening', is selected. Semi-structured interviews are analyzed through a collection of themes, derived from the literature review. Finally, each theme is analyzed to produce recommendations for HiH and to contribute something meaningful to the increasing set of literature on participatory processes; concisely contextualizing participation in relation to a specific function that the practice serves.

Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review for this research looks to answer the following questions: (1) How did environmentalism evolve to include participatory planning? (2) What potential pitfalls should the contemporary practice of participatory environmental efforts be conscious of?

In answering these questions, this literature review will first look at the history of internationally fueled environmentalism, the philosophies that informed early practice and that established the foundations of contemporary practice, and the economics and the instruments and institutions of power that were involved in realizing the ambitions informed by those early philosophies. Secondly, the literature review will look towards the origins of 'development' as an international practice that emerged after World War II. Then, in looking at how development and environmentalism became increasingly practiced in unison, it will explore how participatory approaches became an increasingly regular practice in environmental projects. Finally, the

literature review condenses thoughts from critical literature in order to compile a collection of potential pitfalls that practicing organizations should be conscious of.

History of Environmentalism

The first significant environmental efforts practiced across cultures and contexts occurred in the colonial era (Grove, 1992). There are earlier records of locally practiced efforts that would qualify under some definition or another of environmentalism (Murombedzi, 2003; Chigonda, 2018) but since there is not a local and external aspect to those efforts, they are not particularly relevant to this research. There is significant research that draws comparisons between contemporary practice and colonial environmental efforts (Moola et al., 2018; Garland, 2008; Adams et al., 2002; Cock et al., 2012; Singh et al., 2002). To this end, the literature review will look through the ideas and practices that defined early environmental efforts.

In *The Origins of Western Environmentalism*, Richard H. Grove explores the multiple voices that shaped early efforts in environmentalism as practiced by colonial powers between the 17th and 19th centuries (Grove, 1992). He discusses a series of ideas that were critical in shaping the colonial practice of environmentalism; (1) 'Western visions' of utopic wildernesses in tropical islands, (2) the varying and changing opinions of scientists employed by the French, Dutch and British East India Companies, (3) the thinking behind the establishment of the first natural reserves via the earliest connections between human activity (specifically deforestation) and climatic change (in the form of drought), (4) the first broadly acknowledged claims that the unfettered extraction of resources from nature could lead to global conditions in which the survival of the human race would be impossible, and other key observations from the colonial era. Towards the end of the paper, he states:

If a single lesson can be drawn from the early history of conservation, it is that states will act to prevent environmental degradation only when their economic interests are shown to be directly threatened. Philosophical ideas, science, indigenous knowledge and people and species are, unfortunately, not enough to precipitate such decisions. Time and again, from the 1850s onward, some scientists have discovered that the prospect of artificially induced climatic change, with the full weight of its implications, was one of

the few effective instruments that could persuade governments of the extent of an environmental crisis.

(Grove, 1992)

Most notably for the purposes of this research, he concludes with the idea that:

Our contemporary understanding of the threat to the global environment is thus a reassertion of ideas that reached maturity over a century ago. It is to be regretted that it has taken so long for the warnings of early scientists to be taken seriously.

(Grove, 1992)

Adding further complexity to the issue of definitions, Gregory Barton, in *Empire Forestry and the Origins of Environmentalism*, draws a distinction between ‘environmentalism’ and ‘conservation’ (Barton, 2002). He suggests that natural spaces prior to World War II were protected only for economic value and this disqualifies the practice from being referred to as ‘environmental’ efforts (Barton, 2002). Similarly, he works to discredit the idea that historic forest conservation practices meant for hunting qualify as environmental, based on the intention behind them and the negative feelings they garnered amongst common folk (Barton, 2002). In light of this, the earliest recorded environmentally-minded protected areas are in Colonial India; with the establishment of the Indian Forest Department in 1855 and the associated regulations regarding land use in specific areas (Barton, 2000). The decision was influenced by a variety of philosophical, economic, imperialistic, and scientific justifications, explored in more detail below (Barton, 2000).

Prior to decisions being made in colonial India, two diverging perspectives emerged in European philosophy upon learning of the Native Americans and their relationship with nature; Jean-Jaques Rousseau, among the founding fathers of *romanticism*, believed that the way of life of the Native Americans showcased the “corruption of civilization”, and saw nobility in a life more entwined with nature (Barton, 2002). Simultaneously, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, both 17th century English philosophers, saw this imagined ‘state of nature’ as representative of the evil from which “civil society arose” and that by citizens holding each other accountable,

through contracts and agreements, European society had risen above the more 'primal' ways being represented by the lives of the Native Americans (Barton, 2002). Further, and more relevant to our purposes here, "Locke stipulated that use determines the ownership of land, particularly the intensity of use... the British felt the need to justify the acquisition of land in the New World and to lay a legal foundation for ownership that satisfied an objective sense of justice and satisfied the ethical right to colonize." (Barton, 2002). Locke essentially laid down the philosophical foundation rationalizing colonial conservation practices. This is a key component in the story of environmentalism and will be discussed later in this section in relation to its influence on legitimizing external institutions in local contexts.

Barton then goes over the works and impacts of other Western philosophers such as Gilbert White, Henry David Thoreau, Carl Linnaeus, Francis Bacon, Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham in shaping colonial perspectives on nature (Barton, 2002). Interestingly, it seems that only Western philosophers and schools of thought were utilized to inform these early environmental efforts; even though environmentalism was largely practiced outside the cultural contexts as these philosophers and thinkers.

Using Rudyard Kipling's "complicated late nineteenth-century view of nature", as a 19th century British immigrant in India, Barton makes use of an analogy to showcase the idea that colonial powers in India

Then Barton draws inspiration from the impact of and influences behind Rudyard Kipling's works, commenting on the "complicated late nineteenth-century view of nature" that a 19th century British immigrant in India would have (Barton, 2002). Using an analogy from Kipling's stories, Barton showcases the vision of the local in the minds of the colonizers; the idea being that locals care about their forest but lack the tools necessary to do anything about it (Barton, 2002). *Mowgli* is a character in Kipling's works, an Indian boy raised in the forest by animals; he most wellknown for his depiction in the reworked version of Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, made popular by Disney in their 1967 animated film (*The Jungle Book* | *Work by Kipling* | *Britannica*, n.d.). Barton writes:

The naked Mowgli, standing godlike before a blazing fire, “the very form and likeness of that Greek God” Apollo, is told by Muller that he commanded 5,000 to 10,000 forest guards, and that Mowgli’s new job as a forest guard is “to drive the villager’s goats away” when they have no permit, to watch the game, and “to give sure warning of all fires in the Rukh.” After this he would be paid and given “at the end . . . a pension.” Mowgli readily accepts, for he loves the forest above all things and the rule of British forest law protected his home and playground. In youth, a jungle boy; in maturity, an empire forester.

(Barton, 2002)

Essentially, a variety of ideas motivated the colonizer’s desire to protect forests; yet, the only way they thought it possible to do so was through the institutions, ideas, and systems of governance and management brought into local contexts by the colonial powers.

The earliest formal laws that impacted the natural world were put in place to protect economic interests or to ensure that important game species were not overhunted; for example, in 1630, the English Settlement of Massachusetts Bay Colony offered a one shilling reward for every wolf killed due to threat of depredation (Brown, 2010) and after this, Portsmouth, Rhode Island put in place restrictions on deer hunting in 1646 (Brown, 2010), other states followed suit (Organ, 2018). With the emergence of colonialism, and varying new philosophies, Western conceptualizations of land use, as represented by policies and regulations, defined land that had not been industrialized or commercialized as “wild”, and via Locke, *terra nullius*, or “land belonging to no one” (Hendlin, 2014). This strict definition limited how locals would interact with their land. Land being used by nomadic tribes would still qualify as ‘unused’ as per Western definitions. As laws were placed to protect forests for commercial interests, “In India the jungle that had been the refuge of beleaguered peasants became the object of keen commercial interest...” (Sivaramakrishnan, 1995). India serves well as a representative case of colonial influence on local communities via forest conservation elsewhere as well (Sivaramakrishnan, 1995).

Between 1646 and the 1850s, numerous policies impacting the environment were put into place across the world, with great variations in function between the colonized and non-colonized countries. The general trend was to enslave local populations (as practiced in Africa and South America) and to exploit local resources (Bhambra, 2021). What was clear in these regions was that the colonizers did not intend to stay for very long, which justified this excessive extraction (Miller, 2007). Even in the subcontinent, the 1855 Charter of Indian Forestry (ICIMOD, 2000) and the establishment of the India Forest Department aimed to appropriate forest lands despite the presence of small, scattered communities (Barton, 2020). The Charter of 1855 limited all private rights over protected spaces and maximized British control over the market for teak (timber) (Barton, 2002). As this and other policies evolved in British India, their aim was consistently focused on maximally granting rights over lands and resources to the British (Barton, 2002).

This is true, until the late 1800s; when we see significantly more forest areas labeled under the India Forest Department as “reserves” as opposed to “protected” (Barton, 2002). This is an important distinction, “reserves” were subject to more protections against human influences than “protected” areas (Barton, 2002). This manifested a transformation in intention and practice as the British were now protecting forests in India that, because of their allotted protections, regularly produced a direct economic loss (Barton, 2002). However, this economic loss was borne because of a recognition that investing in the longevity of forests offers other long-term advantages including climate and water management (Barton, 2002). This showcases the shift from conservation for the purpose of protecting resources towards a broader set of concerns, more closely resembling contemporary environmentalism. The future would bring stricter protections for wildlife and forests in India (Barton, 2002). Simultaneously, though, there was also a strong belief amongst the British that handing the forest back to locals would lead to its decimation (Barton, 2002).

As power shifted from colonial to local leaders in the 1930s, the decision-making of the British foresters, via the India Forest Department, gave way to local demands for “de-reservation” (Barton, et al., 2008). However, upon the advent of the Second World War, extraction of resources doubled to directly or indirectly contribute to the British war effort (Barton, et al.,

2008). This showcases the complexity of the role of the British in the Subcontinent, and is, hopefully, reflective of the complexities of colonial rule and colonial impacts on the environment and local relationships with it.

It was well-known and recognized amongst scholars that the European colonial era was fueled by a quest for profit and power (Dominguez et al., 2020). Through this, it is reasonable to assume that the goal of the colonizers in places like the Subcontinent was to maximally extract resources as a means to gain profit and power (Dominguez et al., 2020). In the Subcontinent, this is true despite the efforts of the IFD. However, there is little to no reliable data showcasing the true extent of resource extraction, or that of the environmental impact of colonial activities in British India (Barton, et al., 2008).

At its most fundamental level, colonialism is premised on exploitation of colonised peoples, their territories and resources. The acquisition of new lands and natural resources was thus paramount to the colonial project. It provided colonising powers with wealth and strategic advantages that allowed massive empires to flourish, furnishing raw materials and markets that fuelled industrialisation. Indigenous peoples and other local communities were treated as objects that needed to be subjugated, removed or eliminated in order to exploit their labour and guarantee unfettered access to their lands and the “productive” use of resources. This separation of indigenous peoples from their natural environments was a crucial component of colonisation, one that persists in contemporary conservation strategies, with devastating consequences for indigenous peoples and the environment.

(Dominguez et al., 2020)

In, *Decolonising Conservation Policy: How Colonial Land and Conservation Ideologies Persist and Perpetuate Indigenous Injustices at the Expense of the Environment*, Dominguez et al. suggest that the harmful conservation approaches adopted by colonial powers continue to influence contemporary practice and create negative impacts for local communities (Dominguez et al., 2020). One of their more salient points touches upon a complex set of interactions that helps

contextualize the moral questionability of vilifying local communities for worsening the state of nature.

The widespread plunder of natural resources was a hallmark of colonisation. Nature was something that was to be commodified in order to enrich the colonial power. In turn, indigenous territories were treated as business enterprises, with seemingly unlimited resources to exploit. Undoubtedly, this had dire environmental consequences. Only upon the realisation that their activities were causing rapid environmental degradation did colonisers begin to concern themselves with nature conservation. This brought about early attempts by colonisers to preserve indigenous lands—notwithstanding the fact that indigenous peoples have been conserving their own traditional territories for centuries prior to European contact. Yet the ideology that emerged was that nature was something that should be first exploited, then preserved, but all without the input, involvement or participation of indigenous populations.

Instead of coming to grips with the environmental toll brought about by their own exploitative behaviour, colonial powers, and later, successor States consistently blamed local indigenous communities for environmental degradation. Slash and burn agricultural practices and subsistence hunting (as distinguished from large-scale commercial poaching) were decried as environmental threats, despite the fact that such claims have largely been proven inaccurate. As a result, colonial conservation practices dictated that indigenous peoples be removed from their natural environments.

(Dominguez et al., 2020)

Partha Chatterjee takes this further, exploring a deeper, psychological impact of colonial influence (Chatterjee, 1986). In his *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*, Chatterjee discusses, through his reading of an article by John Plamenatz, one of the most significant obstacles impeding upon the ‘progress’ of most post-colonial nations (Chatterjee, 1986). This has to do with how ‘progress’ is defined. Chatterjee suggests that a ‘universal standard’ of progress that was established by Western countries, and largely marked

by industrialization was embedded into the institutions and cultures of colonized countries (Chatterjee, 1986). As this definition of progress stemmed from Western cultures, there was no doubt that these nations would be “culturally equipped” to progress on those terms (Chatterjee, 1986). However, for colonized countries, this was far more complicated.

Chatterjee discusses “deep contradictions” that exist within the psyches of people in post-colonial countries (Chatterjee, 1986). He argues that the colonizer’s standard of progress is accepted into the local culture, yet, the colonizer himself is rejected (Chatterjee, 1986). Similarly, the local rejects those aspects of their culture that could impede upon their pursuit of progress as the colonizer defined it, and simultaneously, hold on to those aspects of their culture as “marks of identity” (Chatterjee, 1986).

Chatterjee is discussing all of this in the context of ‘nationalism’ and its role in shaping and problematizing post-colonial nation states. However, these ideas are incredibly relevant in explaining why colonizer’s felt the need to utilize their own systems to solve problems in foreign contexts.

Beyond the complicated dilemmas the colonized peoples face, one important factor remains unchecked; that is the role of colonizers in disrupting local systems, and then proposing that their own foreign systems be applied to solve the consequences of those disruptions (Barton, 2002). This is commonplace in the origin story of conservation and environmentalism; whereby Western values (industrialization) are introduced into local mindsets as a necessary goal to strive towards; this results in the increased loss of forest cover and biodiversity; then, the only viable solution presented is the further implementation of Western values (governance and management) (Barton, 2002).

Stories like that of Disney’s *Pocahontas* seems to be reflective of much of this; whereby, a native experiences grave threats to her peoples in the form of oppressive outsiders. However, the hero that emerges to save the natives is one of those outsiders. The outsider is the perceived problem and solution.

The colonizer, upon defining progress with respect to his culture, finds himself to be more advanced than the colonized nation he is in. From here, a feeling of the colonizer’s superiority

emerges; one that is also communicated to and absorbed by the colonized peoples. Later, this pattern will re-emerge as the term 'development' finds its way into the mainstream through President Harry S. Truman's second inaugural speech.

History of Development

"It began as a public-relations gimmick" (Hickel, 2017). This is how Jason Hickel begins the first chapter of his book; *The Divide: Global Inequality from Conquest to Free Markets*, in talking about the origins of 'development' as an idea emerging in the post-World War II United States. He then goes on to explain how a flashy announcement was needed for President Harry S. Truman's second inaugural speech. Hickel credits Benjamin Hardy, a "young mid-level functionary in the State Department" with a "knack for a good headline" (Hickel, 2017) for devising the idea. Hardy proposed that in his speech, President Truman announce that the United States will help put an end to the suffering prominent in the rest of the world brought about by poverty. 'Development' would be the final of "four major courses of action" that the President would propose would "help create the conditions that will lead eventually to personal freedom and happiness for all mankind" (Truman, 1949). After condemning communism, promoting democracy, talking about the altruistic good that the United States has done for the world, the President discussed his "four major courses of action". The first calls for supporting the UN, the second for helping rebuild the world economy through the recovery of Europe and increased trade, the third calls for a treaty for the protection of the North Atlantic Sea. Finally, the President states:

Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.

For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve

suffering of these people.

The United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques. The material resources which we can afford to use for assistance of other peoples are limited. But our imponderable resources in technical knowledge are constantly growing and are inexhaustible.

I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life.

And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.

Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens.

(Truman, 1949)

Hickel argues that this speech had a massive impact on the American imagination. This was a transformative time for the world, with the recent birth of several nation states and the end of the European colonial era. Increasing awareness about the outside world brought increasing awareness about the suffering prevalent outside of North America and Western Europe. This knowledge instilled in America, according to Hickel, a sense that they were “enjoying a very high quality of life while the global South – the majority of the world’s population – was mired in debilitating poverty” (Hickel, 2017). According to Hickel, ‘Point Four’ allowed for two major releases for Americans in light of their recent transformations in awareness. First, it would help Americans see themselves as serving a specific role internationally, powerful and generous. Secondly, it created a distinction between ‘developed’ countries and everyone else and justified it with the following argument proposed by Hickel:

Point Four offered them a compelling narrative. The rich countries of Europe and North America were ‘developed’. They were ahead on the Great Arrow of Progress. They were doing better because they were better – they were smarter, more innovative and harder working. They had better values, better institutions and better technology. By contrast,

the countries of the global South were poor because they hadn't yet figured out the right values and policies yet. They were still behind, 'underdeveloped' and struggling to catch up.

(Hickel, 2017)

He goes on to say:

This story was deeply affirming for Americans; it made them feel good about themselves, proud of their achievements and their place in the world. But perhaps more importantly, it gave them a way to feel noble too – it gave them access to a higher, almost cosmological purpose. The developed countries would stand as beacons of hope, as saviours to the poor. They would reach out and give generously of their riches to help the 'primitive' countries of the South follow their path to success. They would become heroes, leading the way to a world of unprecedented peace and prosperity.

