

LEARNING WITH AFRICA

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NB: "LOT" = Laboratorio Organizacional de Tereno aka FOW = Field Organization Workshop
NPA = Norwegian People's Aid

Summary

This article discusses the outcomes of the Organisational Laboratories (known in English as the "Organization Workshop – O.W.")-method as used in the Chiuta District (Mozambique) Development Program, run under the auspices of the "Norwegian People's Aid" NGO (NPA). This method has the potential to generate organizational and entrepreneurial capacities on a massive scale while, at the same time, ensuring professional capacitation^[2].

It is hoped that this analysis will contribute insights to anyone wanting to apply the methodology, in particular those who are part of the Tadia/UNESCO network. This network, besides studying the African diaspora in Asia, also hopes, thanks to this event, to contribute to solutions to the unemployment problem in Africa as well as in Asia, this being the topic under discussion in the workshops dealing with socio-economic questions affecting the Siddis. The focus of this article may also be of interest to the so-called 'Third World' in general as well as to the economic 'peripheries' of the so-called 'First World' whose populations, tired of waiting for government action, need to be capacitated to offer solutions, in an organized manner before it becomes fashionable around the world to be a young arsonist, as we have seen, of late, in France.

By way of Introduction

This article presents the discussions of the outcomes obtained during the the 2003 evaluation conducted by this Researcher, of the Organization Workshop-method as used in the Chiuta District (Mozambique) Development Program, run under the aegis of the Norwegian "Norwegian Popular Aid - NPA" Non Government Organization which had been working in that country since 1993. This network, besides studying the African diaspora in Asia, also hopes, thanks to this event, to contribute to solutions to the unemployment problem in Africa as well as in Asia, this being the topic under discussion in the workshops dealing with socio-economic questions affecting the Siddis. The focus of this article may also be of interest to the so-called 'Third World' in general as well as to the economic 'peripheries' of the so-called 'First World' whose populations, tired of waiting for government action, need to be capacitated to offer solutions, in an organized manner.

If social inclusion-oriented productive organizations do not receive the necessary help, then, the unemployment-driven 'hidden war' will happen on a world scale, as described in the Brazilian newspaper "*Diario de Pernambuco*", by Clodomir Santos de Moraes, more than ten years ago. Because wars, at least, have a target, whether it be a justified one or not, and a logic and organization of their own. What will happen in this case will be a universal anomy, or total chaos, in one seamless wave of barbarism. And as the Third World likes to copy the First, the protests involving arson, vandalism, and terrorist acts on large scale committed by a an excluded population whose patience has run out waiting for a miracle, for someone able to understand and help them to intervene. Walter Benjamin warned exactly about this eventuality, before the Nazis' victory. He said that the revolutionaries had a proposition for the workers but not for the unemployed people and lumpens who increased exponentially in the face of the crisis and were increasingly used by the nazis.

In the present case, those called excluded were domesticated by assistencialism^[3] that, historically, tried to frustrate their autonomous capacities for fear that these might lead to revolution, in the case of capitalism, or to counter-revolution, in the socialist case. Now, the absence of their autonomous

capability to act leads to a dearth of perspective and hope. They become the "Welfare State's orphans", under either mode of production, given the fact that both regimes go through crises and changes which lead them to cut down rights which once were considered sacred, rights in crucial areas such as health, education, housing and retirement pension

To organize the excluded masses so that they take their history in own their hands and build their future would appear to be exactly the kind of help which can be provided in the short term to all those who in many parts of the world form the vast majority of the population: those without hope and who lost patience waiting . In that sense, the OW (Organization Workshop) method is an important tool towards achieving this, and the African experience is one excellent example.

This article proposes to analyze only the specific case of use of the O.W.-method in Mozambique by the NPA, in the period of 2000 to 2003. The data were collected within the following localities of the Chiúta District, which, in its turn, is part of Tete region, in the north of Mozambique: Mpondo, Zuze, Golowi, Chicoco, Cachere and Manje. Data were also collected in Tete city itself and in the capital of the country, Maputo. This restriction appears justified because of time limitations and the difficult access due to bad road conditions (and the researcher's fear of landmines). 252 persons were interviewed, mainly for the purposes of collecting qualitative data, among the communities participating in these events and among the authorities involved, in addition to the NPA technicians who were directly responsible for carrying out the activities.

The documentary research consisted of access to partial reports and other documents that were made available to us by Mr. Frank Phiri, Manager of the Development Program, and by the NPA Mozambican Resident Representative, the psychologist Isabel Labra.

