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Teilhabe und Vielfalt: Herausforderungen einer Weltgesellschaft

Beiträge zur Internationalen
Heil- und Sonderpädagogik

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Social impact assessment of livelihood promotion programmes in Coastal Kenya

Pwani University (Kenya) and the Sociology of Diversity Chair (Technische Universität München) are jointly developing a participatory inclusive instrument for Social Impact Assessment. The project investigates how the framework of Social Return on Investment can be applied to the field of livelihood development for young adults with disabilities. Small-scale tracer studies are used to find out which (broader) benefits have been created for the target group and other stakeholders by such programmes.

1 Study background

“Work is an important life activity. It contributes to maintaining the individual, the family and the household by providing services and/or goods for the family, the community and society at large. Most importantly, work provides opportunities for social and economic participation, which enhances personal fulfilment and a sense of self-worth“ (WHO 2010).

The participation in labour activities is crucial to earn a living. Gaining access into the world of work is furthermore a decisive step for youths as a transition into adulthood (cf. Mugo, Oranga & Singal 2010), especially in a context where youths are expected to take care of their parents as “most families bank on their children for future prosperity and well-being“ (Gona, Mung’ala-Odera, Newton & Hartley 2010, 179).

Nevertheless, the World Report on Disability (2011) states that “working age persons with disabilities experience significantly lower employment rates“ (WHO 2011, 235) and “commonly earn less than their counterparts without disabilities“ (WHO 2011, 239). In Kenya the term “informal sector“ was coined (cf. Bangasser 2000) and unsurprisingly this sector employs the majority of the workforce in this country, where formal employment is the exception from the rule (cf. Schlyter 2002). The informal sector, as employer, is discussed critically since it operates out of reach of most laws and policies that regulate working hours, payment, occupa-

tional safety and health or social services. Especially for persons with disabilities, the stigma of being “only fit for informal work“ should be taken into consideration. On the other hand, the informal sector provides employment and income where the formal sector does not (cf. *ibid.*). Formal education or vocational education are not necessarily the entry point to these income-generating activities: “The various types of skills that people need to make a livelihood [...] can be acquired in non-formal ways at home and in the community, and in formal technical and vocational education and training institutions“ (Ransom 2010 145). Thus, besides its risks and challenges, the informal sector can offer opportunities for persons with disabilities to earn their living while engaging in an activity that suits their abilities and needs.

According to Reynolds and Ingstad (1995), there are three relevant questions when examining the characteristics of social organization relevant to disability: The ability of a family to care for a member with disability, the occupational structure of the society and whether it incorporates people with disabilities as well as the existence of special programmes, institutions and organizations for persons with disabilities. With regard to the occupational structure of society it seems to be easier for persons with disabilities to make a contribution when the family is the basic unit of production compared to “when labor is a commodity sold on a competitive market in fixed time and skill units“ (Reynolds & Ingstad 1995, 15).

1.1 Livelihood Promotion

Successful self-employment in the informal sector requires access to capital and specific business skills. But workers without a formal job often lack the access to general financial services in the form of loans, savings or insurances. Microfinance makes those services available to people who otherwise have to rely on informal loans and savings in kind that are supposed to be more risky (cf. Martinelli & Merstrand 2010). Livelihood promotion covers a broad range of activities from skills development, to the promotion of self- or wage employment, through access to financial services and the provision of social security measures (cf. WHO 2010).

The access to financial services is seen as a form of assistance for people living in poverty to help themselves to overcome poverty through self-employment and entrepreneurship.

“Case studies of those who have managed to improve their wellbeing indicate that entrepreneurship is the most frequent path out of poverty. Having multiple sources of income is also characteristic of many people who move out of poverty. In addition to entrepreneurship, these income streams include wages and salaries, benefits from family, agricultural earnings, and access to land“ (Narayan, Chambers, Shah & Petesch 2000, 45).

The shift to the concept of financial inclusion indicates that objectives have diversified from mere investments in microfinance as a potential strategy to alleviate poverty towards more differentiated services to cater to the diverse financial needs of the poor (cf. *ibid.*). It seeks to empower marginalised women and men “to better manage risks, smooth income, invest in productive activities, and build assets” (Ledgerwood 2013, 6).

The World Report on Disability proposes self-employment and microfinance as “an alternative to scarce formal employment” (WHO 2011, 247). However, persons with disabilities do not seem to benefit from mainstream microfinance programmes (cf. *ibid.*). Poverty alleviation programmes often fail to target persons with disabilities, who can get access to skills building but not to micro-finance programmes. For this group, self-employment is often the only available income-generating activity (Ingstad & Grut 2006). They face difficulties in accessing services of microfinance institutions when it comes to proving their credit worthiness. The main barriers here are self-exclusion due to a lack of self-esteem, exclusion by the staff of microfinance institutions due to prejudices and exclusion due to service design as well as physical or informational barriers. A survey of the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda on economically active persons with disabilities “reveals that it is time to rethink the entrepreneurial potential of people with disabilities and their saving habits” (Martinelli & Mersland 2010, 229).

1.2 Transitions into the world of work

Currently, very little is known about the situation of youths and young adults with disabilities transitioning into work in Kenya. How exactly youths and young adults earn their living, how they benefit from livelihood programmes (if they have had access to them) and which (broader) benefits and opportunities have been created by support programmes still represents a gap in research. Whether informal employment can be seen as an entry-point to waged employment remains an interesting question to be explored.