(Hickel, 2017)

Hickel's take is rather unforgiving, but is justified then by his explanation of the sheer size of contemporary international development as an industry and then by his explanation of the major practical failures of international development efforts. These are both important concerns and will be discussed later in this section. However, most relevant to the purposes of this research, Hickel discusses how this narrative ignored the past several hundred years-worth of interaction between what would later become the developed and underdeveloped worlds. There had been extreme levels of extraction, including colonial extractions (discussed earlier in this research), slavery, establishing markets in the Global South for "land-intensive goods" so that Western labor forces can be shifted towards more profitable industries, but also the United States' military presence in Cuba and Honduras as late as the 1930s – during Truman's career (Hickel, 2017). Hickel also touches upon the millions of deaths that occurred as a consequence of these practices and the fact that 'the World GDP fell from 65% to 10%, while Europe's share tripled'. He concludes this thought with;

And mass poverty became an issue for the first time in history, as European capitalism – driven by the imperatives of growth and profit – prised people off their land and destroyed their capacity for self-sufficient subsistence.

Hickel claims that the Global North absolved itself of all responsibility in ‘destroying the capacity for self-sufficient subsistence’ in the Global South, and that it approached ‘development’ without acknowledging these truths. To Hickel though, this is not just a phenomenon that is no longer present in contemporary practice. He discusses Jeffrey Sachs, a high-ranking member of the UN and one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people. Sachs wrote a book in 2005 entitled *The End of Poverty* in which he argues that 0.7% of the GDP from ‘rich countries’ would allow for ‘poor countries’ to meet all the necessary requirements to progress towards becoming ‘developed’. Hickel’s primary problem with Sachs’ work is relates to Sachs’ idea that the poverty of ‘poor countries’ is due to natural phenomenon, relating to “natural accidents of geography and climate” (Hickel, 2017). Hickel backs his contention up with a 2016 study that showcases that though developing countries receive large amounts of foreign aid, a far greater sum of money is sent from developing to developed countries. This includes a wide variety of hidden and unhidden costs. There are debt payments, the profits made by foreign investors on local resources, the cost of foreign patents, and ‘capital flight’. The study suggests that ‘capital flight’ is the most prominent cause of the transfer of funds from the developing to the developed world – it consists of practices meant to “evade taxes... launder money or circumvent capital controls” (Hickel, 2017). Through the measurement of the costs of these practices, Hickel’s conclusion is that “for every dollar of aid that developing countries receive, they lose \$24 in net outflows.”

Hickel then takes this further to try and account for unfair policies produced and put in place by ‘rich countries’. He references hundreds of billions of dollars of losses brought about by structural adjustments, the “imbalances in the World Trade Organization”, the abuse of power by rich countries in determining the flow of trade as ‘poor countries’ struggle to lower their prices to compete for access to Global North markets, taxes and fees on remittances, and finally the impact of climate change as a phenomenon “caused almost entirely by rich countries”

(Hickel, 2017). Essentially, though billions of dollars of aid are sent to the 'developing' world, there are still structures and systems of extreme exploitation in place that completely supersede any positive impacts brought about by development. Here, Hickel's argument is that providing development aid is not nearly as pressing a concern as curing the systemic oppression of the Global South.

Though Hickel only briefly touches upon it, this all reflects ideas presented by Partha Chatterjee (discussed earlier in this paper) about a singular definition of success and a linear idea of progress. Arturo Escobar categorically breaks down the philosophical shortcomings that led to the difference in development's practical outcome and its intent as either "the ideological expression of the expansion of post-World War II capitalism; or, alternatively, it can be argued that Development was the result of refined forms of knowledge and greater potentialities of science and technology that could be put to the service of the non-industrialized world" (Escobar, 1992).

I would personally draw connections between these practices and those of British colonial powers in the subcontinent (a major focus of my undergraduate study); suggesting that extractive and exploitative (also, often cruel) colonial practices were justified by a proclaimed desire to educate and 'civilize' the subcontinent. Arturo Escobar, 30 years before this research project, took this one step further and compared the birth and propagation of development as an idea to Edward Said's famous take on the establishment and management of the 'Orient' (Orientalism) under European imperialism. Here it may be important to acknowledge that orientalism, as presented by Said is the philosophical foundation and the set of justifications upon which colonial expansion was based. Both orientalism and development, according to Escobar are "mechanism(s) for the production and management of the Third World..." (Escobar, 1992). He then, goes on to talk about the "pervasive" nature of development whereby the idea of a linear route to progress via development under capitalism has very nearly become the only way to imagine reality. He specifies that he recognizes that there are countries suffering from material circumstances but he has two primary concerns with their being labelled as 'underdeveloped'. Firstly, he is skeptical of the basis upon which a country receives the label.

Secondly, he questions the institutionalization of underdevelopment as a phenomenon to be addressed through foreign aid, and capitalistic values.

What is most interesting about Escobar's work is that development has persisted along the very lines he critiqued 30 years on. There are changes, including many of those proposed by thinkers like Escobar, of grassroots movements and people-centric efforts. Yet, as Hickel reports, the foundations informing practice still remain the same.

History of Participation

19 years ago, Lisa Campbell observed that “over the last 20 years mainstream narratives about conservation and development have been merging...” (Campbell et al., 2003). She references the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report for having sped up the joint practice. The report famously referred to environmental and development efforts as “two sides of the same coin”. This phrase can be found throughout the academic literature.

In describing how the joint practice of conservation and development efforts came to be practiced in unison, Peter Alpert refers to this phenom as a “marriage of convenience” (Alpert, 1996). He argues that the independent failures of conservation efforts, that utilized the establishment of borders between ‘protected areas’ and those utilizing (or exploiting) their resources, and development efforts, that witnessed the broadening of their scope of work to include natural resource management (Alpert, 1996). Conservation efforts saw that those borders failed to produce successful conservation results, and so, in 1971, UNESCO proposed its Man and the Biosphere Program to “promote a sustainable connection between people and nature” (UNESCO, 2020). Through this, UNESCO recommended that these borders be ‘softened’ by demarcating an area around protected areas where locals have greater rights to resource extraction than within the park itself. Meanwhile, development efforts found themselves to be ill-equipped to address the natural resource management challenges they were coming across in investing in the progress of and for these communities, facing increasingly complex interactions between people and nature (Alpert, 1996). In truth, though these serve as important explanations for this conflation, they only paint a partial picture. It is difficult to

imagine that it was only these practical failings that motivated this. A significant role must have also been played by the philosophical underpinnings and foundations of both conservation and development, along with the broader global trends in economics, governance and ideology that formed the context within which those philosophies turned into practice.

Regardless, this gave rise to Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs), which included 'formal partnerships' between organizations that formerly practiced either conservation or development (Alpert, 1996). How these partnerships would play out and what resulting practice looked like would differ from case to case.

There are two sets of academic literature relevant to this idea. One, such as Alpert, looks at this phenom as the conflation of conservation and development efforts ultimately resulting in ICDPs. The other sees this as the transformation of the practice of conservation. The latter is represented by Hideyuki Kubo and Bambang Supriyanto. In their 2009 paper, *From fence-and-fine to participatory conservation: mechanisms of transformation in conservation governance at the Gunung Halimun-Salak National Park, Indonesia*, they draw a distinction between two approaches to conservation. Using the 'carrot-and-stick' analogy here, to Kubo et al., conservation approaches such as establishing protected areas with strict regulations imposed upon local populations regarding access to the land or its resources, is a 'stick' approach. Whereas, inclusive participatory processes "in which local livelihood concerns and respectful interpersonal relationships between resource users and protected area management personnel are recognized as core elements of conservation strategy" (Kubo et al., 2009), make up the proverbial 'carrot' approach. The 'stick' approach, what they call a "fences-and-fines" approach ("fortress conservation" to Dominguez et al., 2020) is geared towards making use of negative reinforcement, such as fines, penalties and incarceration, in order to manage local communities and how they interact with the environment around them. "... resource users are likely to comply with imposed regulations if they perceive the risk of punishment for a violation to be greater than its potential benefits" (Kubo et al., 2009). The 'carrot' approach, on the other hand, "assumes that resource users will abide by conservation measures as long as their own socioeconomic well-being is assured" (Kubo et al., 2009). Kubo et al. reference Mark J. Stern,

and Cesar Viteri and Carlos Chavez, who showcase that there are arguments for both participatory and ‘fence-and-fine’ approaches failing to garner compliance from the local communities (or ‘natural resource users’ as Kubo et al. refer to them) (Viteri et al., 2007, Stern, 2008). Kubo et al. explore the impact of the decision to “transform” the approach of the Ministry of Forestry in Indonesia from a ‘fence-and-fine’ to a participatory approach (Kubo et al., 2009). Though this was an immediate shift resulting from a change in local policies; the field of conservation as a whole has engaged with this transformation in a diversity of ways.

A collection of factors influenced different organizations that were practicing conservation to adopt different values for different reasons. These could include the practical failures of ‘traditional’ conservation, realizations about the similarities between international conservation efforts and colonial practices, moral concerns regarding the impact of conservation efforts on local communities, and even changes in government policies or international human rights. These, among many other motivations, created a large collection of practices and ways in which to integrate conservation and development. Each of these types of practice came with strengths and weaknesses, and those translated directly into their outcomes. This includes practices such as; Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), Community-Based Conservation (CBC), and the focus of this research, participatory processes.

A large collection of organizations attempting this believed (and many continue to believe) that economic incentives alone would suffice as motivation for local communities to comply with restrictions and even assist them in achieving their conservation goals.

Among the first approaches that utilized a ‘carrot’ (as opposed to a ‘stick’) mentality were market-based, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), which started in the 1970s (To et al., 2012). Its emergence is attributed to:

(i) the increasing market valuation of ecosystem services as a means of providing local financial incentives to conservation; (ii) the search for new sources of conservation finance, particularly as a response to shortfalls in public funds; (iii) new corporate

interests in environmental investment and corporate 'social responsibility'; and (iv) supportive changes in resource governance, particularly institutional changes at the national and local level

(To et al., 2012)

Sarah Milne has heavily criticized REDD, (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation), which was formalized via the Kyoto Protocol at the 13th UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP13) in Bali, in 2007 (*The History of REDD* | Ransom, n.d.). REDD was a PES approach to be applied in developing countries based on the idea that economic incentives can be utilized to motivate local communities to adhere to restrictions and assist in achieving conservation goals. In her 2012 paper written with Bill Adams, *Market Masquerades: Uncovering the Politics of Community-level Payments for Environmental Services in Cambodia*, the authors touch upon a collection of ideas relevant to the scope of this research. They firstly highlight how 'neo-liberal' thought favors the idea of market-based solutions on the assumption that markets can be effectively used to produce solutions to the aspects of REDD's agenda that relates to local communities. Milne distinguishes PES from CBNRM or ICDPs by saying that the PES approach requires communities to voluntarily enter into agreements with implementing organizations through contracts. Later in the paper, the authors state that these contracts are not always reflective of community sentiments. Their primary critique is that instead of markets, characterized by 'free market forces', what communities end up with are poor imitations of markets "masquerading" as the real thing. These imitations could be influenced by different stakeholders, regulations, or policies. However, Milne et al. also state that this is largely irrelevant and what truly matters are the "political and social effects of its design and implementation, not in its functioning as a market per se" (Milne et al, 2012). To this end, Milne et al. comment on how communities are perceived as homogenous actors and that REDD policy ensures this by their practice of "committee making", whereby some community members are engaged to represent the entire community and sign contracts on their behalf (Milne et al., 2012).

A broader, more profound critique by Milne et al. refers to the shift in local conceptualizations of nature as a result of quantifying and commodifying local relationships with nature. As per Milne et al., REDD's policies and practice did not leave room for local conceptualizations of nature, and alternatively, changed those local conceptualizations into something simple and transactionary – here, it may be valuable to note that this may in fact be related to REDD's view of local communities as homogenous entities (Milne et al., 2012). Once again, there is an opportunity to connect the findings of other academics to Partha Chatterjee's thoughts. Local conceptions of nature, and indeed wellbeing (especially as we start to consider the 'development' aspects of these projects), are under-represented in relation to external ideas and ideologies.

Similar critiques of the PES approach are also made by Phuc Xuan To and others, who state that "PES only works under certain complex environmental, socio-political and economic conditions" (To et al., 2012). They also discuss, in their analysis of case studies of PES approaches in Vietnam, that (1) local land rights and rights to resources were not adequately considered, (2) payments and benefits were not always distributed in an equitable manner, (3) transaction and opportunity costs were not accounted for leading to diminishing long-term benefits, and finally, (4) that in not adequately accounting for social dynamics in local contexts, their activities led to conflict amongst the community because of problems relating to the distribution of funds (To et al., 2012).

Though it is difficult to trace the avenue through which participation found its way into conservation efforts, Community-Based Conservation (CBC), however, did share commonalities with participatory practices (Campbell et al., 2003). The major difference between PES and CBC approaches is that CBC provides incentives for communities that do not necessarily need to be economic and looks specifically for an alternative to fortress conservation (Campbell et al., 2003). This desire to shift, according to Lisa Campbell and Arja Vainio-Mattila stems from realizations of the practical failures of previous approaches, critiques of the "philosophical basis" upon which previous approaches were based, and finally environmental justice concerns, relating to the negative impact of those approaches on local communities (Campbell et. al,

2003). Campbell et al. in 2003 were critiquing the practice of CBC for mimicking aspects of participatory development without being adequately participatory (Campbell et al., 2003). Here, Campbell et al. dive deeper into CBC, suggesting that universal approaches to conservation could not be successful as success is bound to the complicated local contexts within which conservation is being pursued, and so, CBC would need to put communities at the center of their focus and take lessons from the practice of participatory development, as opposed to focusing their efforts purely on environmental outcomes. Kenneth Iain MacDonald had similar critiques of CBC's practice at roughly the same time.

Given the conflicts that surround the establishment of conservation initiatives, there is a need to find ways to shift the power balance in conservation decision-making. Community-based conservation is one approach that holds promise. But this effort must confront and overcome a disturbing and dangerous tendency among governmental and non-governmental agencies to treat the idea of community as homogenous, and the idea of tradition as static. What become labelled as traditional communities are often treated as non-stratified entities. They are not. Like all communities, they are bounded locations composed of social relations of power.

(MacDonald, 2003)

Fikret Berkes proposes three necessary shifts that led to the formation of CBC; (1) a “systems view of the environment”, (2) accounting for humans in the ecosystem, and then, (3) increased sharing of power, information and responsibility between CBC project implementers and local stakeholders (Berkes, 2003). His 2003 paper, *Rethinking Community-Based Conservation*, calls for the integration of interdisciplinary research and areas of study, to help collectively overcome the immense complexity of the systems at play (Berkes, 2003). These areas of study include “common property, traditional ecological knowledge, environmental ethics, political ecology, and environmental history” in the practice of CBC (Berkes, 2003).

The changes in internationally practiced environmentalism are not linear. There are exceptions and changes in the direction of trends. Among these exceptions is REDD+ (formerly REDD).

Founded in 2013 at COP 19, “REDD+ is a framework created by the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) to guide activities in the forest sector that reduces emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the sustainable management of forests and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries” (*What Is REDD+? | UNFCCC*, n.d.). REDD+ has been criticized for vilifying local communities as “poor stewards” (Beymar-Farris et al., 2011) by “carbon forestry is presented as a “sustainable” alternative to indigenous resource management practices which are demeaned as “destructive” and “illegal”.” (Beymar-Farris et al., 2011). Betsy A. Beymar-Farris and Thomas J. Bassett, in their 2013 paper, *The REDD menace: Resurgent protectionism in Tanzania’s mangrove forests*, criticize REDD+ for representing conservation’s return from community-based to “fortress conservation”. They refer to this as “resurgent protectionism” (quoting the following: Adams, 2009; Forsyth and Walker, 2008; Wilshusen et al., 2002) that they explain as viewing “human use of nature as inimical to biodiversity conservation and by extension to carbon storage” (Beymar-Farris et al., 2011). They suggest that this outlook undermines the idea that potential exists for sustainable human-environmental relationships, arguing for historical considerations to play a role in informing their work (Beymar-Farris et al., 2011).

Ten years after Berkes, MacDonald and Campbell wrote on CBC approaches, Jeremy Brooks, Kerry Ann Waylen and Monique Borgerhoff Mulder produced a paper entitled, *Assessing community-based conservation projects: A systematic review and multilevel analysis of attitudinal, behavioral, ecological, and economic outcomes*. The aim of this paper was to determine what creates successful CBC projects, where a successful project is measured via four themes: attitudes, behaviors, ecological and economic (Brooks et al., 2013). Their results were that four primary factors determine success; (1) that projects are well-designed; (2) that they focus on building local capacity, ensuring resources are distributed equitably, and that they understand local contexts; (3) that the values, beliefs, institutions, etc. of local communities are in-line with the goals of the CBC implementers; and, finally, (4) that local communities be engaged and involved “within the confines of their traditions and institutions”, that they be rewarded equitably with skills, institutional and organizational capacity, and both tangible and intangible benefits (Brooks et al., 2013).

The critiques of CBC, as a modern iteration of ICDPs, seem to be converging on the point that greater participation from and involvement of local communities is essential to the success of these efforts, both in terms of their conservation and their development agendas.

As practices and ideas move between the broad and growing fields of conservation and development, it is difficult, and it would also be simplistic, to point to a specific point in time when participatory approaches began to be used. It would be even more difficult to bound participation within a defined set of practices. As per Robyn Eversole, “Participation is ultimately a discourse: a way of speaking, signaling (in an implicit binary) that we-as-professionals believe that they-as-communities have something important to contribute to the process of social change” (Eversole, 2012). In practice, this is manifested in a variety of ways. Though literature was being published on the variety of reasons why practices resembling “fortress conservation” needed to transition into something more people-centric. The question of how this was to be carried out was answered by ICDPs, PES projects, CBC projects, etc.; each translated by practitioners into a range of activities and approaches. Over time, a positive correlation (albeit an arguably imagined one) emerged between increased involvement of local communities and the perceived successes of projects; i.e., bottom-up solutions (Eversole, 2012).

An interesting starting point for when participation found its way into mainstream practice, however, may be 1991; when Michael Cernea, in editing the second edition of the World Bank’s publication, *Putting people first: sociological variables in rural development*, urged the organization to “pay attention to the role of people in development processes” (Eversole, 2012). Eversole, in her paper, *Remaking participation: challenges for community development practice*, looks at this as an example of how participation is used as a means to recruit local communities into formal institutions and processes (Eversole, 2012). From here, she discusses the work of other academics that have commented on how much of the successes of contemporary practice are marked by the achievement of goals set by external actors without adequate local context (Eversole, 2012). Her analysis of participation within development (not conservation) discusses the role of local and indigenous knowledge systems, formal versus

informal institutions and systems of interbeing, and a more abstract concern about the difference between the moral foundations of participation and its manifestation in practice (Eversole, 2012). This, Eversole's "final challenge" (i.e., "Remaking Participation"), relates to the idea that much of practice has revolved around the question of "how to convince others to participate in our worldviews and institutions" and that it should instead center around the question of "how to become participants in our own right: choosing to move across institutional and knowledge terrains to create new spaces for communities and organizations to 'participate' together" (Eversole, 2012). She suggests an approach, that is backed by "consensus [is] emerging in the literature" (Eversole, 2012), that balances local knowledge and institutions with external ones. "The challenge of remaking participation is to make it multi-directional. Truly participatory development does not just teach, engage, and empower communities, it teaches, engages, and empowers the organizations that work with communities, to see and do things differently" (Eversole, 2012).