Historical and Geographical Location of the Development Program

Mozambique, at the moment of the evaluation, was undergoing a new historical phase than to an uninterrupted period of peace. The municipal elections which occurred in November 2003, and the Presidential elections announced for 2004 were as many steps towards the consolidation of democracy and the new directions taken by the country both in politics and economics.

The country has an area of 801.590 Km² and a population of 17.98 million inhabitants. Its economy is dependent on a external aid in more than 60% of its national budget, although it can be said that it has already been worse, because not long ago this percentage was 80%, according to authorities; it can also be said that Mozambique is giving important steps, questionable or not, to develop conditions in order to, some day, become really independent from the predatory alien forces, as the country, after becoming independent from Portugal in 1975, had just celebrated its independence and the nation was involved in civil war.

Mozambique had undergone successive transition phases, either of political character - with the challenges of building a new post-colonialism and post-socialism country, getting out of a single party system to a plural-party one, or of economical character because the country had gotten out of centralised policy, moving recently into a market economy, globalised and decentralised, with a tendency to privatising.

This means that progress conjugated with the predictions of increasing poverty and unemployment if one considers the situation of the Latin American countries which followed this risky recipe. So, immersed in contradictions, Mozambique tries to transform into reality the official propaganda that says that now it is possible to believe in peace and in the future, Words are always present in the official discourse. The danger is that, if any slip-up occurs, when leaving the immediate global and neo-liberal present in order to believe in future, Mozambique may go back to the past, changing only the face of its colonizer. For this reason, it is urgent to increase the bargain power of its population by means of their critical consciousness, associated to a mass capacitation of a new kind of organisation, devoted to face the negative aspects of the policy mentioned above, so as to be in condition to profit from the positives aspects.

The difficult situation of the country today is the product of the clashes the country went through, which caused the population to run away to the neighbouring countries such as: Zimbabwe, Malawi e

Tanzania, with a complicate return due to unemployment and poverty. Besides, Mozambicans who were working in East Germany returned after the fall of the Berlin Wall and engrossed the unemployment lines. At the moment when the evaluation was being made, in October and November of 2003, there were demonstrations in the streets, with former workers of the former GDR claiming workers' rights, paid by the Germans to the Mozambican Government. The demonstrators claimed that it was never given to them and they were made to return to their country without better perspectives.

Another post-war characteristic, was the arrival of international aid through several Non-Governmental Organizations, coming from European countries. Some of them stood out. The Popular Aid from Norway, APN which at the beginning, meant to bring back refugees, then it implemented a Demining Programme, followed by the Development Program which also sought to approach the issue of HIV/AIDS dissemination. Furthermore, it sought to deal with other themes, with emphasis on genre issues, ecological issues, access to water, incentive to the familiar small agricultural production, among other approaches which were made along this ten-year work of the program.

NPA wanted to be an NGO with a performance different from others, characterized by the participation of the ones which benefit from it, in order to avoid what Mia Couto alerted to in the preface of the Hernandez book (2005:11):

Africa lives a triple restrictive condition: prisoner of a past invented by others, tied to the present imposed by the exterior and even that captive of goals constructed by international institutions which orders its economy.

Objective of the Development Program

The Development Program was implemented in Chiúta, in 1993, by the District Administration's requirement. Chiúta is a rural District, with 64,000 inhabitants, it is located to the north of Tete on a road that goes to Zambia. During the war, heavy armed confrontations with atrocities against the population and damages to the infrastructure happened there. Although APN, since 1994, have been participating of the re-construction and rehabilitation of schools and free distribution of school material to distant localities of the district, only in 1997 the objectives of the Development Program were more clearly defined, and an option was made for the participative methods of planning and action.

As a result, in 2000, to the Organisational Workshop Method was introduced, with the initial capacitation of a team, and an adaptation to the "field" (FOW – Field OW) modality was made in 2001, (thereafter referred to by its Portuguese acronym LOT), bringing a new dimension to the program and a new focus, associated to the participating methodology used before for planning actions of the Program.

It is important to bear in mind that, in this case, besides using the Organisational Laboratories to achieve the usual objectives, such as popular organization for the building of infrastructure and generation of employment and income, there was a strategy to associate the capacitation used by the "Development Programme" to the "Demining Programme", implemented by the same NGO in order to train the personal of the community in mining extraction, generating independence from the high costs of the private services and/or delayed action of the public power.

The urgency of the mine removal, besides the obvious reasons, had to do with the fact that, during the rain season, the areas demarcated and isolated as being "areas of mines" changed, because the force of waters carried the mines to other places.

