

Putting Communities at the Centre of Evaluation Priorities and Challenges

India has a rich history of community organizations working in tandem with the community to drive evaluation at the grassroots level. The rich lineage of using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a testimony of the role played by community organizations in driving evaluation.

Exploring elements of community-centered program design, barriers and best practices to community engagement, and bridging community voices with decision-makers priorities – this webinar engages with organizations involved in community-focused implementation and evaluation such as GENSA, PRAXIS and PRADAN to understand the present evaluation landscape of community-centered evaluation in India.



Sonal Zaveri

Regional Co-Ordinator,
Gender and Equity Network South Asia
GENSA

We have a window of opportunity to include difficult questions related to gender, equity and marginalization.....community engagement and dialogue is not optional.

- We have a rich history of evaluation and strong roots in civil rights movements which has fostered inclusive learning and a ground-up learning environment.
- We as evaluators need to ponder on the question: What difference does the project/intervention make in people's lives from community's perspective rather than evaluators/donor's perspective?

There are certain critical success factors that make social accountability count, and those are the underlying political, legal, social, cultural, and economic factors which would be the key for a sustained impact.

- Social accountability consists of a broad range of actions involving government and civic engagement, so that citizens can hold state machineries to account.
- Initiatives such as Citizen Report Card (CRC) and Community Score Card (CSC) can be used as tools to involve civil society in proactively evaluating public services.



Sita Sekhar

Governance Researcher and
Social Accountability Expert

Our role as professional, as external interveners, are to be agents of change or the stimuli for change. But actually, the change has to be driven by communities themselves. And to be able to do that, communities actually have to have access to information, knowledge, etc.

- Change that originates within the communities are more sustainable in nature as compared to ones which come from a top-down approach.
- While we as interventionists and evaluators continue to facilitate interventions in disadvantaged communities, it is our job that we act as a catalyst rather than initiators of change



Madhu Khetan

Program Director,
Professional Assistance for Development Action
PRADAN

When we define community participation, we have to define marginalization first and find out what is the power relationship within the society

- While we as evaluators tend to focus on effectiveness of program on the overall population, it is imperative that we as evaluators highlight the granularities and grass-root realities of the program/intervention.
- Interventions might have differential effect within groups of population, which is why it is crucial that we as evaluators place the evaluation in the socio-cultural context. This is important as such an evaluation may help us point out factors that determine success/failure of the intervention.



Pradeep Narayanan

Director,
Research,
Praxis Institute of Participatory Practices