To Fikret Berkes,

Conservation has become participatory for two reasons. First, there has been a rise of stakeholders and civil society in general throughout the world. Some would say this is an inevitable development of the postmodern age, like globalization. Second, participatory approaches have come to dominate management because the very nature of complex environmental problems requires a different, participatory approach; as Ludwig (2001) puts it, the age of management is over. It is useful to consider this larger picture in rethinking community-based conservation. As conservation scientists, we need to come to grips with these new realities. "Community-based conservation," as a fad (Hackel 1999), has not been very helpful. After all, "communities" do not conserve or despoil; at least, they do not act as simple, isolated agents. Rather, they are embedded in larger systems, and they respond to pressures and incentives. It may be more useful to rethink community-based conservation as shorthand for environmental governance and conservation action that starts from the ground up but deals with cross-scale relations.

To ground conservation effort, we need a more nuanced understanding of the nature of people, communities, institutions, and their interrelations at various levels.

(Berkes, 2003)

One of the assumptions in their aforementioned 2003 paper by Campbell et al. suggests that as the practice of CBC grew to include participatory processes, that they had not adequately learned from participatory planning as it was practiced in development efforts (Campbell et al., 2003). Not only this, but even if CBC efforts had, they would have had to account for the shortcomings of participation in development efforts and would ultimately be less equipped than development efforts at executing a participatory approach (Campbell et al., 2003).

Like the field of environmentalism as a whole, the practice of participation is changing; responding to the criticism it faces and its own experienced shortcomings. Again, similar to environmentalism, these changes come into practice in different ways, at different rates, across different organizations.

Critique of Practice

Though a series of Western philosophies have influenced the practice of environmentalism, the literature showcases very limited (if any) significant references to the role of any disempowered cultural context influencing the mainstream practice of environmentalism. Marion Hourdequin in, *Environmental Ethics: the State of the Question*, suggests that the field of Environmental Ethics came to be as a response to “deficiencies” in practice. These were marked by ideas such as a sharp distinction between humans and nature, and a series of practices motivated by the desire to save nature for the functions it serves humans (Hourdequin, 2021). He recognizes these as shortcomings of Western philosophy (Hourdequin, 2021). In discussing the origins of Environmental Ethics, he also references the 1973 work of Richard Sylvan, where he “asked, “Is there a need for a new, an environmental, ethic?” and answered in the affirmative, arguing that existing Western philosophical traditions lacked the conceptual resources to ground an adequate ethic to guide human relations with the broader natural world” (Hourdequin, 2021). Hourdequin also suggests that the philosophical solutions proposed by the emerging field of

Environmental Ethics in the 1970s were already a part of several Eastern traditions thousands of years older (Hourdequin, 2021). Here, it may be safe to assume that in referencing the limitations of the Western philosophies that influenced international environmentalism, the author is setting boundaries around the collection of ideas accepted within a widespread cultural context and not suggesting that all of Western philosophy is a single entity. This can be assumed because of the author's mention of Kant, Descarte, and of Aristotle's role as a foundation for much of Western philosophy; in relation to his ideas concerning the superiority of humans over the natural world (Hourdequin). Similarly, Eastern philosophies must also be considered as discrete and unique. Arguably, Eastern philosophies could be considered to encompass more discrete, unique, and numerous philosophies (at least over the last 200 years) because of the relatively greater opportunity for ideological exchange and cross-cultural influence within Europe and North America during that time. Consequently, a wide variety of conceptualizations of nature and the relationship between nature and humans exist in the East (Hill et al., 2020). Just as Hourdequin may have argued, the practice of environmentalism would have improved with the inclusion of Eastern schools of thought prior to the birth of Environmental Ethics. Similarly, contemporary practice can be improved by the inclusion of local conceptualizations of nature; at the very least if they utilize local ideas in local contexts, and at best if they utilize them to improve upon their own philosophies and epistemologies.

Just as conceptualizations of nature and humanity's relationship with nature are unique to each community, so too are their conceptualizations of wellbeing. 'Wellbeing', as explored by Sarah White and a collection of other writers and practitioners in the 2019 book, *Cultures of Wellbeing: Method, Place, Policy*, is a broad, interdisciplinary, and highly debated measure relating to tangible and intangible contributors to a person or community's satisfaction with their lived experience; and that is experienced within and through the philosophical lenses of specific cultural contexts (White et al., 2016). Much like Western philosophies have dominantly influenced the practice of environmentalism, they have also defined wellbeing without the adequate input of other schools of thought (White et al., 2016). White also comments on the materialistic, individualistic, and scientifically informed ideations of wellbeing within Western traditions; much of the rest of the book showcases the conceptualizations of wellbeing across

cultures that do not fit into the Western tradition's definition (White et al., 2016). For example, in her chapter in the book, Carola Eyber discusses measures of wellbeing as they relate to religious experiences.

The tendency to collapse religious and spiritual issues into the broad category of cultural practices and beliefs is widespread amongst academics as well as amongst psychosocial practitioners and humanitarian aid organisations. Little attention has been paid to the way in which religious matters affect the meanings attached and the expressions given to suffering, or the way in which everyday practices and notions of wellbeing are intertwined with religious and spiritual aspects of life... religion and spirituality are being ignored in the dominant conceptualisation of psychosocial wellbeing or subsumed under the notion of cultural practices... ignoring religion and spirituality undermines the commitment to take local understandings of wellbeing as an essential starting point for understanding the suffering of displaced populations.

(Eyber | White et al., 2019)

Eyber also talks about “a longstanding practice of ignoring religion and the role it plays in people's lives due to the assumption that as societies develop and modernise, they would ‘naturally’ undergo a process of secularisation” (White et al., 2016). This relates back to the Western idea of progress functioning linearly, as explored earlier in this research.

White et al. (and Milne et al.) reference the variety and uniqueness of cultural contexts that exist throughout the world. As this claim is made about the uniqueness of communities in relation to one another, it must then also be extended to account for the uniqueness of individuals in relation to other community members. The function this serves is to account for conflicts and marginalization that may occur within communities. Kikula et al. reference an example of local conflicts in the form of impending land use crises occurring in a Buffer Zone establishment project in Tanzania (as referenced earlier as an ICDP approach) where squatters had started to grow crops and build a dependence on the resources and opportunities in the region (Kikula et al., 2003). In regards to accounting for marginalized groups, a great deal of

literature references the importance of accounting for matters concerning women in conservation efforts, including the study by Kikula et al., *Shortcomings of Linkages between Environmental Conservation Initiatives and Poverty Alleviation in Tanzania*. Kikula et al., witnessed minimal representation of women's voices in village meetings ("only 4 per cent of the women spoke during the meetings") and suggest that "Programmes to empower these rural women, with emphasis on illiteracy eradication, are imperative because there is unquestionable evidence that women are more linked with the environment; since their day-to-day activities are closely dependent on nature and natural resources, especially water" (Kikula et al., 2003).

Many conservation conflicts involve deep-rooted conflict. Such conflicts include deeply held values, high stakes, power imbalances, complexity, and a sense of moral superiority that may drive parties to perpetuate the fight, even when they cannot win in the short term... Deep-rooted conflicts often have conflict both within groups (intragroup) and between groups (intergroup), where the internal conflict actually perpetuates the external conflict, as leaders are compelled to maintain the conflict in order to protect their identity and promote group cohesiveness.

(Madden et al., 2014)

The arguments in this section so far correlate to the importance of open-mindedness in the practice of conservation and development efforts; and by extension, participatory conservation. However, it is also important to contextualize this open-mindedness in knowledge of the past and present of external influence on local contexts. The aim of this research is to develop an understanding of how well an approach to participation addresses the disconnect between external and local elements of conservation projects. In order for a participatory approach to address this disconnect, it must also be conscious of the historical, cultural, and contemporary setting in which the relationship between external and local elements plays out.

Dominguez et al. refer to a return to “colonial interventions” via practices such as ‘fortress conservation’. This is reflective of Resurgent Protectionism, as defined by Beymar-Farris et al. (earlier in this research). In the conclusion of their paper, Dominguez et al. make recommendations to NGOs practicing international conservation in post-colonial contexts.

Ultimately, large conservation NGOs and international donors that fund conservation initiatives in former colonies must be held to account for the harms fortress conservation policies have disproportionately inflicted on some of the world’s most marginalised and environmentally conscious communities. They must do so by providing effective mechanisms for victims of fortress conservation to seek redress, providing adequate restitution and compensation. These actors must stop funding and promoting these policies in favour of indigenous and community conserved areas (ICCAs), i.e., territories conserved and administered by indigenous peoples and local communities [163], leveraging their considerable power to help catalyse the legal and political reforms necessary to make customary indigenous title enforceable. As a starting point, conservation projects must respect indigenous peoples’ right to self-determination and free, prior and informed consent. They must also devote funds to better understand how indigenous traditional knowledge helps preserve the environment, integrating it into modern conservation science. Such a rights-based approach to conservation is not only required urgently as a matter of international human rights law, it is also often the best way to effectively conserve the environment and mitigate climate change.

(Dominguez et al., 2020)

It is clear from the above, that a great deal of knowledge is required in order to make this practice effective and ethically sound. As mentioned earlier, Fikret Berkes argues that an interdisciplinary approach is needed to do this work and achieve adequate results (Berkes, 2003). He considers areas of study such as “common property, traditional ecological knowledge, environmental ethics, political ecology, and environmental history” to conclude with the idea that an interdisciplinary approach is important to achieve both conservation and human-centric outcomes (Berkes, 2003).

Kubo et al., discuss how the evolution of conservation from “fence-and-fine” to more participatory approaches was fueled by, among other things, “learning processes” (Kubo et al, 2009). Similarly, 6 years earlier, Campbell et al., critiqued CBC practices for not learning enough from participation as it was practiced in development efforts (Campbell et al., 2003). From these suggestions, we can conclude that iterative learning processes are essential to effectively practicing conservation. This also relates to the inevitable learning curve that organizations will face with every new cultural context within which they carry out their work. Approaches must be unique to unique solutions and must require that practitioners adopt an approach whereby they continue to learn and do so iteratively, adopting what is learned back into practice.

... it is evident that each cultural group has their own unique beliefs for conservation. Some people are unable to accept the limitations of conservation and do not consider differing cultural dependencies on nature.

(Morrison et al., 2018)

As shown above, the literature regularly references the unique nature of communities and from this argument, it stands to reason that the success or failure of a conservation plan depends largely on the context in which it is being applied, and the extent to which that context is considered by project implementers (Waylen et al., 2010). This can be taken in the context of how best to carry out conservation solutions in a context, how to conduct development activities, and how to pursue wellbeing. Based on the (aforementioned) work by White et al., it is safe to assume that when considering the impact that activities may have on local communities, accounting for wellbeing may also be an important step. Ideally, unique solutions would be developed with local involvement and with local contexts in mind, geared towards achieving wellbeing as it is defined by its target communities. Simultaneously, the history of conservation and its conflation with development, as it leads into including participatory processes in its approach, showcases the strengths and weaknesses, both practical and philosophical, of a variety of different types of support offered to communities in the pursuit of achieving conservation goals.

Participation may be considered as a continuum. In fully participatory approaches, needs are identified by the community themselves, who then may seek external support. At the other end of the continuum, superficial participation of community representatives is sought to validate the aims of programme planners, usually already decided.

(Morrison et al., 2005)

The threat of superficial participation is considerable and will be discussed later in this section in the context of relationships with and the influence of donors. It is, however, also relevant to the nature of support that is provided to communities. Based on the complexities of local cultural contexts, it is important that community involvement serve more than an aesthetic function. Negative consequences of superficial participation would stem from a poor understanding of local contexts leading to the design of projects based on incomplete information (or misinformation), that do not achieve results which are sensitive to local conceptualizations of nature and wellbeing. Based on the literature, this is a significant consideration for practicing organizations to be conscious of. Power, according to these arguments, must actually be shared. Kikula et al., also discuss how sometimes, target communities have to opt for short-term benefits, losing out on the opportunity to generate long-term benefits (Kikula et al., 2003). Alongside being truly participatory, organizations must also account for the limitations of the decision-making capacity of target communities.

Related to the idea of superficial participation is another important concern for practicing NGOs and their relationship with local communities; trust. “Trust-building” is a major theme in Kubo et al.’s aforementioned 2009 paper.

The result of this analysis indicates that while the dominant discourse of participatory conservation assumes a primary importance of satisfying local economic needs for conservation, what should be emphasized is the process of trust-building and learning between frontline staff and local resource users without which the durability of a conservation institution is questionable.

(Kubo et al., 2009)

This statement is also qualified later in the paper; “the approach of participatory conservation with the focus on trust-building might not be sufficient for the purpose of ecological recovery although it is effective in halting further degradation” (Kubo et al., 2009). Tania Murray Li suggests a similar argument concerning learning. Though it is a critical aspect of conducting community-centric work, extensive learning of local contexts alone is not enough. In the 7th chapter of her book, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*, explores a World Bank project in Indonesia headed by an anthropologist dedicated to bringing the conscientiousness of the social sciences into the practice of community-centric conservation. Though this project seemed to be an ideal form of participation, whereby decision-making power rested with the local communities; Li argues that “This did not mean that the program merely responded to villagers’ desires. Rather, like the other governmental interventions I have described, the village level planning process devised by the bank, backed by its rule books, monitors, and auditing devices, was designed to shape desires and act on actions, setting the conditions so that people would behave as they ought” (Li, 2007). This is a clear representation of how participation can be superficial and highlights an important pitfall for organizations practicing participation to avoid.

In being conscious of this, the literature suggests that it is important for organizations to work towards aligning their goals with those of their target communities. Instead, however, “... outside developers from the World Bank to Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) are casting themselves in a supporting role: providing resources, expertise, assistance and support to the “locals,” whether at national government or local village level, to achieve “their own” development goals” (Eversole, 2003). Similar to Li’s aforementioned work, Robyn Eversole explored 3 cases of participatory efforts critiquing them through this lens as they struggled to manage their ambitions within local cultural contexts and achieve different levels of relative successes (Eversole, 2003). These were development projects and each had somewhat defined their goals for their communities beforehand and incurred challenges (Eversole, 2003).

Brooks et al., discuss how within CBC projects “it is increasingly argued that projects must achieve not only ecological but also economic, and social goals” (Brooks et al., 2013). For

participatory conservation (as a subset of CBC), it is perhaps important to align these goals with those of local communities.

There is an argument that “international development evaluations have a positive bias”; this is taken as a starting point in Michael Bamberger’s 2013 paper, *Why do many international development evaluations have a positive bias? Should we worry?* Bamberger highlights some of the consequences of the positive bias in evaluations (Bamberger, 2013). He suggests that practicing organizations tend to:

■ *overestimate the positive effects of the interventions they support* ■ *ignore or underestimate the proportion of the population excluded or not benefiting from the interventions* ■ *ignore or downplay many of the negative impacts of the interventions—some of which can be very serious. The potential institutional and policy implications of this bias include:* ■ *agencies may continue to fund projects that might be producing fewer benefits than claimed* ■ *reduced resources and incentives to develop and test alternative programs* ■ *failure to take measures to reach out to excluded or under-served groups—often the poorest and most vulnerable* ■ *failure to identify and address negative impacts, resulting in a failure to follow the policy of ‘Do no harm’.*

(Bamberger, 2013)

More relevant critiques (as they relate to conservation projects as opposed to the development projects discussed by Bamberger) come from the 2019 paper by Catalano et al. entitled, *Learning from published project failures in conservation*, in which they focus their “analysis upon social dimensions as opposed to biological causes, which have been comparatively well addressed” (Catalano et al., 2019). On an unrelated note, they also justify the approach taken by this research by suggesting that “The peer-reviewed literature has the potential to become a useful repository of lessons learned from failed projects”, but qualifying that statement with the need for organizations to address several “practical challenges” relating to effectively reporting and learning from project failures (Catalano et al., 2019). These include:

... identifying individuals' cognitive biases, cultivating psychological safety in teams, mainstreaming systemic team learning behaviors, addressing varied leadership styles, and confronting fear of failure in organizational culture must be overcome if conservation professionals are to effectively navigate research-implementation 'spaces'.

(Catalano et al., 2019)

In conservation projects, an organization impacts and is impacted by a variety of stakeholders beyond itself and its target communities. Gani Aldashev and Thierry Verdier discuss how large international NGOs can outcompete smaller local NGOs (Aldashev et al., 2007). They comment on local NGOs facing “donor saturation” and the formation of attractive “new markets” for NGOs internationally (Aldashev et al., 2007). They also talk about how the availability of funding, in relation to this competition and selection processes by donors, suggests that “globalization reduces the number of NGO varieties present on the market” (Aldashev et al., 2007). This suggests that international organizations should consider their potential impact on local NGOs. Whether an organization opts to compete against local NGOs or to assist them, thereby maintaining the ‘variety’ of NGOs in a context, it is at the very least important for a practicing organization to be conscious of their impact on the broader local context – “events and discussions happening within the process may also have impacts outside of the group of participants” (Hassenforder et al., 2014).

This also applies to working with local governments. Dan Brockington explores the role of a ‘corrupt, violent and predatory’ village government in conservation efforts in Tanzania (Brockington, 2007). He discusses impacts on projects such as exaggerated successes, failure of democratic solutions that benefit everyone in the community, and lowered expectations of what a community can achieve (Brockington, 2007). While he discusses a local village government, of course, it stands to reason that Brockington’s observations could also be applied to provincial or federal government departments and bureaucracies within countries. Organizations must also be conscious of their relationship with local governance.