General Results of the Program: the effectivity in the practice

In relation to the Program as a whole, along this ten-year performance, it was possible to observe that the objectives were achieved, including the carrying out of actions which had not been planned at first. In all, there were welfare improvements of several types, from the construction of schools, health centres, adult education centres and centers for women to seed distribution, road construction and the drilling of artisan wells. The impact of those actions – in quantity and quality – have caused APN to be seen as an NGO different from the others that are acting in Mozambique

The Organisational Laboratories

The methodology of massive capacitation in organization called Organisational Workshop was created by the Brazilian Clodomir Santos de Moraes and it was systematized in his doctoral dissertation in the late eighties at University of Rostock, Germany (Moraes, 1987), but with a practical use since the early sixties when the first experiences were carried out by the popular organization called "Peasant Leagues".

After the exile of the author, the method started to be used by programs of the United Nations agencies the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) with several objectives, such as to create peasant enterprises in order to make the agriculture production economically viable in areas where agrarian reform was carried out, where the Honduran case stood out; or to optimize the existing businesses or associations, as in the Mexican case; to form a Labour Union Central in the recently independent African countries, when training courses for instructors for Africa were held in Switzerland in the early eighties (Labra y Labra, 2000:132) ; or to help and to improve the cooperative system in Portugal, with events that covered nearly the whole country.

The advantage of this methodology is that it enables the generation of organisational abilities in the collectivity involved. At the same time it provides professional initiation training in subjects chosen by the participants, freely in some cases and, in others, related to the infrastructure project which needs to be built (Correia, 2002). These activities become initial project of the course's enterprise, which will be the organisational challenge to function as objective activity (Leontiev, 1978), generating needs for the people involved who cope with them and, at the same time, get the skills in organization and in the chosen professional modalities.

There are four types of Workshops (Moraes, 1987): the course ones, the centre ones, the enterprise ones, and the field ones. There are many differences and similarities between the types of Workshops or Laboratories, but basically, one might say that the centre ones and the course ones begin with the instructors' training and they happen under confinement, like a boarding school, while in the case of the other two, the enterprise ones and the field ones, capacitation is provided directly to the community, in the place where they live, without the need of confinement.

The Organizational Workshop of the Course (Laboratório Organizacional de Curso – LOC) has the objective of forming social participation systems of various natures: those which identify the projects, those which promote cooperativeness, and those of rural development. About forty to sixty technicians are trained under confinement and those train their interlocutors (The "Project Auxiliaries") in the local communities, not under confinement, in a 15 to 21-day course, where they share what they have learnt, in a concised way and accessible to people with little school education, in areas of repressed economy. The auxiliaries identify suggestions for enterprises. Those and the Technicians set up the Identification System for Projects that Generate Employment and Income, the SIPGER. Once it has been set up, it will have a life of its own, free from the institution that sponsored its setting up.

The Centre Organizational Workshop (Laboratório Organizacional de Centro – LOCEN), as mentioned before, is done under confinement, in the rural area, and the practical activities of the courses must provide support to agriculture and animal raising, while the collectivity learns organization. Several types of courses are offered, according to the participants' choices, but those connected to the sustainability of the Centre are primarily offered, including those on administration and accounting of cooperative associations, secretarial courses, community journalism and others, along with cattle vaccination small animal care, agriculture techniques, etc. Agricultural produce is what meets the feeding needs of the collectivity. Not only must they learn to cultivate but also to market the produce, because they will have to buy things that the Center does not have. Besides, they will have to leave for the next group to get into the Capacitation Centre a crop area ready for use, exactly like the one they received for produce marketing.

As to the Enterprise Organizational Workshop – (Laboratório Organizacional de Empresa – LOE), it tries to restore a business to good condition, operation, and capacity, organising the workshop in the same place.. A business in trouble is reorganized and its staff gets trained through the required courses, having to do with the type of project that will be implemented by the business. Besides, it

seeks to meet the demand for courses required by the surrounding community so as to generate sympathy and synergy towards the business which is trying to recover. That is because, in order to achieve that, this business will need the support of the surrounding community. The logic behind this capacitation is self-management, involving its employees, their families and the surrounding community. It may be either a business created by a previous Workshop, or a traditional business which, going through difficulties, makes a deal with the workers so as to pay off salary debts. Those workers are trained and they take over the business under a new organisational model.

The Field Organizational Workshop (Laboratório Organizacional de Terreno – LOT) aims the capacitation of the collectivity in organization and in pre-professional subjects, with 80-hour courses on several technical professions of the basic type or of cultural motivation.

