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**Removing Unfreedom  
July 7<sup>th</sup> Colloquium  
LSE**

**Michael Mutter  
Speaking on the Rights based Approach**

Basically this presentation was going to be given by Jeremy Holland. Jeremy is part of the Swansea University Development Studies Centre and it has been working with DFID in interpreting a Rights based approach and seeing to what extent Rights are fundamental to the way in which the individual can be part of the process.

**Slide 1**

**Department for International Development  
Participatory Rights Assessment  
Methodologies  
(PRAMS)**

When I've been introducing the idea of **Removing Unfreedom** within the discussion groups in DFID people say, you mean Rights! We're already doing it; its called Rights based approach.

**Slide 2**

**DFID Rights and Poverty Reduction**

**DFID** is committed to a rights-based approach in order to reduce poverty outcomes as measured by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

And I've said no, hang on a minute. It's not quite the same thing. In fact, the way I would describe it, it is part of what Sen is describing as **Removing Unfreedoms**. And it's certainly an awareness that people can gain within the process.

### Slide 3

#### **DFID's Target Strategy paper Principles**

- 1. Participation:** From passive beneficiaries to active and empowered citizens.
- 2. Inclusive:** All human rights for all people
- 3. Fulfilling obligation:** to protect, promote and ensure the realisation of all human rights

DFID, as part of its Target Strategy paper series, did a paper on that. And there are three basic principles to it, **Participation**, building on the participatory property assessment. The kind of work that I think, that as practitioners, have become very familiar with.

Aiming for **inclusion** but really beginning to instil this idea of fulfilling obligation. Referring people back to the existing legislation that most countries have, certainly the international community has with the very basic human rights agenda that is central to the ideas of the UN and the way in which the international community works.

### Slide four

#### **DFID'S Target Strategy Paper Principles**

**From Principles to poverty reduction**

So what's DFID been doing? It's been analysing the way in which this process can be brought together. I'm afraid I'm going to skip over a lot of it, even though I have been part of some of the work that Jeremy has been doing. But I think we need to come to this slide. This was Jeremy's presentation that he put together and sent to me this morning so that we would have an idea. He apologises for falling ill at the wrong moment.

## Slide 5

### **What is Prams?**

Prams aims to facilitate:

- Peoples own identification and assessment of their rights
- Understand and agreement between stakeholders of the obstacles poor people face in accessing those rights.
- Identification of actions to support governments and other duty bearers in the protection promotion and realisation of human rights.
- Institutional change and the opening up of new channels of institutional engagement between citizens and duty bearers.

But what it is, is this identification process. Peoples' own identification of what Rights they have. And then the way in which they can exercise those rights by agreement with authority. Basically, but you will see that the word *obstacles* comes in here. And I think it's generally in a similar frame to Removing Freedoms. But it's one of the fundamental tools that can be used in the negotiation. And I think it's what backs up NSDF's (national slum Dwellers Federation) kind of work, in saying, "well we've got our resources but also we've got rights." But Rights tend to be obscure and bringing a spotlight onto what Rights people have, I think, is the very useful aspect of this approach.

What its also doing, is saying we are doing it on an assessment basis.

## Slide 6

### **Why Prams**

**Participatory poverty assessment explores the multidimensional nature of poverty.**

### **Participatory rights assessment:**

- Policies assessment highlighting power relations and processes of exclusions and discrimination.
- Identifies and engages with institutional structures that define, interpret and implement rights.

So the second point here is that, if one really begins to make an assessment for the extent to which people can exercise their Rights in any country or in any particular local situation, one knows, then, where support is needed to help people undertaking a Rights based approach.

And basically what DFID is exploring is the extent to which this kind of thinking can be incorporated as a matter of course, rather than as a---- there is no such thing as a Rights based approach project in DFID. But there are Rights based approaches that are being incorporated into whatever projects DFID is doing. And it is been done on an elective process, by certain country programmes, beginning to come in and use this as a tool.

## **Slide 7**

### **Where is Prams being piloted?**

And now Rumania, Peru, and Zambia are four of the pilot countries where this kind of thinking is brought in to whatever the country programme is doing. In other words there is a Rights based approach assessment done in as many of the projects as possible. Although in the pilot obviously certain immediate programmes are used to test the case.

## **Slide 8**

### **Methodological choices for PRAMS**

Finally, just so that you've got an idea, that there is a whole set of Rights based approach tools, Prams tools, which you see in the fifth column, which are ways that can be explored in introducing this idea, that here is a method and support of what the community and the civil society groups and the way in which they interact with government, how that can be more clearly expressed by using some of these tools, by using generally a Rights based approach. I will leave it at that and include as much of this documentation from this presentation but also may be augmenting it with some of the other current work that's been undertaken by DFID.

I think what's interesting, is that its not automatically taken up by the country programme. There is a variety of resistance to using new kinds of approaches. We would be forever facing the same sort of problem by saying, "ah, well now were going to trying to take over using the Removing Unfreedom's approach." And I think that we have to be very straight forward and matter of fact, that all we are doing is introducing a way of observing how the government takes place.

The more that people can think along these lines and so long as the literature that is supporting this case is very clear about the way in which its supporting what people are doing in whatever activity they are already doing. I think that is sufficient. I don't really want to have a revolution and introduce different ways of working, except to keep in mind that these are ways of supporting what people have done.