A major concern, in both practice and academia, is the role of donors in internationally practice conservation; this is especially complicated in participatory conservation as an additional set of values directly influences the design and implementation of a project (i.e., local community values are added to the list alongside the NGO's goals, local government's interests, and the donor's requirements). The challenge here is that donors can utilize their positions of relative power in order to try and define the direction of projects. Nadia Horning argues "that the gap between foreign aid and development performance is rooted in donor competition to give aid for the purpose of advancing their foreign interests. In turn, the state exploits this donor competition to stay afloat" (Horning, 2008). In looking at the relationship between donors and the state in conservation efforts she suggests that "what disables successful conservation and the development it should enable is neither the volume nor type of foreign aid but the absence of institutions that effectively align donor and state incentives with strong development performance" (Horning, 2008). This idea should be extrapolated to other stakeholders as well to suggest that mechanisms be developed in order to align the goals of local communities, local and international NGOs, local governance, and donors.

Here, it stands to reason that superficial participation could also occur as a consequence of organizations appealing to donors, as they increasingly request that projects be participatory, as opposed to using participation as a tool to create positive outcomes for communities (Horning, 2008).

Methodology

Introduction

This research aims to explore and understand the extent to which a specific approach to participation addresses the broad disconnect between local and external stakeholders as represented by the literature review above.

A four-step process was adopted to conduct this research; (1) development of an assessment criteria, in the form of themes against which to measure the effectiveness of a participatory approach at addressing the problem at the crux of this research; (2) collect data from a relevant

organization, through semi-structured interviews to gain broad insights on the practice and intent of that organization; (3) categorize, organize and quantify that data in NVivo using the themes from the assessment criteria; and, finally, (4) analyze the data through an iterative approach to thematic analysis.

Assessment Criteria

To measure something as specific as participation's impact on shortening the gap between external and local stakeholders, I looked towards the academic literature and compiled relevant histories of environmentalism, development work, and their subsequent conflation. I also looked towards how these histories led to the practice of participatory environmentalism. This research showcased that the evolution of this broadening field was influenced by practical failures and moral realizations. Simultaneously, it also showcased the repetition of past shortcomings in more contemporary practices, often influenced by older philosophies and systems of economics and governance within which these contemporary practices take place. The purpose behind this 'literature review' was to collect information that could potentially be valuable to practicing organizations.

By utilizing the literature review above, I was able to collect a large amount of information on how the disconnect at the center of this paper has manifested itself in environmentalism, both historically and in contemporary practice. This disconnect was explored in the literature review as a difference in the foundational philosophies and ambitions of different stakeholders that culminated into inadequate outcomes for local communities. Further, the literature review also explored how participatory practices emerged as a potential bridge, minimizing the negative impact of this disconnect.

Taking an iterative approach to the coding of qualitative data, I first developed Developing lists of all the factors considered, and then proceeded to rearranging and reorganizing them., Through this process, I was able to condense this information into a list of concerns that neatly fit into five primary themes that all practicing organizations should account for. These themes are; (1) culture of learning; (2) nature of support; (3) relationship with communities; (4)

reporting practices; and (5) the impact on and influence of other stakeholders. This is represented below in **Table 1**.

One theme is intentionally left out in order to restrict the high levels of abstraction that qualitative research such as this is at risk of operating at. This has to do with the role of external influence on local communities. The aforementioned ideas by Partha Chatterjee reflect the complicated, inconsistent, and dynamic impact of biases instilled in local communities as a consequence of an unrealistic conceptualization of the Western, modern, or external world. This could be influenced by everything from colonialism to social media and is an impact that is exacerbated in remote communities that due to increasing global connectivity are rapidly losing their 'remoteness'. This is also excluded because of an absence of an adequate selection of literature on the topic warranting further, more focused, research. Further themes that are not considered include 'local property rights'. Though this is an important consideration, the historical and political analysis required would broaden this research beyond necessity. Further, local property rights have a complicated relationship with external stakeholders that requires extensive study of the historical and contemporary backgrounds of a social and political phenomenon.

TABLE 1:

Themes	Justifications
Culture of Learning	<p>Through the literature it is clear that a culture of learning is central to doing this work well. Learning must take place to the following ends:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Open-mindedness: This implies learning about the different philosophical frameworks and the different cultural contexts of local communities. This relates to exploring understanding local conceptualizations of wellbeing and nature, among others. Relevant references include Sarah White and Marion Hourdequin.2. Empathy: An understanding about broader truths that have created a need within local contexts for support from external sources. This includes exploring historical contexts, impacts of colonialism, the role of international relations (as explored by

	<p>Hickel) in shaping and perpetuating global inequities. Relevant references include Tania Murray Li and Jason Hickel.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Interdisciplinary learning: Due to the complexity of the issues being explored and the relationships between the various aspects of this work, it is important that the approach to learning and to developing solutions be interdisciplinary in nature. Relevant references include Fikret Berkes. 4. Iterative approach: Finally, in order for the efforts taken towards learning to be meaningful, organizations must be committed to continuing to learn more, and to applying what is learned back into practice. Relevant references include Lisa Campbell and Arja Vainio-Mattila, and Hideyuki Kubo and Bambang Supriyanto.
Nature of Support	<p>This theme looks at the various types of support the organization provides. Though this will specifically look at what sorts of interventions are implemented, emphasis will be placed on exploring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. how broad the scope of interventions is. 2. the extent to which the interventions are truly participatory (as opposed to superficial participation) 3. the types of support extended to communities <p>Relevant references include Sarah Milne, Morrison et al., and Waylen et al.</p>
Relationship with Communities	<p>The approach organizations take in engaging with local communities and the goals they set for their relationships with local communities are important. (1) 'Trust' is perhaps the most important consideration according to the literature. Simultaneously, however, it is also important for organizations to (2) work towards sharing power and aligning goals with local communities. An additional consideration, not represented in the literature will also be measured here. This relates to (3) the extent to which information and knowledge is evenly shared between the local and external stakeholders. Relevant references include Kubo et al, Stern et al. and Robyn Eversole.</p>
Reporting Practices	<p>There is a great deal of literature on reporting practices. The primary concerns are that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. failures are not adequately reported 2. reporting is not sufficiently used to inform and improve practice 3. reporting tends to be narrow; in that it ignores measures beyond what is relatively measurable. <p>Relevant references include Villar et al., Michael Bamberger, Allison Catalano, and White et al.</p>

Other Stakeholders	A large collection of stakeholders is involved in the sorts of international, community-centric environmental efforts this research is exploring. This research is, however, focused on the interactions between local and external elements of this work. To this end, how practicing organizations interact with (1) local NGOs or other NGOs operating in the same space; (2) the extent to which local government is coordinated and collaborated with; (3) impacts on the broader community, and people that do not fall under the project's target communities; and finally, (4) the impact and role of donors in influencing any aspect of the project.
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These themes were used to develop a coding structure (**Table 2**) identifying primary and sub-themes; and consequently, this coding structure was used to analyze the selected participatory approach (discussed in the next sections).

TABLE 2:

Learning	Nature of Support	Relationship with Communities	Other Stakeholders	Reporting Activities
Open-mindedness	Broad support	Trust	Local government	Reporting failures
Empathy	True participation	Power sharing	NGOs	Reporting broad outcomes
Culture of Learning	Types of Support	Align goals	Donors	Learning from reporting
Interdisciplinary		Conversational	Broader community	

Based upon Bamberger's evaluation of the "positive bias" in international development practice (and my own experience with the phenom) this research adopts an approach whereby the foundational principles, rather than outcomes, are taken into consideration (Bamberger, 2013). Bamberger discusses the various causes and impacts of the positive bias he sees as prevalent in the development sector (Bamberger, 2013). In light of this, I opted to not make use of an

organization's reporting activities other than as a secondary source of information meant to add nuance and detail to this research. The primary approach that was utilized was a qualitative analysis of the detailed explanations of activities that were provided by experienced members of the organization's staff.

Bamberger also explores the limitations of quantitative methods in determining the true outcomes of projects (Bamberger, 2013). Campbell et al., in 2006, utilized qualitative methods to determine "environmental values" for "Volunteer Tourists Working for Sea Turtle Conservation" (Campbell et al., 2006). Their argument was justified by their critique of previous quantitative approaches that produced limited pictures of a phenomenon as complex and dynamic as "environmental values" (Campbell et al., 2006).

... and finally... we were less interested in "measuring" these values... or identifying their existence... Rather, we were concerned with how different values interact, compete, and reinforce one another.

(Campbell et al., 2006)

Similarly, coupled with Bamberger's arguments about biases in reporting practices, this research also looks towards qualitative methods, exploring the responses of interviewees in relation to the major themes being explored. Like Campbell et al., semi-structured interviews were used (Campbell et al., 2006); in order to explore not only the broad outlines of the various activities the organization carries out, but the ideas and philosophies justifying those activities and the relationships of those ideas and philosophies with each other.

Data Collection

The criteria for selecting an organization have been consistently represented throughout this research. Relevant organizations would be environmental organizations from the developed world working in the Global South on environmental projects, that also utilize 'development' processes as a tool to further their environmental goals, and engage with local communities through participatory practices.

Though there are trends within environmentalism whereby the participatory aspects of a project have to do with conducting evaluations of projects after they have been implemented, with the intention of learning lessons from those evaluations. However, the organization this research project looks at should, ideally, not fall in this category. The organization selected utilized a more inclusive process that also shares power. The larger aim of this research is not to critique an existing organization for failing to meet hypothetical requirements of inclusion and power sharing, but to eventually understand how participatory practices can be improved and have more positive outcomes.

To achieve this, it made logical sense to select an organization that seemed like it may be closer to an ideal (imagined) participation than most. Thus, we were able to draw lessons from their practices which meet the criteria of this research and we do not, theoretically, have to impose massive changes in order to achieve an even more ideal set of participatory practices.

5 members of staff with experience in conducting the organization's approach to participation were selected. Collectively, they covered the organization's current project areas, i.e., at least one person per major project area.

... the purpose of the contemporary descriptive/corrective SSI [semi-structured interviews] is to evaluate the dominant discursive representation of an experience by comparing it with participants' actual experiences. This type of interview uniquely juxtaposes what is known about an experience (i.e., established knowledge in the literature), or known only from the privileged perspectives of others (e.g., those persons who represent others, such as researchers reporting on the vulnerable, invisible groups), with the perspectives of those whose views are typically absent or under-represented and who have actual material knowledge of this experience. The word "disjuncture" (Smith, 1990) refers to the discrepancies between the conceptualization and textual mediation of an experience with the actual material experience of participants.

(McIntosh et al., 2015)

If the “dominant discursive representation” or a participatory approach is that it functions well in achieving the holistic positive outcomes that seem to be missing from the historical analysis of past practice (as showcased by the Literature Review), then, the purpose of these semi-structured interviews was to evaluate the true nuance behind an organization’s unique approach to participation and examine if it measures up as a response to the critique of previous practice.

The interviews were scheduled through a staff member at the organization. The staff member was careful not to talk to the potential participants about the specifics of the research so as not to introduce bias in the participants. Individual interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, ending at an average of 50 minutes. The interviews were conducted and recorded on *Zoom*, a video conferencing software that can generate audio transcriptions. These transcriptions were edited to account for the errors produced by the voice recognition software and were then uploaded into *NVivo* after names and other information that could reveal the identities of individual participants were removed.

The interview guide (below) showcases the structure of the questions asked. However, a further step was taken to avoid the interviewer’s biases. Only topics that were brought up by the participants were explored further. Though this still leaves room for bias, as I only asked questions that were relevant to my research and with each subsequent interview was geared towards filling the gaps in my research; it is relatively negligible.

The interview guide is as follows:

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Tell me about yourself and your role at the organization.
2. Tell me about your organization’s approach to participation.
3. What does the organization know or aspire to know in order to practice this?
4. What type of support does the organization extend to local communities?

5. What sort of relationship should one have with local communities?
6. How does the organization account for the other stakeholders involved?

Data Management

The assessment criteria were compiled into a coding structure in *NVivo* (**Table 2**), a data analysis software used for quantifying qualitative social science research. It also better informed the semi-structured interviews this coding structure was used to develop. This is an iterative process and questions will be informed and guided by a desire to gather a holistic understanding of the organization's practice and the intentions and values behind that practice.

As mentioned above, data was to be collected through semi structured interviews conducted with the organization's staff in managerial positions. The transcriptions of those interviews were loaded onto NVivo and every relevant mention of a factor on the coding structure (**Table 2**) was highlighted and categorized. Further, other publications

After the transcriptions had been categorized according to the coding structure and their relationships with each theme, NVivo's options to visualize the data were utilized to draw relevant graphics that showcase how often themes were talked about.

Approach to Analysis

This is all premised on the idea of 'causal mapping' (Pyrko et al., 2018). This is an "accessible, yet structured and formalized, method that can be used in a variety of studies within the broad organization and management research" that establishes a means of "deductive content analysis" based upon a "pre-specified hypothesis or, at least, coding categories..." (Pyrko et al., 2018).

NVivo served to categorize and organize the data thematically that then allowed for the exploration and analysis of the interview transcripts and publications as they relate to the themes. Therefore, the primary function *NVivo* serves is to organize the data so that the content could be explored as it relates to each theme and sub-theme.

Case Study: Health in Harmony

Background

Health in Harmony (HiH) was founded in 2005 by Dr. Kinari Webb. In her memoirs, *Guardians of the Trees: A journey of hope through healing the planet*, Dr. Kinari Webb recounts her journey from working as a young biology student conducting research on orangutans in Borneo to founding Health in Harmony (HiH) in 2005 (Webb, 2021). The book goes through the breadth of Webb's lived experience with rainforest communities and emphasizes key moments that led to the author establishing HiH and developing their unique participatory approach to environmentalism, labeled 'Radical Listening' (RL) (Webb et al., 2021).

Operating on the principles of Planetary Health, HiH aims to address carbon emissions by addressing rainforest loss. Planetary Health is a field of study that is based on "the human health impacts of disrupting Earth's natural systems" (Myers et al., 2020). HiH utilizes a now common theme in conservation efforts, that in order to protect natural spaces to a high degree of effectiveness, local communities must be involved. Their work targets healthcare, livelihoods and rainforests ("Impact," n.d.). Webb's personal experiences highlighted the interconnectivity and interdependence of these three focus areas. This does mean, however, that their work is broad and they practice a diversity of projects. HiH believes that the best way to involve communities is through its unique approach to participation.

Radical Listening is an iterative participatory approach that is characterized by listening actively to communities. The cornerstone of RL is the idea that communities are best suited at defining the solutions to the challenges they face. This is, of course, in contrast with the majority of participatory approaches that involve communities in order to understand perspectives on solutions that NGOs propose to communities. More forward-thinking organizations may involve communities at the planning stage but with limited decision-making powers. RL instead calls upon communities to collectively develop solutions. HiH's literature quotes limited challenges with this practice and does not showcase any examples whereby conflicts between the community's collective decisions and HiH's goals surfaced; or where HiH influenced the collective decisions being made. Instead, HiH in its 'A Guide to Radical Listening for Planetary

Health' quotes the usage of RL as opposed to 'facilitation' because the latter involves outside bias directing decision making.

Radical Listening is iterative. It involves first 'understanding local contexts', then 'listening to the community', 'collaboratively designing solutions', 'signing a reciprocity agreement', and then cycling through 'implementing solutions', 'refining solutions', 'listening to the community', 'collaboratively designing solutions', and then once again, implementing them.

Radical Listening has 6 primary characteristics according to HiH (Webb et al., 2021):

1. It involves listening to groups instead of individuals.
2. It helps pinpoint and recognize "key fulcrums of change" in local communities.
3. It gives importance to local knowledge and shares power with local communities
4. Through RL, the solutions that are developed have a higher probability of being applied.
5. It is based on mutual exchanges from stakeholders to create positive impacts for all.
6. It is practiced with an 'intention to implement' the solutions derived from communities.

If participatory approaches exist on a spectrum ranging from very high to superficial community involvement in decision-making, HiH is clearly striving to be more inclusive and conscious of sharing power with local communities than most environmental organizations. This makes HiH a particularly interesting organization for the purposes of this research. If HiH is, hypothetically, among the most evolved, forward-thinking, and inclusive participatory approaches, then surely it will be very well suited to addressing the disconnect that this research argues participatory methods emerged in order to address.

Data Sources

5 interviews with HiH staff were conducted. This included 3 Program Directors, 1 Medical Coordinator, and 1 freelance translator. Each country HiH works in (Indonesia, Madagascar and Brazil) were represented in these interviews. With the exception of the translator, for whom the questions asked were different, the results are completely anonymized by position and country so that the major themes represented in each conversation do not give away the identities of participants.

Further, HiH has produced a "Radical Listening Manual" which informs individuals and organizations on how to practice Radical Listening and was selected. Two impact reports, one pre-Covid (2018), and one post-Covid (2021) were also selected. These were also coded into NVivo to explore the nuance in their published works.

Similarly, HiH also conducts workshops on *Radical Listening*. Unfortunately, the scope of this research did not allow for an analysis of the workshop; though this would make for interesting future study to add more nuance and detail to the outcomes of this research.

The above coding structure (**Table 2**) was slightly amended to more neatly match HiH and their approach after preliminary research into HiH and their operations:

1. LEARNING

- a. **Open-mindedness:** Acknowledging the complexities of the cultural differences between the organization and the local community, as well as the differences amongst and within local communities. These could relate to the different definitions of wellbeing and conceptualizations of nature explored in the literature review.
- b. **Empathy:** Acknowledging the difficulties and complexities of the lived experiences of local communities, both modern and historical. This would include measures such as the extent to which colonial pasts and contemporary inequities are considered.
- c. **Culture of Learning:** Adopting an iterative approach to learning, whereby what is learned continually informs practice and all sources of knowledge are utilized.
- d. **Interdisciplinary approach:** Recognizing that environmentalism comprises of a collection of fields of study connected by a common goal.

2. NATURE OF SUPPORT

- a. **Broad outcomes:** Ensuring that activities are not only designed to serve communities in direct and measurable ways conducive to externally founded conceptualizations of progress and wellbeing.
- b. **Local contexts:** This is not measured for HiH, because via Radical Listening, HiH only conducts activities that are designed by communities.
- c. **True participation:** Ensuring that participation is not “superficial” (Morrison et al., 2005)
- d. **Types of support:** This node only measures for the various increases in access and amenities provided to the communities, including skills, tools, and capital.

3. RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- a. **Trust:** Working towards building and earning trust with communities. This could be a complicated process directly related to the local contexts HiH is working in.
- b. **Sharing power:** This is related to the idea of ‘true participation’ but instead focuses on the extent to which HiH would be bound by decisions made by their communities.
- c. **Aligning goals:** Unlike development organizations, environmental ones have interests beyond the wellbeing of local communities. Whereas a participatory development organization would have the same larger goals as their communities, i.e., collective wellbeing, an environmental organization must work towards aligning their environmental goals with the local communities’ ambitions for wellbeing.
- d. **Conversational approach:** Premised on the idea that critiques of past practice centered around how community voices were not adequately involved and that an equal exchange of information and power was not conducted, the argument emerges that HiH may in fact have tipped the balance too far in the other direction. Whereby, HiH is learning from and about communities and their local contexts, but

are not providing local communities with commensurate information about themselves and their ‘foreign’ contexts.

4. OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

- a. **Local government:** This explores the nature of the relationship with and the influence of local government departments.
- b. **Other NGOs:** This explores the nature of the relationship with and the influence of both local and foreign NGOs operating in the same space or with potential for collaboration.
- c. **Donors:** This explores the nature of the relationship with and the influence of donors on project activities and subsequently, outcomes.
- d. **Broader community:** This explores the nature of the relationship with and the influence of and on people beyond HiH’s ‘target’ communities.

5. REPORTING

- a. **Reporting failures:** Ensuring that not only successes are recorded but also the ways in which projects have failed or have not achieved desired outcomes.
- b. **Reporting broad measures:** Ensuring that reporting activities are not restricted to measures that are in-line with foreign ideations of progress and wellbeing, but are instead more holistic and considerate of measuring successes on local terms.
- c. **Reporting as a means to learn:** Ensuring that reporting practices are part of their approach to learning, which should also be iterative and self-correcting.

Results

The major themes were coded in each interview as per **Table 3**. This showcases how often each theme was coded in each interview.

TABLE 3:

TRUE NUMBERS	DATA	Learning	Nature of Support	Relationship with Communities	Other Stakeholders	Reporting	TOTAL
	ONE	62	26	28	9	2	127
	TWO	48	24	19	20	9	120
	THREE	29	16	29	3	0	77
	FOUR	62	14	14	7	3	100
	FIVE	46	23	24	8	9	110
	All Participants	247	103	114	47	23	534
	RLM	212	74	60	15	6	367
	Reports	29	16	1	9	12	67

As is clear, the most common theme in the interviews was ‘learning’, followed by ‘relationship with communities’ and ‘nature of support’. ‘Other stakeholders’ were also talked about, but ‘reporting’ was the least common theme. The RLM follows a similar pattern to the interviews. The HiH reports showcased a slightly different hierarchy of themes. Though ‘learning’ and ‘nature of support’ came up fairly often, the reports did not go into detail regarding ‘relationships with communities’.

How often an idea was coded into the themes differed for each interview and because the approach was qualitative and based around different speech patterns, the manner in which content was coded differed for each participant. To this end, relative percentages of content dedicated to each theme is more relevant. This is represented by **Tables 4** and **5**.

TABLE 4:

PERCENTAGES (TRUE)	DATA	Learning	Nature of Support	Relationship with Communities	Other Stakeholders	Reporting
	ONE	48.81890	20.47244	22.04724	7.08661	1.57480
	TWO	40.00000	20.00000	15.83333	16.66667	7.50000
	THREE	39.18919	21.62162	39.18919	3.89610	0.00000
	FOUR	62.62626	14.14141	14.14141	7.00000	3.03030
	FIVE	41.81818	20.90909	21.81818	7.27273	8.18182
	All Participants	46.60377	19.43396	21.50943	8.11321	4.33962
	RLM	57.76567	20.16349	16.34877	4.08719	1.63488
	Reports	43.28358	23.88060	1.49254	13.43284	17.91045

TABLE 5:

PERCENTAGES (ROUNDED OFF)	DATA	Learning	Nature of Support	Relationship with Communities	Other Stakeholders	Reporting
	ONE	49	20.5	22	7	1.5
	TWO	40	20	16	16.5	7.5
	THREE	37.5	21	37.5	4	0
	FOUR	62	14	14	7	3
	FIVE	42	21	22	7.5	8
	All Participants	46.5	19.5	21.5	9	4.5
	RLM	58	20	16.5	4	1.5
	Reports	43.5	24	1.5	13.5	18

Through the percentages, it is clear that the most common major theme that was discussed in the interviews was ‘learning’, followed by ‘relationship with communities’, ‘nature of support provided’, ‘role of other stakeholders’, and finally, ‘reporting activities’ were the least discussed. However, this research adopted an approach whereby *NVivo*’s primary function was to organize the data so that each theme could be explored (in the Discussion section). Still, it may be useful to see the breakup of how many times, each sub-theme was represented within each primary theme. **Tables 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10** showcase this.

TABLE 6:

LEARNING	DATA	Open minded	Empathy	Culture of Learning	Interdisciplinary	AGGREGATE
	ONE	29	10	6	10	62
	TWO	19	13	6	3	48
	THREE	23	5	1	0	29
	FOUR	43	8	5	2	62
	FIVE	17	12	8	0	46
	All Participants	131	48	26	15	247
	RLM	110	44	15	10	212
	Reports	3	3	4	19	29

The majority of the data within ‘learning’ related to ‘open-mindedness’; whereby, organizations consider the differences between the cultural experiences of different peoples and how this affects their conceptualizations of wellbeing and nature.’ open-mindedness’ also considers the extent to which differences and conflicts may exist between and within communities. The RLM followed an almost identical pattern. The HiH reports, on the other hand, tended to focus on the ‘interdisciplinary’ nature of their approach to understanding and solving issues (i.e. Planetary Health) and had little else to say regarding this theme.

TABLE 7: Some sub-themes were left out here because they do not apply to HiH’s work, as mentioned earlier.

NATURE OF SUPPORT	DATA	Broad	True Participation	Types of Support	AGGREGATE
	ONE	6	13	7	26
	TWO	4	7	5	24
	THREE	2	10	1	16
	FOUR	5	6	2	14
	FIVE	2	4	16	23
	All Participants	19	40	31	103
	RLM	26	12	27	74
	Reports	7	0	9	16

Here, HiH’s emphasis on being truly participatory was clear. Though this will be explored in greater depth in the discussion session, this may in fact showcase that HiH is well aware of the existence of “superficial participation” (Morrison et al., 2005) in community-centric work. The RLM, on the other hand, emphasized more on providing types of support with ‘broader’ outcomes. The reports, on the other hand, did not allude to the idea of ‘true participation’ at all.

TABLE 8:

RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMUNITY	DATA	Trust	Power sharing	Aligning Goals	Two-way Conversation	AGGREGATE
	ONE	4	12	2	6	28
	TWO	5	4	6	3	19
	THREE	8	8	3	2	29
	FOUR	0	2	3	6	14
	FIVE	4	1	10	3	24
	All Participants	21	27	24	20	114
	RLM	9	19	1	9	60
	Reports	0	1	0	0	1

Here, ideas relating to power-sharing were brought up quite often; however, this has to do with the fact that conversations centered around HiH's practice of Radical Listening which calls for communities to determine what interventions HiH will carry out there, and thereby, inevitably shares power with local communities. Similarly, because HiH is primarily an environmental organization, all their work, including Radical Listening, is bound by their environmental goals. Therefore, their work innately requires that goals be aligned. Overall, every relevant aspect of their relationship with communities was (more or less) equally discussed. The RLM, however, seemed to emphasize more on the 'power sharing' aspects of HiH's relationship with local communities and barely touched upon the idea of 'aligning goals' with the community. However, this does require some nuance because, as mentioned before, unlike a development organization that is only motivated by improving the lives of local communities, contemporary environmental NGOs have to also achieve their primary conservation or environmental goals. Therefore, it can be said that their work innately requires that their goals be aligned with those of the community. The reports barely touched upon HiH's relationship with the community, in regards to these themes and sub-themes.

TABLE 9:

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	DATA	Local Government	NGOs	Donors	Broader Community	AGGREGATE
	ONE	3	3	1	2	9
	TWO	3	3	13	1	20
	THREE	3	0	0	0	3
	FOUR	1	3	1	2	7
	FIVE	5	3	0	0	8
	All Participants	15	12	15	5	47
	RLM	9	5	0	0	15
	Reports	0	2	3	2	9

Here, the role of local government, NGOs and donors were fairly evenly discussed. Impacts on the ‘broader community’ beyond the direct beneficiaries of HiH’s projects were talked about far less in the interviews. The RLM did make mention of its relationship with ‘local government’ and ‘other NGOs’, but did not discuss HiH’s relationship with donors and the ‘broader community’ they may be impacting. Meanwhile, the HiH reports did touch upon these sub-themes with the exception of ‘local government’.

TABLE 10:

REPORTING	DATA	Reporting Failures	Reporting Broad Outcomes	Learning from Reporting	AGGREGATE
	ONE	0	0	0	2
	TWO	0	1	0	9
	THREE	0	0	0	0
	FOUR	0	2	0	3
	FIVE	0	3	0	9
	All Participants	0	6	0	23
	RLM	1	1	2	6
	Reports	0	0	0	12

Reporting seldom came up organically in the interviews. As **APPENDIX 1** shows, leading questions had to be asked to encourage participants to talk more about their reporting practices. Still, even when content was relevant to reporting practices, it did not link to the sub-themes that were being measured. Instead, the lion’s share of the content that was coded in

this theme was a general mention of ‘reporting’. This is explored further in the Discussion section. The RLM does make some mention of reporting activities and the HiH reports themselves did report on a significant number of their activities but these were not mentions of ‘reporting broad measures’, or ‘reporting failures’, or even ‘learning from reporting’.

Discussion

Introduction

Radical Listening, HiH’s approach to participation, is practiced by two members of HiH staff going into a community that has already agreed to speak with them and that they have already done some preliminary research into. Then, after briefly introducing themselves, they ask the following question:

“You all are guardians of this precious rainforest that is important for the health of the whole world. What would you all like as a sign of thanks from the world community that would allow you to protect this forest and bring about a thriving future for yourselves?” (Radical Listening Manual)

After this, they wait and let community members speak, listening intently, taking notes, and encouraging those saying less to share their thoughts. After they see that nothing new is being said, the HiH staff summarize the meeting and confirm with the community if they understood their thoughts correctly. The final thoughts are then discussed amongst HiH staff, and a secondary meeting is held with relevant community representatives to discuss the finer details of the project.

This question HiH asks their communities is challenging to analyze. If HiH was a development organization, they could be critiqued for attempting to instill local ideations of nature with their own external ones; by placing at the center of their discussion the idea that local communities are responsible for protecting the rainforest and that the rainforest is “precious”. This is because a development organization should, ideally, aim to improve the wellbeing of local communities entirely on their own terms. An environmental organization, on the other hand, is

bound by its environmental goals. To this end, this question can be thought of as a gentle approach adopted by HiH to explain to communities what they need from them.

Overall, RL makes for a very complicated and interested study, considering the theme of this research.

In this section, some identifying markers have been left out of the quotations from participants. This includes names, locations and other details that may allow for those so inclined to decipher who they are.

Learning

HiH has a substantial focus on learning about and building their own sensitivity towards local contexts. They encourage 'listeners' to conduct 'desktop research' beforehand. As per the RLM, this is in-depth research into target local communities, that is conducted before the first meetings are held.

"It's just like basic information about the area, so statistical information that we gather from government data, for example." (FIVE)

Yet, in-line with Tania Murray Li's arguments about how learning is an incredibly important aspect of working with communities but learning alone is not enough (Li, 2007), HiH is conscious of the fact that even extensive social science research on a community does not necessarily make for a successful outcome or improved outcomes for communities.

**"While this background research is critical, at the same time, we always understand that there is only so much that can be learned without talking to the communities."
(Radical Listening Manual)**

HiH staff members seem to recognize that though their 'desktop research' is critically important, it is not sufficient to design solutions independent of community members.

“And again, I say humility, because we don't know everything. We always assume that the Community is an expert. They live there, they know their surroundings, they know their environment. So, they should be put first, before anything else.” (TWO)

Here, Radical Listening plays a crucial role in HiH's approach to learning. Through this approach, HiH places the onus on community members to determine what projects will be implemented in their communities. Throughout the interviews and HiH's publications, communities are defined as “experts”.

“... we really believe that the experts are the communities, and we will not bring any solution that is ready beforehand. We would want to listen to them, what they think they need in order for them to be healthy, happy and for them to be able to protect the forest.” (FOUR)

RL on its own significantly promotes open-mindedness. The principle against which open-mindedness was added to the criteria leans on Sarah White's arguments about different types of wellbeing (White et al., 2016) and Partha Chatterjee's arguments about the misleading nature of Western ideations of progress (Chatterjee, 1986). From these, I concluded that it is important for organizations to acknowledge that the solutions that would work in communities are unique to those communities; not merely because of the traditional structures and institutions in place, but also because of the different conceptualizations of nature, wellbeing, and progress. RL aims to remove the organization from a position of having to develop solutions for communities by keeping in mind the entire complex web of relationships and beliefs that make up a community's cultural context. Instead, communities are simply asked to do this themselves. HiH's role in all of this is to listen attentively, take notes, relay a summary of the conversation back to the community, making sure that there are not discrepancies between what the community wants and what HiH understood, and then deal with local leadership, explaining their own limitations, to determine the specifics of implementation. Though they regard 'desktop research' as critical, they do not use it to make recommendations to the community or to design projects without the community's involvement.

Throughout the data, there are instances showcasing that HiH acknowledges the uniqueness of communities, though they are occasionally surprised by it.

“I don't know why there was a difference between Indonesia and Madagascar in that aspect.” (ONE)

They also acknowledge the differences, in relation to themselves, in local conceptualizations of wellbeing and nature. The RLM, in discussing their Planetary Health approach states:

“The idea that forms the basis of planetary health, that the human and natural world are deeply intertwined, is not a new one. In fact, it is rooted in local, ancestral, and Indigenous knowledge about the interconnected and interdependent relationships between people, plants, animals, spirits and places.” (Radical Listening Manual)

Yet, it could be argued that, since they are not referring to a specific culture, they are failing to recognize local communities and contexts as unique and are making the mistake of homogenizing the idea of ‘local’, ‘traditional’ or ‘indigenous’.

However, it would be unfair to critique HiH for this without acknowledging that what organizations publish in the public domain does not always reflect practice. It stands to reason that much of that content is written to explain a complicated concept to a broad audience. In this pursuit nuance is lost.

What is important is that this critique is not necessarily reflected in their practice. If this were indeed reflective of practice, the outcomes of a single RL session in a single community would be extrapolated and operationalized in different communities. This is, of course, not the case. RL sessions are conducted in every community HiH works with, in some form or another.

A similar argument might also suggest that as HiH believes in RL as a universal solution as per Campbell and Mattila (Campbell et al., 2003). This would be a weak argument because the “universal approaches” that are critiques by Campbell and Mattila refer to solutions. HiH is merely suggesting that RL is an approach towards developing solutions, and is therefore universally applicable. They maintain that solutions are not universal.

“... we take a Planetary Health approach, but what we see is that Radical Listening can be used in any kind of setting; for-profit, nonprofit. It's just a methodology; so that is the most essential part. Listening to groups of people, recognizing that they are the experts, and implementing their solutions. So that whole process is kind of what is groundbreaking, especially investing in [local] solutions.” (ONE)

This is all premised on their proposed foundational argument, that “the local communities are the experts”. This was a major theme throughout the interviews and was mentioned by each of the interviewees at least once. The idea that communities propose the best solutions has been critiqued within academia (Kramer et al., 1997, Murphee, 1994); however, these critiques are becoming more infrequent. Yet, the data accounts for this as well. They clarify that granting communities decision-making power and implementing the solutions they design, does not necessarily mean that the “experts” are developing the best solutions, but that because they are developing the solutions, they are more likely to implement them and work to ensure that they are successful. This is important and telling nuance; showcasing that HiH’s approach is informed by a variety of viewpoints.

“...it [RL]actually makes your job, a lot easier, as an organization, because you have the buy-in from the communities, because it creates agency and governance. Plus, the communities designed this so they're not going to push back and are going to be part of implementing the program and the solutions instead of you know, having an NGO do it for them.” (ONE)

“Radical Listening yields solutions that are more likely to be implemented and therefore more efficient and effective: How you determine the solutions may be more important than what the solutions are. Even if ‘better’ solutions might theoretically exist, those chosen by the group are more likely to succeed because they will actually be implemented with full buy-in. The stages of behavior change are precontemplation, contemplation, preparing for action, and then doing something. This process identifies what people are already prepared to do.” (RLM)

Another example of how they account for the uniqueness of communities is by acknowledging the different types of “intergroup” and “intragroup” (Madden et al., 2013) conflicts that exist within communities.

“Who is considered part of the ‘community’ and who is an outsider? (For example, there may be people with access to political power who might still be considered to belong to the community; some people might be excluded from some things based on gender or caste; even menstruation can affect participation in some cultures).”

(Radical Listening Manual)

Keeping this in mind, HiH chooses “neutral places” to hold its meetings, so that no one community or community member is in a position of power above others.

“The meeting is held in a neutral place... because, for example, if we meet in the house of the leader of the village, then the leader of the village will feel like he has the power within his house and then he tends to speak more. That’s why we hold the meeting in another place; usually it’s under a tree or in a public place that does not belong to anyone; a place that is neutral.” (THREE)

Keeping this in mind, it can be suggested that because RL is carried out with large groups, that marginalized voices may not be adequately represented. HiH does account for this.

HiH acknowledges some of the ways in which intragroup conflicts may be manifested and one interviewee, in particular, was eager to talk about how they counter the risk of RL being exclusionary.

“I think that the big group radical listening sessions are really interesting to set up some common understanding with the communities. But I think it can be very, very enriching to have conversations with smaller groups, dissonant groups and separate groups, like women’s and men’s groups; because in my experience, for instance, alcohol related problems are usually men's problems and they become problems for women; like violence in the household. And they [women] will not talk in front of men and they probably will not talk in front of other women unless it's a huge problem; or

if they already had talked about that. Otherwise, they would just talk about that [alcoholism, for example] in smaller groups. But maybe if you have this understanding and you bring it up in a women's group they can start sharing a conversation that they didn't have until now because it was taboo talking about mental health conditions."

(FOUR)

Another participant mentioned:

"What is happening is that mostly the woman within the meetings tend not to speak and its usually the men who really talk. And during the radical listening session staff from HiH encourage the women to participate. And then the women also talk and then the men listen." (THREE)

This section, thus far, showcases how HiH accounts for open-mindedness in their approach. Yet, HiH's approach also allows for the exploration of the extent to which they focus on building empathy.