The event begins with the masses' immediate access to courses in general in order to, from that point on, new knowledge about organization can be built, generating the development of skills to manage a big company (the minimum participants: 40; maximum participants: no restrictions). That is why the Workshop can have students from all ages and from all school level (including the illiterate) and it is feasible to cope with all the cultural particularities and particular preferences.

Among all the Workshops, it is the most democratic and holistic one, as all the families attend the event at the same time, the old and the young, and provided that the right conditions are met, everybody can learn what they want to.

In addition, the LOT trains, in the field, the future directors and technicians-instructors of this kind of event, working side by side with those more experienced.. The former have been selected as prospective Directors or Technicians of the so-called "Primary Structure", which is a team of multifaceted instructors who both teach classes and assist in the organisation of the collectivity.

The LOT is takes place close to the participants' homes. It is the participants themselves who organize the event from the beginning: they decide when and where the classes will be, they make a course list and a list of course applicants. Sometimes the community provides the event with instructors in special skills, when the organizing team can not meet the demand, although its instructors are multifaceted, which means that each one is able to teach different courses.

The APN Experience with the Organisational Workshops

As to Mozambique, adjustments were made to the LOT, subordinating the course offer to APN's objectives and goals, present in the infrastructure recovery project and in approaches to different subjects (ecology, genre, AIDS, etc.) during the event. Neither was it possible, due to several limitations, to broaden the range of courses to meet the demands of the several age groups in the community, nor even their private objectives, nor to the other necessities aimed to the generation of income, as the priority was the building of infrastructure (schools, dams, secondary roads, wells, etc.)

Another adjustment of the Course Organisational Workshop was made for the capacitation of the Workshop Directors (as mention before, Workshop directors are usually trained in LOT, in a practical way), without the usual process of multiplication of the knowledge and skills acquired, after the confinement phase, in order to create a network of auxiliaries under a self-managed business type coordination. The people trained had the task of leading the Organisational workshops wherever APN determined to.

The goal of the APN was also to prepare human recourses for the Demining Programme which, as mentioned before, needed to massively spread the knowledge of how to remove mines safely, and to increase the number of Development Programme Directors for the reconstruction of more infrastructure or the construction of new one. This strategy conceived by APN Resident Representative, the already mentioned psychologist Isabel Labra, generated the conditions for institutional resource optimization, making use of the mine subject to massively train in organisation those involved in Programme who, after that, could use that knowledge to solve other problems, which, most of the times, they could solve by themselves, with a minimum capacity for business organisation.

In the LOC, held in October 2003, Angolans who had already participated of the Ground workshop in Angola, led by the Psychologist Ivan Labra, were trained so that the Mozambique experience with both Programmes could be taken Angola.

Most of the APN's actions in Chiuta with the Workshops were carried out successfully in 2001 and 2002, thanks to the technicians's commitment to the method and ideals. 425 people, including 97 women, participated of the event.

The kinds of businesses were created: 01 Carpentry Workshop involving 11 participants (men), in Mange, 02 small companies, in Kaunda, (a blacksmith workshop and a brass workshop), involving 02 participants (men), one company which makes wells, with 16 participants (men), 01 company of road rehabilitation, 38 participants (05 women among them) and 01 restaurant in Zuse. 04 participants (women)The other participants who did not open businesses were benefited with the capacitation, which later possibly generated job opportunities.

Some qualitative aspects to bear in mind about the LOTs

This method also includes a Development Fund, which consists of money for small expenses during the event. This fund also creates a need for accounting, which results in budgeting capacitation. Generally, the Fund, in the LOT's is given to the collectivity, not divided among individuals, which is different from what is done in the Course Workshop, where each participant receives a scholarship and there is still a small fund to be used by the collectivity for emergency expenses of the business created for pedagogical purposes. As to the LOT's adjustment in Mozambique, the Fund was given during the LOT, as an individual scholarship, like it is done in the LOC model. In spite of this adjustment there were positive results, benefiting either individuals or families, but indirectly benefiting the community.

In general, in the LOT case, when this fund is optimized, it may generate surplus to finance the start-up of a collective big business. When it generates individual or familiar business, after some time, those tend to gather into a bigger company (a company made up of companies) in order to, in the beginning, optimize their purchasing and selling efforts, and afterwards, the production.

At any rate, in the case of Mozambique, it was possible to perceive an impact on the community immediately after each event. The women, for example, got together in order to form small businesses such as: restaurants, clothes shops, goat and pig breeding, and they still spared some money for emergencies; the men bought kids, cows, bicycles, and some said they used the money to get married (Correia, 2003).