No academic literature exists on microfinance and disability, for instance on aspects such as the target group size or exclusion mechanisms as described above (cf. Martinelli & Mersland 2010). The World Report on Disability (WHO 2011) simply records a dearth of evidence about the effectiveness of microfinance programmes targeting people with disabilities.

Capacity-building and microfinance programmes supporting young adults with disabilities often lack the evaluation tools and routines to continuously monitor the programmes and projects as well as measure the impact on the individual, the family and the community. Data and research-based information to develop programmes and strategies, to convince national and international funding agencies and to transfer lessons learned as well as good-practice examples to other areas are

not available. Therefore, research with a focus on the impact of livelihood promotion is urgently needed in the Kenyan context.

2 Methodology

Against the foregoing background, the study-at-hand takes a closer examination of the structures and effects of two running programmes operating in the field of livelihood promotion on the Kenyan Coast: one especially designed for young adults with disabilities and another that targets women, who – compared to men – experience a higher level of marginalisation due to lower literacy levels, high incidence of child marriage as well as less access to and control of resources.

The study will be conducted in two phases, looking at the impact of those programmes from two different perspectives: During the first phase of the project, the research team developed a participatory inclusive instrument for Social Impact Assessment (SIA) to be used to assess the impact of livelihood development programmes. The tool will be field-tested in the Coastal Region of Kenya in conjunction with two project partners. In the second phase of the project, the developed instrument will inform the development of a monitoring and evaluation tool. The second tool will be based on the Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach. The tool will aim to assess the value on financial returns as appreciated by the stakeholders themselves.

Consultation in the tool preparation process is achieved through regular round-table meetings with the collaborating partners in the field, staff members and directors of livelihood development programmes, and various experts in the area of disability and research methodology. As experienced organisations in the field of livelihood development, the collaborating partners will be valuable in the identification of (un)expected and (un)desired social outcomes and changes with regard to quality of life. They will furthermore facilitate access to data and information about their programmes as well as contacts to the beneficiaries of their programmes. Small-scale tracer studies (with fifteen purposively selected respondents) will assess the impact of the respective livelihood programme.

2.1 Social Impact Assessment

The framework adopted by the researchers to examine the social impact of livelihood development activities is the so called “Social Impact Assessment“ (SIA).

“Social Impact Assessment includes the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programmes, plans, projects) and any social change

processes invoked by those interventions. Its primary purpose is to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment“ (Vanclay 2003, 2).

SIA covers a broad field of different approaches and perspectives on impacts as well as studies of different sizes focusing on diverse levels. It can therefore best be described as an “overarching framework“ (ibid.) for assessing impact. Apparently, principles such as the use of local knowledge, the participation of all stakeholders in planning and carrying out the assessment as well as the empowerment of those affected by a certain activity, are essential characteristics of this framework.

2.2 Quality of Life

As transitions into work and employment are important at the individual, family and community/societal levels, a monitoring and evaluation tool that is adequately designed to assess livelihood development activities will thus have to pay special attention to the social outcome of these activities. Quality of Life (QoL) serves as an appropriate framework to assess those social outcomes. Schallock (2010) suggests eight QoL domains, namely

1. Personal development
2. Self-Determination
3. Interpersonal Relations
4. Social Inclusion
5. Rights
6. Emotional well-being
7. Physical well-being
8. Material well-being.

This set of domains represents the multi-dimensionality of the construct Quality of Life. The eight QoL domains were elaborated through a meta-analysis of international literature on Quality of Life and validated through cross-cultural studies. They are further operationalized as QoL core indicators that translate into personal outcomes. A list of those indicators can be found in Table 1. Those indicators can subsequently be broken down into specific items that are assessed through self-report or direct observation – referred to as methodological pluralism (cf. ibid.). The cross-cultural validation supported that the domains have etic (universal) properties but that the core indicators show emic (culture-bound) properties in the form of significant differences between groups and geographical regions (cf. Schallock, Keith, Verdugo & Gómez 2010). This means, that the relative importance of different indicators varies inter-individually and inter-culturally (cf. Schallock 2010).

Tab. 1: Quality of Life core indicators (Schalock, Keith, Verdugo & Gómez 2010, 19).

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Core indicators</i>
<i>Emotional well-being</i>	Contentment, self-concept, lack of stress
<i>Interpersonal relations</i>	Interactions, relationships, support
<i>Material well-being</i>	Financial status, employment, housing
<i>Personal development</i>	Education, personal competence, performance
<i>Physical well-being</i>	Health and health care, activities of daily living, leisure
<i>Self-determination</i>	Autonomy/personal control, goals and personal values, choices
<i>Social inclusion</i>	Community integration and participation, community roles, social supports
<i>Rights</i>	Human (respect, dignity, equality) and legal (citizenship, access, due process)

3 Progress report

The present study is on course and on-going. A comprehensive interview guide targeting the self-reported impact of livelihood promotion on different domains of the respondent's QoL has been elaborated by the project team. Feedback from partners obtained during a round-table meeting has been incorporated. Research assistants have been trained to use the tool. They have subsequently conducted a pre-test that is currently being analysed.

The ultimate goal is to come up with tools that can guide organizations to objectively assess the impact of their projects and programs. These results will be used to influence livelihood programming decisions and policy formulation.

The main expected outcomes are the two tools. The Social Impact Assessment tool will be incorporated into a tool for measuring the Social Return on Investment, which will facilitate comprehensive monitoring and evaluation. Besides, a better understanding of the structures of livelihood development programmes and their impact as well as deeper insights into the life circumstances experienced by young persons with disabilities and their transitions into work/employment are expected.

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