Some interviewees expressed concern about the historical injustices HiH's communities have faced. Some mentioned colonialism and I was interested to know how HiH operationalizes sensitivity towards concepts like colonialism and histories of foreign-fueled oppression and extraction.

"I think it's, as a listener, being sensitive to the history of a place... for example, Indonesia has been colonized by the Dutch and there's old wounds there; there's things that happened to these communities or previous generations that have past trauma. So, how do you approach a community that has that trauma and how are you sensitive to that as a listener and recognize that a lot of harm has been done, and a lot of trust needs to be restored with outsiders?" (ONE)

The response not only showcased that colonialism is considered as an important theme to recognize in order to establish empathy with the community, but that empathy and sensitivity towards the community will ultimately serve to garner the community's trust (this will be

discussed later when this research explores how HiH builds and imagines their relationships with their communities).

Simultaneously, they are also conscious of the sorts of arguments put forth by Dominguez et al. about the potential for conservation organizations, especially via “resurgent protectionism” (Beymar-Farris et al., 2011), to repeat colonial practices (Dominguez et al., 2020).

“Also, to avoid reproducing any kind of colonial relationships. You're coming in as a big NGO with resources; how do you prevent from that being an issue and prevent from there being a power imbalance as much as you can?” (ONE)

“In an anti-colonial manner, we see our role as reversing a flow of resources to communities who have fewer resources due to a long-history of extraction. This explicit reversal of the transfer of resources is absolutely necessary at this time in history if we are to survive as a human species. Each country is not an island and we must recognize the survival and thriving of all people all over the planet is interdependent.” (Radical Listening Manual)

Colonialism is of course not the only means that were used over the last 200 years to negatively impact the Global South. The following is in the RL Manual:

“Structural racism, coloniality and an economic system based on the false premise of unlimited growth and extraction are rapidly undermining the very basis of our capacity to survive on this planet.” (Radical Listening Manual)

Similarly, the participants also spoke about other contemporary forms of inequity, oppression and other limitations.

**“When I started going into communities, there was a huge lack of basic health...”
(FOUR)**

Broader connections were also made by some participants; connecting a lack of access to healthcare to systemic poverty and lack of access.

“Kinary Webb first came to Indonesia to conduct her studies in biology and she quickly realized that the forest was disappearing around her and then she went to the Community and talked about it... because there's this link between health and conservation that she found. So most of the communities were logging trees at the time, cutting trees to pay for health care, because most of the communities... are in a remote areas, so they need access to healthcare and mostly healthcare is located in the cities and it's not accessible for them. So they need a lot of money. And they somehow think that forest is like a ‘savings account’. Whenever they need money they can just go to the forest and cut trees down to get money.” (TWO)

However, despite this, they did not seem to mention the sorts of complicated systemic challenges that Hickel touched upon in relation to development efforts in the Global South; whereby trillions of dollars come into the Global South annually in the form of “aid” or “development assistance”, but significantly larger sums of money leave in the form of tangible and intangible costs (Hickel, 2017). That being said, Hickel provides a complicated critique of development practices that does not frequent itself in conversations that are not specifically about global structures of inequity. Simultaneously, it is perhaps outside the scope of HiH to comment on the sorts of challenges that Hickel highlights.

It is therefore, safe to suggest that within its own capacity, HiH does a good job of theorizing how both open-mindedness and empathy can be fostered and operationalized into their practice. Understanding the emphasis placed on learning by HiH requires an exploration of two more ideas. Firstly, an interdisciplinary approach, as suggested by Berkes, should be explored. Secondly, the entirety of knowledge gathered should be used to inform future practice.

It, therefore, stands to reason that an interdisciplinary approach is central to the success of contemporary community-centric conservation efforts (Berkes, 2004). The account for the former via their Planetary Health approach and they tie in the idea of using an interdisciplinary approach to local cultural contexts.

“Many NGOs have missions, they would only do health care, for example, or they will only focus on waste management, or clean energy. And there's a room to have a more holistic approach. Whereas if you really focus on listening to communities, you will find that communities design integrated solutions because they don't see the world in silos. And that's the most important part; where they have integrated solutions and then the organization has to also take an integrated approach in working with these communities.” (ONE)

**“Our goal is to work towards planetary health and we recognize that in order to achieve that goal we must begin to see the well-being of all living systems, all species, and all people as intimately intertwined. When communities and ecosystems in one place thrive, that creates a positive feedback to all other systems on the planet.”
(Radical Listening Manual)**

One participant also connected their interdisciplinary approach to a version of wellbeing (White et al., 2016) called ‘well-living’.

“... for us, health is not a matter of disease and medication and doctors, but it's related to well-living and as a concept of well-living everything that they [communities] need to have better living [conditions], to be happy in their environment, and with their families, and be willing to stay there, and protect the forest and bring the next generation to this understanding as well. So, we work for this. We really believe that the experts are the communities, and we will not bring any solution ready beforehand and so we would want to listen from them what they think they need in order for that to happen, for them to be healthy, happy and for them to be able to protect the forest.” (FOUR)

The interdisciplinary aspects of their work are heavily featured in their impact reports, often in relation to Planetary Health.

An interdisciplinary approach is at the center of HiH’s work. However, Planetary Health is not the broadest interdisciplinary school of thought, comprising largely of connections between

environmental and human health (Myers & Frumkin, 2020). Broad as these concepts are; in thinking about the endless implications relating to human health and the complex philosophical dilemmas surrounding environmentalism; philosophy, politics, sociology and other fields are not directly featured in the approach. Planetary Health can and should be coupled with other types of knowledge. That being said, it is impractical for organizations to have boundless scopes and to this end, it does make logical sense for HiH to bound its goals.

Lastly, for all of this emphasis on learning to be truly useful, the data showcases that HiH places importance on informing their practice with what is learned.

“If there comes a time when it appears that the original solutions have now been fully implemented and those challenges seem to have been resolved, the project could either end or further rounds of Radical Listening could be held to determine what the community now identifies as the solutions to bring about even more thriving. The ideal is that over time community members themselves become Radical Listeners and use this methodology to further improve the wellbeing of their communities.” – RLM

Here, the RLM acknowledges that the idea of solutions is iterative. In referring to their RL Manual:

“We see this as a living document that will improve over time as further knowledge is gained from other sites through monitoring and evaluation of our programs. We hope the reader of this document will share their own experiences as well and further improve this work.” - RLM

In relation to the earlier reference to communities potentially not coming up with the “best” solutions, HiH discusses how RL should ideally be continued after implementation to ensure that as challenges appear, more sessions are held to resolve them; acknowledging that circumstances and needs change and that it is more important for approaches to be iterative than for solutions to be perfect.

In the pursuit of learning about their communities, HiH utilizes its local networks.

“... so, we find out [who has influence and power in the community] from many, many sources. We can ask previous NGOs that’s already work there, or the government... or anyone that we can ask around.” (FIVE)

Learning as much as possible from as many sources as possible was also a parting piece of advice one interviewee shared with me.

“I think I think the best advice will be to really engage with the communities; take a while to listen to them; and listen to the partners that work with them, people that have been working with those communities for a long time. And if there's no one working with them, talk to their leaders with more, deeper, time. And be ready for whatever comes from the communities and change the way that you thought that you would work with them, because it will probably happen. Things will not be what you think they will be... it's another culture. another way of living, another world, and that's challenging, and that's lovely as well” (FOUR)

Of course, HiH’s primary source of learning is the community itself, which is essentially studied and understood through RL. This does raise a concern mentioned earlier in the paper as an example of a potential theme that is being left out. As per Partha Chatterjee’s arguments, local communities, especially in post-colonial contexts (and I would argue in remote contexts), are subject to severe and complicated psychological and ideological impacts as a consequence of external, oppressive, and extractive players (Chatterjee, 1986). These impacts rapidly distort locally held values and philosophies as they evolved in the absence of external influencers (Chatterjee, 1986). When outsiders appear representing superiority, via any measure relevant to locals, they change how communities perceive their own wellbeing, progress, their relationships with nature, their ambitions for their families, and countless other impacts; along with the sorts of deep-set insecurities and dissonance that Chatterjee alludes to (Chatterjee, 1986). As mentioned before, this is not being significantly considered and was not measured for because of its potential to open up this research to higher levels of abstraction.

Though there are some gaps in HiH’s approach to learning, I am comforted by the fact that this approach is, above all else, iterative. That it is subject to change as the organization learns

more. Perhaps detailed long-term studies would be useful in revealing how ideological changes informed by new knowledges are realized in HiH's practice. In the meantime, this makes for an approach to learning, centered around RL, that other participatory organizations should adapt to their needs and then adopt in their own work.

Nature of Support

HiH provides its communities with healthcare and alternative livelihood options. In exchange, communities are to take steps to assist HiH in achieving their environmental goals. The terms of this exchange are defined in 'reciprocity agreements' or contracts.

"This reciprocity agreement is where we agree with the community on what things we can provide or [the ways in which we can] help the community. And then, [we ask] 'What are the things that the community needs?' It's mostly for us to set up programs, education, conservation, livelihood programs or health programs. But then, at the same time, the Community also needs to actively work to reduce logging, so this These are called 'reciprocity agreements', so our program is based on this." (FIVE)

However, it is important to also acknowledge that because communities decide what solutions will be implemented in them, they can request for more than what HiH can provide. In this case, HiH explains their limitations to communities and they work towards finding a manageable solution.

"And, and we ask them... 'What does good health care look like to you?' And they might say we want you to build a clinic in each village. And we might say as an organization, 'we can't do that because we don't have the money for that. But we can do mobile clinics So what do you think about that?' And 'where do you want these mobile clinics to be?' For example... we had a very small startup budget, and we looked at the map and said, 'Okay, maybe we can do X mobile clinic visits or X different sites that we can go to, and we can go there twice a month.' So then we ask the communities, 'Which X locations should we start in given that we can't build a clinic in every village?', and then we kind of met together and decided on X locations that were would benefit everyone, all X communities." (ONE)

Local communities can also ask for interventions that are completely outside the scope of HiH's work.

"However, it certainly can be the case that communities ask for something that is outside the scope of what a given non-profit can provide. We had this happen in our second site in Borneo where the community saw a new road as a key solution (we are sure they are right and wish we could afford it, but sadly can't). The community understands this and is grateful for the other solutions we can implement. However, we can continue to advocate with the government to build the road (naturally in a way that protects the environment since this is a prerequisite of the way the question is asked). For this reason, Radical Listening should always be qualified with, "We can't promise you we can do everything you ask for, but we can promise you that we will try." (Radical Listening Manual)

This sometimes requires that HiH involves other organizations as well. Both the involvement of the government and other NGOs will be explored later ('Other Stakeholders').

"... we are providing medical healthcare services, and we also provide community development, alternative livelihoods, and environmental education as well. So, for us to also be involved in that. There're these organizations... working on environmental education, so we developed an environmental curriculum together with them, and we conduct environmental education" (ANONYMOUS)

HiH also works towards providing support to communities that will not necessarily produce measurable outcomes.

"For instance, we had this meeting, a big community radical listening meeting with this indigenous group... they didn't ask for the same things that for [other communities] were a priority... but they asked to make a movie of their elder, because they were very afraid during Covid, that he will die; and he's the last one that speaks their language. And he's really, really old. And they've been trying to take notes of what he says or record him with their cell phones, but it always gets lost; kids mess with the paper or erase the videos in the cell phones. So, they were like, 'we really want to have memory of him, and we think this will bring the whole community

together in the long term and teach the youngsters when he's not here anymore.' So, for me, it just was really amazing... it was something that when they realized that everything that they fought was related to their well-being they could ask [for this] as a priority. They just like went crazy with this project..." (ANONYMOUS)

Critiquing HiH for the types of support that they offer is challenging. It would be simplistic to look towards failures of certain approaches in certain contexts and then critique HiH for using them in different contexts. However, RL demands that local communities decide what interventions and activities will look like.

"Through, this kind of requires a different mindset, where you have to let the organization know that 'if you're willing to do this, you have to also be willing to invest in whatever solutions the communities come up with. So, 'try to go in with a blank state of mind' basically and be more of a facilitator versus 'someone from the organization'." (ONE)

As seen above, the data repeatedly reinforces the idea that practitioners should never bring their own biases into their work. In order to do so, decision-making power, regarding what interventions are needed rests entirely with the communities. One interviewee mentions how other practitioners tend to fail in this regard. In response to a question regarding what they meant by "traditional NGOs" when they said that "a lot of traditional NGOs are working from the top-down approach."

"I don't want to throw anyone under the bus; but, for example, USAID has funding for a specific project. They set the targets in their headquarter office. They have to reach those targets, associated with grants, money, etc., etc. So, they already have a preconceived notion of what the community needs. Maybe they'll come in and say, "okay we're going to make sure there's clean water access in these villages", for example, without really having talks with communities and understanding if this is what they want, this is what they are asking for. How do we engage communities into process? And I'm not saying that it's impossible for an NGO to have a pre-designed

project; it's just how you integrate, how you invest in community solutions and how you interact with the communities along the implementation that's really important.”
(ONE)

As seen above, there is a great deal of nuance in the interviewee's perspectives. They mention that what USAID (in this case) does is not truly participatory; but then qualified that statement by suggesting that it is not impossible to make their approach work. That organizations need to “integrate”, “invest in community solutions” and “interact (well) with the communities”. This is important to mention here, because HiH is not working in these contexts without its own agenda or its own “preconceived notion(s)”. HiH's preconceptions merely do not directly deal with community welfare. They do, however, indirectly, deal with community welfare. In Robyn Eversole's aforementioned work, she suggests that participation can be used as a means to bring local communities into formal institutions and processes (Eversole, 2012). By this logic, HiH's environmental agenda can be thought of as representing what Eversole thinks much of participation looks like; i.e., revolving around the question of “how to convince others to participate in our worldviews and institutions”. As opposed to what it should be; i.e., a question of “how to become participants in our own right: choosing to move across institutional and knowledge terrains to create new spaces for communities and organizations to ‘participate’ together” (Eversole, 2012).

Here, once again, further nuance is needed. Eversole is critiquing development projects (Eversole, 2012). Ignoring the complicate politics and economics that fuel and give direction to both development and environmental efforts, in its purest form, development aims to improve upon the wellbeing of local communities. To this end, Eversole's critique is completely valid, if development efforts do indeed bring in values and ideals from outside the community and strive to get target communities to participate in the pursuit of those values and ideals. However, environmental efforts, are, at their purest, efforts to improve the perceived wellbeing of nature. Historical evidence has showcased that it is increasingly accepted that these cannot be achieved independent of each other; “two sides of the same coin” (Campbell et al., 2003). Yet, while it may be difficult to justify USAID's work through Eversole's lens (as interviewee ONE

described it for having pre-defined goals), HiH's work aims to restore rainforests, and in the pursuit of this, they are utilizing participatory processes in order to try to improve local wellbeing and tie it to their primary environmental goal of rainforest restoration; hoping that both will be achieved.

It is important to consider Eversole's work, but it must be contextualized with the goals of the organization. If we are only concerned with human wellbeing, then there is room to critique HiH on this basis. If we are also concerned with the natural world, then Eversole's critique does not apply as holistically. HiH has two goals, but it only retains the right to define successes for one of them. This does get more complicated when I explore HiH's reporting practices later ('Reporting').

To practice true participation, and to minimize the potential for confusion and biases, RL sessions require that two 'listeners' be present at the meetings and that one of them be thought of, by the community, as somewhat of a 'local'.

"Our recommendation is that there be two listeners. One person should ideally be recognized by the community as being of the same ethnic and/or language background or from the same cultural context. In our experience, in some places like Madagascar there is so much language and ethnic variability and so little mobility that even someone from a few hours away may be considered an outsider. However, in many places in Indonesia, there is quite a bit of mobility and so much cultural mixing that someone who speaks Indonesian and comes from the same island is likely to be considered an insider. These are the sorts of things that are important to know beforehand and are also helpful in selecting listeners (which is why the preparation stage is so important)." (Radical Listening Manual)

As mentioned before, one interviewee was particularly interested in discussing how they work towards making their approach even more participatory, by supplementing RL sessions with smaller meetings with groups or families that may not be sufficiently represented in the RL sessions.

“What we what came up with in the bigger meeting, it's the guidelines that we will follow in the course of our work... but when we do a follow up meeting, we can bring up some things that didn't show up at the first moment and say “we've been listening to that as well” and bring it to the group. Like, “do you believe this is something that we should start working with?” Like, I mean if it's a community problem, like alcohol related problems, I think we can bring it up in a way that's not aggressive and that will not bring harm to any of the people... because in a more confidential way like, “we've seen during the consultations” or “we've been dealing with problems that are related to mental health issues or with alcohol related problems. What do you think? Do you think it's something that we should keep working with? Should we make more efforts to address it or not?”

So, I think we can work with this in two ways when we think about it like a bigger program. So, we are not going to ask for funds to do a different thing that was not what communities asked for, but we can bring it up to them in a follow-up session with the group. Or, the other way of doing that is with this smaller management. If we have funds, we may bring communities [that are] asking for it more specialized consultations. So, we will bring a psychologist and not physical therapist, for instance. We can do this management of something that was not that specific that the community asked for it, but we saw in the conversations with them that it may be a need and it may be helpful.” (FOUR)

Though HiH is conscious about being holistically participatory, it is interesting to see that they are utilizing means to supplement that participation, very cautiously, with their own findings. This will also be discussed further later ('Relationship with Communities').

In thinking about what lessons can be learned from HiH's practice, one interviewees statement was very relevant.

“... you have to recognize if you're listening to communities and you're listening to their solutions, you have to make sure that you are able to invest in whatever they come up with.” (ONE)

The above is an involved point that suggests that simply listening is not enough. Intentions must also be communicated clearly and support must be provided to communities. This is a key component of building relationships with communities that was explored via this research.

Relationship with Communities

As mentioned before, Kubo et al.'s 2009 paper references "trust-building" and its importance in practice (Kubo et al., 2009). This was another major theme within the data and is clearly something HiH gives significant consideration to.

"... the only way for your program to succeed is by gaining trust from communities, because they're going to be the ones that are actually implementing the program ultimately. They're the ones they're going to have that are going to protect the rainforest, in our case. If you don't have trust then there's not much you can do."
(ONE)

Most interestingly, one interviewee gave an in-depth example of why communities may not initially trust them and how they work towards building that trust.