A bicycle, bought at the price of three goats in an area of absolute poverty, where there are not animals for transport or traction, can be used both to transport sick people, who, in the past, had to be carried in a hammock to the nearest city, and to transport merchandise for trading. In the latter one should include the creation of a new service: the "bicycle-taxi", used to transport those who get off the bus on the road. Without the "taxi", they would have to walk 10 kilometres., and sometimes even more, to their villages or houses (not all of them live in villages), and even worse, they would have to transport their goods on their backs (Correia, 2003).

Although the tertiary roads, built during the event, were suitable for use and it was possible to find women volunteers doing conservation work, two situations were found in some communities: the first one was that the community gave up on the conservation of those roads and were waiting for the public power to carry out the maintenance; the second one that everything worked as expected and there were teams taking care of the maintenance.

The community's giving up on the maintenance of the roads had two interpretations. One considered that "waiting period" to be positive as it reflected the people's getting aware of a National State, which makes them citizens entitled to rights. On the other hand, the "waiting period" could mean accommodation/inaction, a cultural characteristic inherited from colonial times, reinforced after the war by the assistance of NGO's.

The technicians explained that after the Workshops it was always agreed that teams that would carry out the maintenance of the ducts, schools, dikes, and roads. An the technicians also affirmed that the Organizational Laboratories do not allow accommodation/inaction, because the community learns the

technical division of labour and for this reason there is not an overload of work for only one person, the leader. With the new organizational technology, he is replaced by a collectivity organized in work committees and, because of that, several leaders are born in this process and everyone is responsible. This Organizational technology contrasts with the way they behaved before the event, when a strong demonstration of artisan-like conscientiousness is seen with strong doses of individualism, self-sufficiency, disbelief in productive associative activities, etc. When they are involved in complex organizational activities, having become leaders, or individual overloaded cannot give attention to his own "machamba" (cultivated plot), or his own family. The technicians explained that the other NGO's "respect" people's "culture", in that aspect, not helping them to learn to work in a different way. Here it is important to examine Mia Couto's preface mentioned above (Hernández, 2005:12), where she affirms that:

Another common place in this effort to figure out the African Continent is the weight given to tradition. As if other peoples in other continents did not have traditions, as if the past in those other places, did not affect the present. As a result, the Africans become easily explainable. What one needs is to invoke anthropological, ethnic, or ethnographic reasons. The others, the Europeans or the Americans are complex entities who have social, historical, economical and family relations.

Nevertheless it is worth elaborating on the theme about cultural aspects if one bears in mind another phenomenon linked to what could be seen as clear remainders of the colonialism effects: In the interviews people were asked about what they did after the event from what they had been trained to do. All the answers had to do with the construction of infrastructure of communal use such as a church, more schools, housing improvement, etc. When they were asked if they had used the organizational technology learnt to organize, for example, the traditional community celebrations, they readily answered that they did not think of that, "because it did not cross their minds that they could do it", meaning they were allowed to do that.

The interviewees agreed it was a good idea to use the organizational technology for other things, "because, it is very difficult for the person in charge of the party to do everything by himself or herself", which sounded like they needed permission from their instructors in order to give other use to what they had learnt, using the knowledge related to civil construction to the cultural area and other areas corresponding to their collective needs. For private family use, however, it was possible to observe that some women started to assign household chores to their children and husbands, as they had learnt at the event.

The Decapacitation Phenomena

The phenomenon of "accommodation/inaction" of some ex- participants of LOT maybe this could be explained by what is said by Sobrado (2000) in relation to the origins of the Decapacitation phenomenon.. The explanation resumes the concept of objective activity: if it is the presence of an object generator of needs that pushes the individual to be capacitated, the absence of this object, or the paternalism in dealing with this same object, leads to the decapacitation. Thus, the absence of the object generator of the organizational challenge, in the case of Mozambique a company for infrastructure construction and another one which would replaceable it, structured from other courses which could be offered simultaneously to those required by the construction process, may have caused the collectivity to abandon what had been learnt.

Sometimes, the habit of "waiting" is the fruit of the ONGs' or the Government' assistance actions, which cause the necessities generated by the object to be dealt with without the collective organized action. The assistance actions deal with the needs beforehand, inhibiting any community initiative and, therefore, also inhibiting the abilities learnt in the process..

The "object" ceases existing owing to the lack of an adequate plan for capacitation. The Development Fund itself, which should function as an indivisible income (Morais, 1987), is given out as individual salaries rather than to the collectivity. It is important to mention that the illiteracy rate, in some communities, is over 95%, especially among adults, and among them, women. It is interesting to observe that here the issue is not only the inability to write, but also the inability to speak the

Portuguese language, considered as Mozambique's official language by the majority of the population of the area under study.

This linguistic exclusion adds to the omission of minimum citizenship rights which begins with the documentation that registers, since birth, a citizen with full civil rights. Who could be the interested one in maintaining so many non documented people in a border region, inhabited by very poor people who have returned from the exile in neighbouring countries, in a country which, like Brazil, people, mostly women and children, have fallen victims to either prostitution, drug traffic, or even organ trade for transplant, although the latter was still seen with some reservation by the interviewees, as still not being a serious problem in Mozambique, which should be doubted as human life is given to so little value when one is born in a country like Brazil or Mozambique, full of socio-economic contrasts, where the neediest are not cared for, and people grow up and die and that transit through the world happens without a register of great part of the population.

LOT and HIV

According to the observed data, the Workshop is seen as highly positive from several viewpoints, but some consultants, in their partial reports elaborated by request of APN, surveyed the risk of increase of contamination by HIV during the LOT, due to the agglomeration of hundreds of people for several days. But what could have been a problem became a solution: the LOT coped with that problem together with the community massively spreading information about HIV. Considering that Chiuta is in the international corridor to Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, this is a problem that has to be taken into account very carefully (Correia, 2003).

The sustainability of the Work "Post-LOT"

The sustainability of the work carried out through the Laboratory Method, without the presence of the technical team which organized the training, depends on the adequate design of the event, according to the local characteristics and the conditions that will followed its end, so that the collectivity can gradually replace the persons and materials from outside the community by its own. This collectivity must work with its own people, now trained, and with equipment and alternative material, ready to be mobilized by those people through organized action.

It is important to carry out this transition before the end of the event because, from the moment of the end, the sponsor team can only return through a formal invitation or to assist the negotiation of projects. As for the formed enterprise, as any other in the market, it must seek; its survival and the solution to its problems in the existing institutions. In those cases paternalism frustrates capacitation. There is a Brazilian saying that says: "one should not waste candles on a bad person when they die", which means that, if the collectivity does not move to achieve what is needed, using the tools which they have learnt, there is no point in spending energy to keep it alive in an artificial or paternalistic way.

The reason for that is simple. Every enterprise born from a laboratory is temporary. The continuity of its existence will depend on two conditions: one having an objective character and the other a subjective character. The former has to do with the existence of material conditions for the continuity of the enterprise's work: the place, however simple it may be, equipment and personnel enough for the technical division of labour. The other condition, having a subjective character, consists of the collectivity's necessity for the existence of the enterprise in which they are organized, besides the level of capacitation achieved during the process, either to look for substitute equipment for those available during the event, or to facilitate the administration of the production of goods and/or services.

As for the communities in Chiuta, there was a technical decision which is important to register and explain: The communities where companies for the construction of infrastructure were created, those were implemented temporarily, according to the method oriented, but only one of these received the right conditions in order to keep existing after the event, when they kept the equipment used during LOT for the construction of infrastructure. This fact occurred, according to the interviewees, to prevent the competition of the same kind of enterprises from the neighbouring area.

The trained people who were not able to keep their construction enterprises reported that they got jobs easily owing to the knowledge acquired during the event. Their success made that the women in those

communities requested the return of the LOT in that area, so that this time they could learn “the same as the men did, because they also needed jobs”. It is important to see here one consequence of the LOT, or the crossfire of unemployment, to contribute to an adaptability of the traditional roles of the men and women within the community.

With regard to the conclusion of the infrastructure non-finished during the LOT, the tendency is that the community will continue organized until the conclusion of the event. The opposite only occurs when there is any difficulty to obtain the material, due to the fact that the community cannot afford to mobilize it. One example is linked with cement: the current legislation requires that schools must be built with cement. It is also used in the construction of dams because of the force of the water.

The problem of the cement also prevented the community from building new schools or new dams on its own, remaining dependent on the ONGs’ actions to finance the cement. Because of that, they cannot put the organisational technology learnt to use if they do not take it to another performance area such as the area of cultural events which has been mentioned before.

The capacity to become owner of new knowledge is what is expected from the capacitation in organization rather than the possibility of a mechanical repetition ad infinitum of the practice that they had, although transformation of social consciousness is reported as consequence of the new practice, translated into the fearlessness to directly deal with the authorities about their problems, the boldness to receive visitors, the awareness of their rights and responsibilities, and the overcoming of genre questions and taboos. (Correia, 2003).