"So, what we usually do is, we go to the Community, and then we talk to them. Sometimes it's not easy, because some of these communities have been approached by the government or maybe there's a program that the government implemented in the Community, but it was not very successful. This leaves them even more suffering than before, so there's a lot of lack of trust." **(TWO)**

"... we collect a lot of data... that the communities trust us to keep. So, we are not going to tell the government about that confidential information..." **(TWO)**

Trust is also why one of the listeners is someone that the communities might consider relatively local.

"... having someone who the community perceives as likely to generally understand the challenges they are facing and someone who is less likely to wish them harm can

be helpful in engendering trust. This is particularly critical in communities who have experienced long histories of exploitation.” (Radical Listening Manual)

The RL Manual also reads:

“Being listened to helps build trust and support between the listeners and the communities and their leaders.” (Radical Listening Manual)

Simultaneously, as per Eversole and Brooks et al., it is important for this relationship to be one where the goals of implementers are aligned with those of beneficiaries. This ties back to the idea of conflicting agendas.

They even end their meetings by acknowledging the need to manage expectations.

“And then we say, “we can't promise we can do everything” or “this doesn't mean we're actually going to you know start working here, but we will promise that we will do our best to find partners and to make sure that we can facilitate whatever you need to keep protecting the rainforest”. Anyway, that's kind of how we end it.” (ONE)

Even the RL Manual states:

“Radical Listening should always be qualified with, “We can’t promise you we can do everything you ask for, but we can promise you that we will try.” (Radical Listening Manual)

Power sharing is intrinsic to HIH’s RL approach. If interventions are to be decided by communities, then HIH no longer holds exclusive power in determining what projects it will implement. Still, they take extra measures to balance out the aesthetics, no doubt with greater, cumulative implications in practice.

“Even how the people sit together [in RL sessions] is different. People sit on the same level. So, we don't sit on chairs or on tables, but we all sit on the ground. All of us. And we sit in a circle with all of the participants. And whether you’re a big person or a

small person, whether you're a woman or a man, you are on the same level. Even the chief of the village. They all sit together." (THREE)

Apart from this, HiH's RL approach also innately works towards aligning their goals with local communities.

"So we have a program where we inspire former loggers to stop and then [help them] build new sustainable businesses, rather than logging. So, they start new businesses as their livelihood [options]. But we have to ensure that these businesses stay [fruitful] in the longer run for them to get the benefits, and to feed their families. If this business is not sustained then they will have no livelihood; and more than likely they will go back to logging. And they will be even more difficult to work with in the future, because we would have already lose their trust or their interest in living in a sustainable way." (TWO)

HiH does communicate some information to local communities. This includes introductory notes on the organization, the timelines and other details relating to projects that are relevant for local communities, and environmental education. They are, however, cautious not to instill bias in the communities.

"We first like have to build trust to with the village leaders... then we show up and introduce ourselves very briefly; we don't really talk about our programs yet, we only like, briefly, say who we are... that we are an NGO, we are here to help and, our names. Sometimes if we bring a doctor or physician with us, we don't really tell them that this person is a doctor, because we don't want to... bias the community toward health programs." (FIVE)

As mentioned before (participant FOUR discussed how sensitive topics are brought up with the community in the 'Nature of Support' section), sometimes, HiH staff will bring in their own ideas into practice; albeit very cautiously.

Despite this, there is still a possibility that this approach is not ideal. Much of the literature, as well as much of what has brought conservation to its current form is a series of critiques about how external actors that bear power do not consider the local cultural and historical contexts (Milne et al., 2012), that agendas are set and activities are planned before communities have been adequately consulted (Eversole, 2012), and that these stakeholders talk to and at communities rather than listening (Campbell et al., 2003; MacDonald, 2003). Throughout these critiques, there is an allusion to a hypothetical ideal balance between external and local stakeholders; for example, Berkes discusses how “increased sharing of power, information, and responsibility between CBC project implementers and local stakeholders” was one of the causes of the formation of CBC as a practice and that ultimately this was a good thing (Berkes, 2003). If this balance between local and external interests is the ideal to some; is it possible that HiH may have taken the critiques of previous practice too far?

In their practice, RL implementers gain deep insights into local communities and collect a wealth of knowledge about systems of being and schools of thought that exist completely outside their own. Meanwhile, the only things that seem to be communicated to the communities are (1) the aforementioned statements about managing ideas, (2) information about timelines and other things relating to the implementation of the project, (3) summaries of RL sessions (in which implementers are encouraged not to talk after asking their first broad question), (4) questions to gather more information. The potential point of contention here is that communities are not adequately informed about HiH’s context. Granted, they could be critiqued for instilling their biases into the communities, but perhaps there is a way to make this approach more conversational as opposed to one-sided. Perhaps, if HiH contextualized Western notions of success and progress with what is missing. For example, if they are talking about some aspect of the world outside the remote communities HiH works with, the internet could be discussed. It could simultaneously be presented as an addictive medium, the usage of which can be associated with self-harm and suicidal behavior (Marchant et al., 2017), and as a source of limitless information, knowledge and community. Due to the aforementioned pre-defined agendas of practitioners, their goal tends to be to convince communities to support those agendas; but, if conversations could be had that were holistic and with even distributions of

power, then perhaps, the alluded to hypothetical ideal balance between information and value sharing.

Here, the risks are great. If not properly managed, ideas like these can verge on the colonial-esque solutions that Dominguez et al. and Beymar-Farris et al. discussed (Dominguez et al., 2011; Beymar-Farris et al., 2011). Realistically, how do we account for our biases and sense of relative privilege in conversation with people who have different philosophical and even epistemological foundations? This is an important concern that I believe should be at the center of debates around how to properly practice participatory environmentalism.

Other Stakeholders

Other stakeholders are also involved in HiH's work. This includes (1) local government, often in the form of country equivalents of national park services, (2) other NGOs, (3) donors, and (4) the community of people beyond HiH's target communities.

The role of local government and HiH's relationships with it are complicated. On one-hand, they cooperate and collaborate with governments, ensuring that they have all necessary permissions. On the other, they are careful and cautious of the impact government departments may have had on their local communities. To this end, HiH ensures that their relationship with local government, remains positive, but does not hinder their relationship with local communities.

“We work closely with government agencies (e.g. National Park and Ministry of Health offices) while demonstrating a non-corrupt, ethical approach. We never, ever pay monetary bribes as part of our principle of being the change we want to see in the world. We follow all legal rules and serve as a bridge between community priorities and government resources.” (Radical Listening Manual)

That being said, according to one interviewee, HiH prioritizes the trust of the community over almost everything else. One of the interviewees made it clear that they will intentionally not tell local government departments sensitive information about their target communities.

“... we collect a lot of data... that the communities trust us to keep. So, we are not going to tell the government about that confidential information...” (TWO)

Concerning why they do not share information about who is practicing illegal logging in the region, an interviewee said;

“... we ensured the forest guardians that whatever data they share with us about their village is going to remain confidential with Health in Harmony because we don't want this to get out to the National Park offices, for example, because they sometimes take different measurements in how to deal with this and might punish villagers...” (ONE)

Interactions with the government can also be through advocacy efforts, as mentioned before in relation to HiH helping a community appeal to the government to build a road.

It is also important to consider Aldashev et al.'s perspectives on the state of national and international donor markets and competition between local and international NGOs (Aldashev et al., 2007). The aforementioned threat to the “variety of NGOs” is represented by the idea of international NGOs occupying space and funding that may have otherwise been available to local NGOs. Two schools of thought line the extremities of this suggestion. The first would suggest that the histories of colonialism and extraction in HiH's target areas are not necessarily being addressed if any positive outcomes produced by international NGOs in local contexts comes at the cost of outcompeting local NGOs. This would be based on works like those of Dominguez et al. The other school of thought, a conservative one, would argue that the relatively superior knowledge and access to markets and capital of the international NGO calls for their expert involvement at solving and addressing local issues. This could be expected from Kramer and Murphee as discussed earlier and other critics of participation (Kramer et al., 1997; Murphee, 1994).

“We're not coming in to replace anyone... we do an organizational landscape... we collaborate with NGOs that are already there.” (ONE)

HiH finds a satisfactory middle-ground. They are conscious of existing relationships between various NGOs and local communities. They also discuss, quite often and fairly unprompted, the importance of collaborative efforts. If HiH aims to provide communities with whatever solutions the communities collectively decide upon, and the community asks for an intervention that HiH does not have the expertise or capacity to provide, then they call upon other organizations that can help fill that gap.

“... sometimes in the beginning, you might, especially when you're on a very low budget, there might already be an NGO in the area that can support implementation of some of the aspects. Like in Brazil, we have a strong partner.” (ONE)

An interviewee also mentioned how the interventions that are carried out are not influenced by HiH's own expertise in providing healthcare services and in that case, HiH partners with other NGOs.

“In implementing education, for example in Madagascar, we did radical listening. Communities asked for access to healthcare food support agriculture training alternative livelihoods and education. And especially education we don't have much experience with and there's organizations in Madagascar, international organizations that have a lot more experience with that, so in that case we would collaborate with them, but we are still like willing to equally invest in that versus all the other components.” (ONE)

Relationships with donors makes for another concern that did not often arise organically in the interviews. When it was discussed, interesting points were raised.

“... sometimes there's a donor that might want to get benefits from the program they supported. For example, “we will support you if you this about our company” ... and then, there's also a donor that tries to steer your program.” (TWO)

The same interviewee from the quote above also spoke about how donors are interested in supporting programs that plant trees, but are not too keen on funding efforts to maintain trees that were planted some time ago.

“There’s a lot of support for planting trees. But, we need more money to maintain those trees that we planted five years ago... sometimes the donors might think once they invest in planting trees... the trees will grow.” (TWO)

Managing donor expectations is also difficult work; especially when they have their own goals and agendas (Eversole, 2012).

“It’s always challenging to make the donor understand, because most of the donors do not come from the same background as us. Some of them might come from a business perspective... if they want to invest, the results should be seen right away, for example. Of course, the nature of funders is different from one to another.” (TWO)

Further, HiH, according to this interviewee, does not accept funds from organizations who they believe are harmful to their broader vision of planetary health.

“We don’t receive money from private sector companies that are doing destructive things, not only in the community but also for the environment; like mining companies, cigarette companies” (TWO)

The interviewee also relayed a debate with an oil company’s representative where the representative talked about how many hectares of forest they saved, and the interviewee reminded them that the business that they are representing destroyed “hundreds of thousands of forests.”

From their mention of conducting “organizational landscapes”, it is clear that HiH does, somewhat consider the communities beyond their target beneficiaries.

“In July, the medical team prepared for, and successfully navigated through, a wave of COVID-19 patients caused by the Delta variant. Thanks to generous donors, including the Packard Foundation, we were able to donate oxygen concentrators and tanks to share with the Indonesian government and support the local hospital. In the fall, the team began site visits and Radical Listening with communities to explore expanding programs to a third site in West Papua.” (2018 Health in Harmony Impact Report)

“And we hosted our first experiential Planetary Health courses for students and young professionals with our Indonesian partner Alam Sehat Lestari (ASRI).” (2018 Health in Harmony Impact Report)

And more importantly:

“And so we always hire staff, that is from the area. National staff.” (ONE)

In line with Aldashev et al.’s arguments, HiH does account for the broader impacts of their work. Perhaps they could broaden it further, but that would be bordering on dangerously ambitious. It is perhaps, better that HiH focuses on Planetary Health and alternative livelihoods, and leaves room and creates opportunities for other organizations to help communities and pursue their environmental goals.

Reporting

Reporting did not come up organically during the interviews. It is mentioned in the context of making their processes iterative; the RLM is to be seen “as a living document that will improve over time as further knowledge is gained from other sites through monitoring and evaluation of our programs” (RLM).

The RLM does reference using reporting (monitoring and evaluation) as a part of its iterative processes, but the interviewees had to be asked about their reporting specifically in order for it to be discussed.

“We see this as a living document that will improve over time as further knowledge is gained from other sites through monitoring and evaluation of our programs. We hope the reader of this document will share their own experiences as well and further improve this work.” (Radical Listening Manual)

“During and after implementation of the solutions further meetings may need to be held if unexpected problems arise in order to refine solutions. In other words, Radical Listening is iterative, understanding that as changes are made, solutions may need to shift.” (Radical Listening Manual)

Even when participants were specifically asked about reporting, it was not mentioned in relation to any of the themes and sub-themes this research is exploring. With one exception whereby the interviewee expressed their concern for this.

“I think it's not something that's ready; like, how do we do reporting? It's something that we are building, because with different communities there are a lot of different challenges that come up, that show up. In the communities that we are working in now, it's more similar to what was being done earlier; related to health. But it's easier to follow the same ways of doing things, like conducting research and making the structure of the health program. But we have a lot of [different projects] going on here in the communities. This is very challenging for HiH internationally as well.”

(FOUR)

HiH seems to exclusively report on measures that are based on their goals of (1) addressing rainforest loss, (2) providing healthcare services, and (3) providing alternative livelihood options. To this end, I decided to also code for two of HiH's published impact reports. These are publicly available on their website. In going through these, the breadth of projects that HiH works on was revealed. They account for successes on the basis of each activity. For example, they have a program called 'Goats for Widows'.

Traditionally, in rural Borneo, wives whose husbands have died are left with few options for making a living. Community leaders requested our partners at Alam Sehat Lestari

(ASRI) create the Goats for Widows program to empower these women and give them economic independence. Goats not only provide vulnerable families with an additional source of income, they also produce manure, a valuable fertilizer.

Thanks to widows paying offspring forward to other women, costs for this program are limited to veterinary check-ups for the goats and basic training for women who take care of them. As a result, Goats for Widows is the rare example of a social enterprise that has become truly self-sustaining.

(Phillips, 2019)

In their reports, they recount numbers achieved such as new widows that joined the program, goats that were returned to the organization, number of goats presently in distribution, and the number of widows involved (ASRI – 2021 End Year Report | <https://healthinharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/ASRI-2021-Impact-Report.pdf>).

Similarly, HiH conducts a program called *Chainsaw Buyback* whereby they provide local community members with “sustainable livelihoods” in exchange for their chainsaws and them agreeing to stop logging. In their reports, they count the number of former loggers that participated and the subsequent number of trees that were saved as a result. There is little to no reference on the relative wellbeing of participants.

The reports showcase a lack of consideration towards broader measures of wellbeing as Sarah White et al. might have opted for (White et al., 2016). Once again, however, this statement needs to be balanced by ground realities. As mentioned earlier, there are further complexities in understanding the relationship between the agendas of external organizations (and their donors) and local communities (Horning, 2008). HiH could be criticized for producing reports that do not meet the high standards of social scientists, such as Sarah White (White et al., 2016). However, these are reports that are available on their website for all to read. It does not imply that these are the only reports that feed into their iterative learning processes, as extrapolated from Campbell et al. and Kubo et al. (Campbell et al., 2003; Kubo et al., 2009). If these are HiH’s public publications, then it would be important to explore their motivation for

designing these as they are. Of course, this is outside the scope of this research and is not directly relevant to the prime focus of this paper; i.e., the disconnect between external and local stakeholders. If this is fueled by a desire to make a Western audience aware of HiH's work or to appease and attract donors, then this would relate to relationships between external stakeholders.

HiH does, however, involve local communities in the monitoring of their projects. This was not explored in the Background section of this research, though this is written about in academic literature. Evans et al. suggest that "Participatory monitoring could provide a framework for linking global, national, and local needs, aspirations, and capacities for forest restoration" (Evans et al., 2018).

"... another interesting part of this meeting is where we ask the communities, 'how should we monitor forest degradation? How do we know if your business is no longer logging?'" (ONE)

Their answer to this question in Indonesia led to the Forest Guardians program, whereby local community members are employed to monitor logging activities and report to HiH anonymously about activities that run counter to their goals.

"In Indonesia, they came up with a system that we call Forest Guardians. So, the Community said, "we're going to assign a forest guardian for each village and that person is going to patrol the area and look for illegal logging signs". And that person already gets a 75% discount, plus their family, so there's no incentive for them to leave. And plus, we ensured the forest guardians that whatever data they share with us about their village is going to remain confidential with Health in Harmony." (ONE)

As seen above, trust is a priority for HiH, as is appropriate means of incentivization (i.e., the healthcare discount afforded to forest guardians). Still, they take further steps to ensure that the reporting is accurate.

“... we have an agreement on who is going to monitor how we're going to monitor it, and then we kind of backed that up as an organization with satellite imagery, with data from a national park, so we do compare it because we want to make sure that whatever information we're getting from forest guardians is correct. In case there's still incentive for them to lie or to not be honest about it.” (ONE)

It is an interesting but challenging approach to include the local community in this process.

If properly planned, participatory monitoring can play a key role in meeting the accountability needs of intergovernmental and governmental agreements while meeting the local needs for decision making and generating local buy-in.

(Evans et al., 2018)

Unfortunately, beyond the RLM there was no note-worthy mention that could be interpreted as HiH's focus on learning from reporting or reporting failures. However, there were mentions of learning from failures, just without reporting processes as an avenue to do so.

“And then, when the program is ongoing and at some point there is a problem, then the approach is the same. They [HiH staff] will do their radical listening, they will converse with the community leaders, and the community, the chief of the village, and then they ask, “what do you think is the solution?”. And it's always like that; the solution will always come from the community first and the HiH is assisting, helping.” (THREE)

All this does not imply that HiH does not practice iterative monitoring and evaluation or that they do not measure or consider the broader outcomes of their projects. This does, however, suggest that reporting is not considered as relevant to the topic of local participation as the other themes.

Recommendations

Health in Harmony was challenging to critique. As mentioned before, much of the critique around environmental, development or conservation practices was based on the fact that local contexts were not adequately considered in developing and implementing interventions. It could be argued that HiH serves as a response to almost the entirety of the critique of past practice. Although my results suggest that they do miss the mark in a few categories, HiH seems to be an organization operating on fairly sound ideological foundations, provided that they do indeed inform their practice by their own shortcomings and critiques.

The organization has a significant focus on learning, yet, its approach acknowledges that learning alone is not enough to implement successful projects. HiH either directly or indirectly, provides communities with a broad variety of support with an emphasis on that support being truly participatory, despite the potential biases they may be unintentionally instilling in communities. Alongside, their dedication to true participation, HiH aims to share power with local communities, leaving it up to them to determine what interventions should be implemented in their communities, though HiH's restrictions and their own environmental goals must also be kept in mind by the communities. They also value the trust of local communities, making clear that they value this over their relationship with other stakeholders such as local governments. In interacting with other stakeholders, HiH does a good job at being collaborative, working towards ensuring that they do not have a negative impact on other stakeholders and that other stakeholders do not negatively influence their projects.