Genre

Since within some communities the activities linked with civil construction are filled with prohibitions for the women due to cultural issues, it was great to learn that they participated in the events in a larger or smaller number (in each one there was a different percentage). Anyway, they were the first to benefit from the facilitated access to water coming from the semi-artisan ducts.

Unfortunately, for reasons already mentioned, the capacitation in organization and pre-professional training, in some cases (not all), remained essentially in the hands of men, in spite of the emphasis given by the APN to the work involving genre issues. Those were the questions raised by the women, most of them common to women in general: There was nobody to leave the children with, even when the husbands or the cultural questions did not prevent them from doing the work, and when they came back from the event, they were snowed under with household chores, because their husbands did not help them as they had to take care of the plantation. Consequently, the women had a lot to lose if they lost their precious time. They had to be sure that that think would bring some kind of benefit.

It is important to mention that at the moment of the evaluation, the women asked for courses normally meant for men, related to the construction mentioned above, the so-called courses for men, to be provided to women now, because they wanted to get a job and have their own money, they argued. Nevertheless, there was still a significant group of women, including those who asked for “courses for men”, who also asked for sewing, crochet and midwifery courses.

It caught this researcher’s attention that the women in those communities did not know how to preserve food which was abundant at harvest time, such as fruit. They knew neither how to make pickles (Food kept in vacuum with salt and vinegar or lemon); nor how to make sweets, marmalade, cheese, nor how to dry fruits, etc. The Laboratory could have spread this kind of knowledge, although, the lack of local raw material would probably prevent some of those ideas from being carried out, however easy they look for urban eyes.

Other demands of the women have to do with the loans for small business, as long as they return what they have received. They exemplified with horticulture which could be carried out if they had some money for the seeds.

According to the community’s men,

There is no problem in working all together men and women. Things are changing here now. We have women working for government of Mozambique. In the past nobody used to think about that. In the past

the women could not learn how to read and write and even now this is still a problem because since the colonial time, this has been seen as the step before prostitution. (Correia, 2003).

The partial reports found in the APN's archives and which were analyzed by this researcher also proved that there was improvement in the access to technology and resources, in education and training possibilities, increasing the opportunities and the options of activities economically viable in the rural area. Thanks to the LOT the women had the possibility to organize themselves through organized work, (Correia, 2003).

Men's Opinion in Communities where the LOT was held:

The male interviewees provided important information saying that they were surprised with the results of the event. Only around 20% gave up participating in the LOT because they did not understand what it was, or because they thought that there would not be any benefit or that it was a joke. Only until they were no longer students and they become an enterprise. Thus they had contracts to build roads and semi-artisan ducts in several places working for APN, and other ONG's. With the money from the contracts they pay those who work, but they put 10% percentage aside for a fund which they use to finance the partners' trip to the city of Tete in order to participate in events and to cover the expenses of new contract negotiations and as a reserve for emergencies. The commercialisation was very important because the traders come to make business exchanging what is produced by the community for theirs products. They come mainly from Zambia and Malawi, and bring Kalapunas, plates, bicycles, radios, hoes, pans, salt, etc. The company was called Chuma-Chirinthaka, which in Nbana (language spoken in Chiuta) means, "Life lies in the work with the land". "It is what we believe in. Here, we plant rice, corn, peanuts, sugar cane, bananas, oranges, mangoes, beans, onions, kale, papayas, and tomatoes". (Correia, 2003).

As for what they considered to be important for their future, they mentioned a corn mill, the creation of an peasant association for purchasing and selling products, to the construction of a dam for irrigation.

Benefits of the Organizational Laboratories according to the APN's technicians:

Here is a synthesis of the LOTs benefits, from the point of view of the technician who carried out the work in the communities researched and who had already worked with other methods, according to the report already mentioned (Correia, 2003):

- * The LOTs met their objectives. There is a difference between the groups trained in the LOT and those that are not.
- * The duration of the courses and other differentials: more people in less time.
- * In the past there was only one kind of training; in the LOT, the training is more flexible, and what is carried out is what the community needs, and says that they want.
- * There is a quick initial impact, with circulation of the the Development Fund money.
- * The construction of the required infrastructure is carried out by the community and because they built it, they care for it.
- * The reactions of the community towards the visitors have improved because now they know how to receive visitors.
- * The male myths and traditions have diminished in power. It was possible to see this in the beginning of the LOT: the student distribution in the classroom or by activity used to be determined by genre. Eventually, that distribution obeyed the logic of the technical division of labour.
- * The school construction time diminished.
- * On the other hand, the LOT has been helping in the local administration, because it is a training world for institutions too. When a joint project is made, it seeks, with the partners, with the community, to provide solutions.
- * The partners and the community technicians have participated and been trained. However, in the hiring and progress monitoring stage the lack of identification documents hinders the company's registration. The number of people without ID in the communities can reach 80%. A joint action of the government organs was needed to solve this problem.
- * The mine problem in the Chiuta area is already under

Control; the problem now is the unemployment and the commercialization, which needs to be studied more deeply, because to open new road will not solve the problem; capacitation is needed to identify market niches.

- * Infrastructure construction has improved in quality.

- * As for community organization, the LOT's met their objectives.

- * Water has helped a lot, it is collected in a safe way, through a hole from where it is extracted by means of a pump; so there is no point in using contaminated utensils and this prevents many illnesses.

- * The better roads allow connection between the communities. Intensive labour is used so the roads cannot be compared to those built with the help of machines. In spite of that, they are important to the community, because the government only cares about the main roads and not the tertiary ones, which the community will have to build and maintain. The people understand that as they built the road, it belongs to them. Therefore, they take care of it.

- * There has been a lot of home improvement with what they learnt. There was no point in thinking of production companies as they were too far away from the trading centres.

- * Another positive point is that the Organization Theory

influences their way of life in an indirect way, and this helps in the agriculture production. The government has a program called "Linking School – Community" which carries out school maintenance together with the people, who are trained to take grass off, repair winter damages, etc.

- * When the LOT is used, the constructions which were started are more likely to be finished, because the community is involved. In the past, when the APN hired outside contractors, the community used to lose interest in doing their part and often abandoned the work, according to the APN. Besides, the money which remains helps the community.

- * So far the Development Program has made a big leap, which started with a seminar attended by the method theorists Isabel and Ivan Labra. They taught us a lot and it is their disciples who organize the Organizational Laboratories now. In the past, the participative planning was the big leap, but it was up to other people to carry it out. Now the participative planning has a delivery instrument: the Organizational Laboratories.

- * There is knowledge multiplication. Those who participated teach those who did not. When one compares the before and after the LOT, there has been a visible improvement in the communities' standard of living. The LOT has potential to do much more. On the other hand, there are new areas that LOT can deal with, such as: land, human rights in general, youth, women's rights.

- * As other benefits, we can point out that the fact that the resources remain in the community is a great benefit because it reduces poverty. The Maravia and Chiuta Districts were chosen as the Pilot Districts for Budget Decentralization. It was the use of the methodology which caused these communities to be able to participate and to say what they need. This is a World Bank's Project.

- * There is also the creation of the District Development Committees. With all that, if Development means, for some authors, a change in mentality, can we say that the method achieves that?. Are we using it correctly? Could it be done in another way?

CONCLUSION

Actually, the APN technician's opinion conclude this article, because their experience shows the potential of the method as to community organization, not only to get jobs or income or to build infrastructure, but to trigger off a development process in a new level which could generate social justice, economical viability, and ecological balance. Unfortunately the short time available, which has already expired, hinders a more analytical register of the APN's actions in Mozambique. However, it must be pointed out that, undoubtedly, this is an ONG different from others, at least as to its actions in Mozambique in the analysed period, which was concerned about solving the emergency problems such as the return of the refugees and the demining process, within a conception tending to what Raff Carmen sees as "Autonomous Development".

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2(The word “Capacitation”, does not have in English Language the same meaning as in Spanish or Portuguese. In this document it has been translated as “training”, even though the meanings does not correspond exactly. (note of the translator)

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[2]The term “*Capacitation*” (Port: capacitação) does not exist in English as a separate educational term. While ‘*capacitation*’ does contain elements of ‘training’ and ‘instruction’, it is nevertheless generically different from the latter. *Capacitation* goes beyond mere linear transmission of knowledge from individual trainer/teacher/instructor to trainee, -- as typically happens in ‘training’ or even ‘capacity-building’ -- and operates (best) in large groups, where learning happens through direct interaction of a large group with the/a (complex), commonly ‘owned’ ‘object’. (‘Objective/-ised Activity’) (English translator’s note)

[3] Top-down provision of ‘assistance’ to supposedly passive, ‘needy’ groups, mainly on the part of the State, but also NGO’s, in the form of aid, charity, philanthropy and also patronizing development projects.