Based on my findings, there are certain contradictions in their practice; three of which stand out. Firstly, that communities are repeatedly referred to as "experts" alluding to the idea that they develop the best solutions. Yet, both the RLM and the interviewees suggested the idea that the primary function of community-designed solutions was to create opportunity for the community to take ownership of the interventions and be dedicated to make them function well. Though both ideas can be found in the data, they are slightly contradictory; i.e., either community designed solutions are adopted into interventions because they are the best

solutions, or they are adopted into practice because this makes for a good way to get “buy-in” from the communities. Perhaps if HiH showcased this as a democratic, as opposed to a meritocratic issue; i.e., if they suggested that communities should design the solutions because it is their right to determine how they will be impacted as opposed to suggesting that communities should design solutions because they design the best solutions, they could resolve this issue.

Secondly, HiH prides itself on being extremely participatory, in that it aims to not instill any of their own biases on the local communities. For the most part they seem to achieve this, with the significant exception of the question they open their radical listening session with.

“You all are guardians of this precious rainforest that is important for the health of the whole world. What would you all like as a sign of thanks from the world community that would allow you to protect this forest and bring about a thriving future for yourselves?” (Radical Listening Manual)

Establishing the community as “guardians” and the rainforest as “precious” does direct the community in a specific direction; placing at the center of their discussion the ideas that local communities are responsible for protecting the rainforest and that the rainforest is “precious”. This limits the capacity for local conceptualizations of nature to be brought into the Radical Listening sessions. Though I recognize that this is a potential necessity; perhaps it could be replaced with a more transactional and direct approach, whereby a question similar to the following is asked by HiH staff:

We believe that we should work towards protecting this rainforest. However, we need your help to do so. We also have the means to help you with some of the challenges you all might be facing. Is there anything we can do together so that both our needs can be met?

Lastly, HiH could also increase the breadth with which they seem to approach their reporting practices. Throughout the interviews, there was no significant mention of reporting broader outcomes. Things like the well-being of local communities as informed by their own cultural experiences makes for important considerations for organizations to have (White et al., 2016)

and unless these organizations are measuring the impact of their work on local well-being, it would be difficult to ensure that the organization will adequately improve local well-being. Only one interviewee expressed interest and concern in the matter. The interviewee mentioned that they are working on it, but HiH should have already been reporting on outcomes such as changes in wellbeing, happiness, mental health, and other such measures. Further, they could also work on incorporating the importance of reporting failures and learning from reporting activities into their published materials and amongst their staff members.

One issue, which I will note here not as a direct recommendation but simply as a point of reflection, is that although HiH has an impressively interdisciplinary approach, they could go further to incorporate ideas around systems perpetuating global inequity (Hickel, 2017) into their practice. HiH is obviously conscious of colonialism and 'colonial approaches to conservation' were mentioned in the data. However, as Hickel suggested, there are currently broader systems in place on a global scale that perpetuate suffering (Hickel, 2017). Just as HiH is careful about the ethical implications of working with potential donors that may produce negative impacts on people and the environment, they should also be conscious of and take equal measures to account for or even address those systemic problems.

While my research on HiH's approach and practice was limited, I hope that this assessment and my recommendations provide fodder for further discussion and reflection. Given HiH's iterative approach to learning and practice I have no doubt that they will be received with the intellectual generosity with which they were intended.

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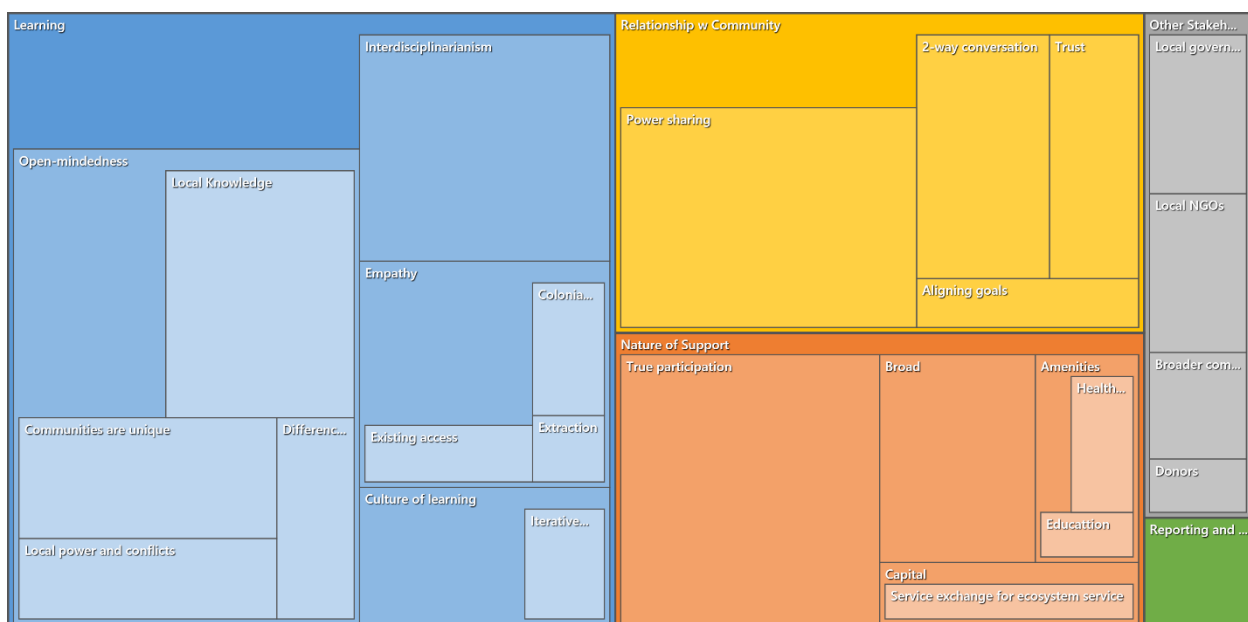
Appendix 1

This represents the questions that were asked during each interview, and the visualizations showcase the breakdown of the themes this research paper was measuring for.

1. ONE

a. Questions:

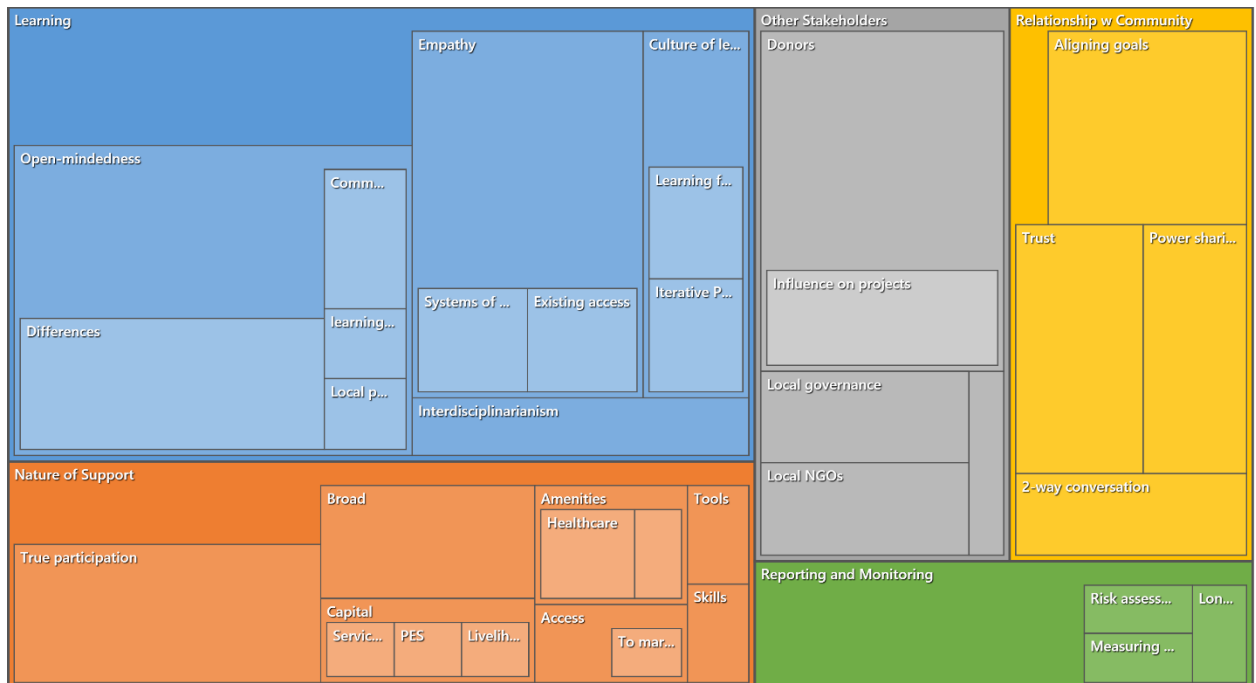
- i. Could you please tell me about yourself and your role at HiH?
- ii. How does HiH first approach a community?
- iii. What does a Radical Listening session look like? How does it play out?
- iv. What lessons do you want to impart on people and organizations that want to learn Radical Listening?
- v. You mentioned “changing mindsets”. In what ways do you hope to change mindsets?
- vi. You mentioned “traditional NGOs using top-down approaches”. Could you explain this further?
- vii. In what ways is HiH not a “traditional NGO”?
- viii. You mentioned collaborations with other stakeholders. Could you explain more about these dynamics?
- ix. When a project is implemented, who manages the operations after HiH’s work is complete?
- x. Could you explain HiH’s relationship with it’s “sister NGOs” that you mentioned?
- xi. You mentioned that HiH takes “more risks”. Could you explain further?
- xii. You have talked about the importance of “restoring trust” with communities. What did you mean by that?
- xiii. You mentioned “colonialism” several times throughout this interview. What do you mean by it and how is this idea operationalized in practice?
- xiv. If I were to replicate Radical Listening, what advice would you give me?



2. TWO

a. Questions:

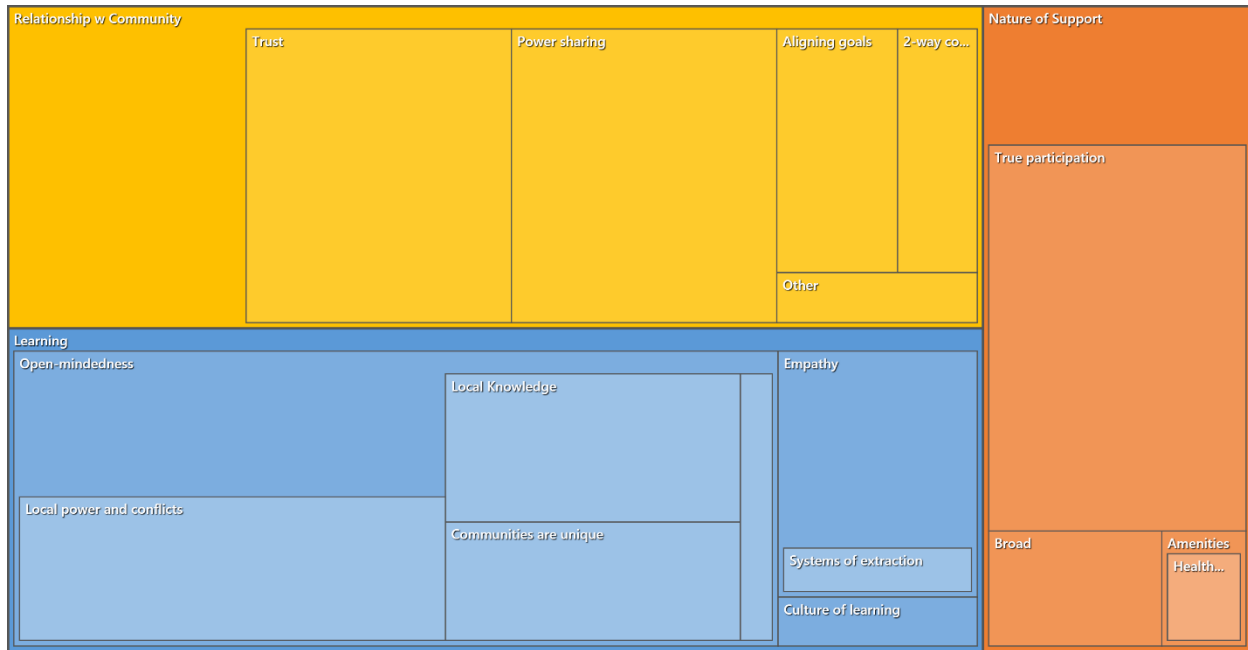
- i. Could you please tell me about yourself and your role at HiH?
- ii. How does HiH first approach a community?
- iii. What does a Radical Listening session look like? How does it play out?
- iv. You mentioned accepting noncash payments from communities. How do you decide what will and what will not be accepted as payment?
- v. You mentioned communities can be mistrusting of outside organizations. Why is that and how do you overcome it?
- vi. You spoke about working with local government. What sort of relationship do you try to maintain with the local government?
- vii. What other stakeholders are involved?
- viii. You talked briefly about HiH's relationship with donors. Could you add to that?
- ix. As you mentioned the importance of reporting activities for donors, could you talk more about how HiH reports on their projects? How do you conduct monitoring and evaluation activities when communities design projects?
- x. You mentioned HiH's efforts relating to education. What does HiH aim to teach local communities?
- xi. If I were to replicate Radical Listening, what advice would you give me?



3. THREE

a. Questions:

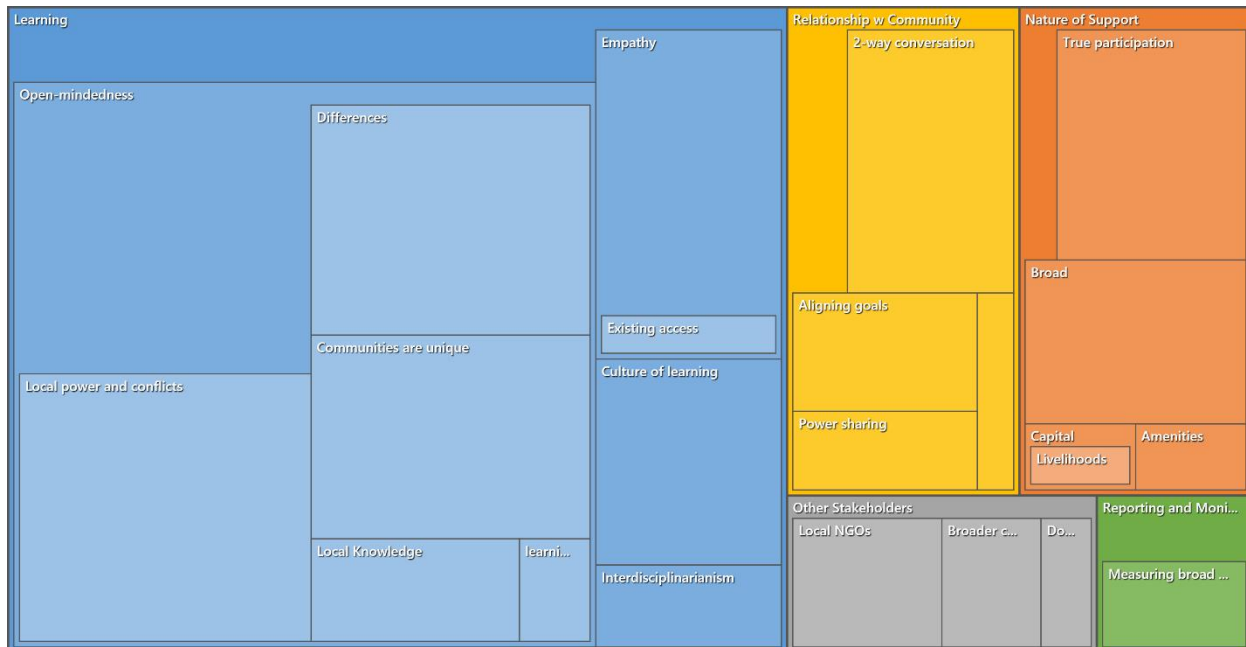
- i. Could you please tell me about yourself and your role at HiH?
- ii. How does HiH first approach a community?
- iii. What does a Radical Listening session look like? How does it play out?
- iv. Who participates in Radical Listening sessions?
- v. Do Radical Listening sessions look different across different communities?
- vi. You mentioned that HiH will encourage people that are not participating to speak their minds. Could you say more about this?
- vii. Your role as a translator is unique in that you are observing without intervening, as you said. How have you observed the reaction of communities to HiH? Has it changed over time?
- viii. You spoke about HiH staff introducing the organization. What do they say about the organization?
- ix. If I were to replicate Radical Listening, what advice would you give me?



4. FOUR

a. Questions

- i. Could you please tell me about yourself and your role at HiH?
- ii. How does HiH first approach a community?
- iii. Could you say more about how the HiH team introduces itself to the community?
- iv. What does a Radical Listening session look like? How does it play out?
- v. You suggested that Radical Listening is not the only way you engage with communities. What other approaches do you employ? How do they work alongside Radical Listening?
- vi. You mentioned consulting with people inside and outside the HiH team. Could you say more about this?
- vii. You spoke about broader impacts on local communities. How do you account for and measure these outcomes (as opposed to outputs)?
- viii. If I were to replicate Radical Listening, what advice would you give me?



5. FIVE

a. Questions

- i. Could you please tell me about yourself and your role at HiH?
- ii. How does HiH first approach a community?
- iii. What does a Radical Listening session look like? How does it play out?
- iv. You mentioned the importance of “building trust”. How does HiH build trust with local communities?
- v. Could you talk more about the research you mentioned, that HiH conducts before the Radical Listening session?
- vi. You spoke about local government. Could you describe your experience working with local government?
- vii. You suggested that participatory projects work better than those focused on negative reinforcement. Could you speak to that further?
- viii. You have spoken about the importance of engaging communities in the decision-making process. Do you think equal success could be achieved without the participation of local communities?
- ix. You mentioned communities suggesting solutions that are outside of HiH’s scope or capacity. How do you deal with those suggestions?
- x. As there is a variety of different projects, how do you measure your relative success or failure? Outcomes versus outputs?
- xi. You mentioned that staff intentionally do not talk excessively about HiH. Why is this?
- xii. If I were to replicate Radical Listening, what advice would you give me?

