Report Seminar Reflexive monitoring for transformative change

9th of April, 2014

Organisation: Barbara van Mierlo and PJ Beers

Knowledge Technology and Innovation Group

Introduction

More and more people actively support initiatives for change towards sustainability. Some of them do so by stimulating collective reflection and learning, with the aim to help these initiatives not only to change more effectively, but also to transform the world around them. In the past decades, action researchers and innovation facilitators alike have developed integrated methodologies and concrete tools that have been applied for change initiatives in agriculture, health, education, development and biodiversity, both in the Netherlands and abroad. The aim of the seminar was to share our experiences, to learn from each other, and to improve our practice.

On the 9th of April, the Knowledge, Technology and Innovation group organized a seminar about Reflexive Monitoring for Transformative Change in Wageningen. This seminar brought together practitioners who wanted to exchange their experiences with other practitioners so as to increase the added value of reflexive monitoring.

The aims of the seminar were to share and compare valuable experiences on the practice and tools of reflexive monitoring and similar approaches to create an action agenda for future development of the methodologies and to identify opportunities for future collaboration.

Program

10:00 Welcome prof. Cees Leeuwis, Knowledge, Technology and Innovation, Wageningen university, chair seminar

10:10 dr. Barbara van Mierlo, Knowledge, Technology, and Innovation, Introduction to reflexive monitoring

10:30 ir. Frank Wijnands, Applied Plant Research, Wageningen UR, about the importance and relevance of reflexive monitoring from an innovation manager's point of view

11:15 Parallel sessions on tools:

- Dynamic learning agenda / learning history
- System analyses
- Integrated learning analysis of discourse
- Process and impact indicators

13:30 Parallel sessions on domains:

- Plant sectors
- Animal husbandry

- Health
- Development

15:00 prof. John Grin, Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam about the importance and relevance of reflexive monitoring from a theoretical point of view

15:30 Panel of practitioners: main lessons & future action agenda
Denise Bewsell (AgResearch NZ), Frederiek van Lienen (Biodiversity in Business), Anne Loeber (Universiteit van Amsterdam) and Rik Eweg (van Hall Larenstein)

This report summarizes the discussions in the parallel sessions.

Contents

Parallel sessions on tools

Dynamic learning agenda / learning history

Introduction: Barbara Regeer, VU University Amsterdam and Saskia van Veen- Athene Institute
Minutes: Thomas Hassing

Participants

Andrew Dunningham	University New Zealand – "here to learn"
Rik Eweg	Van Hall Larenstein, to know more about tools – how to organize learning between
Marion Heerens	NL instituut voor sport en gezondheid, WU chairgroup health and society
Danielle Zandee	Neijenrode Business University – Organizational, social change, integrate by the now – how to organize change from within?
Frank van Steenbergen	Researcher on youth care for Drift, Erasmus University – Reflexive monitoring, wanted to learn more about and get involved in the network
Bette Harms	IUCN - action oriented program on ecosystem management, interested in learning new tools, exploring the idea of learning agenda
Nienke van Veelen	Athena Institute VU - Wants to write an article about learning agenda
Renee de Wild	VU University - reflexive monitoring, writing a thesis on how to facilitate learning agenda and wants to learn more about that

Barbara starts by introducing the Dynamic Learning Agenda (DLA) concept. She mentions the session will focus on DLA, not learning history.

Presentation

- DLA starts by articulating tough issues, since these are often ignored
- Reflexive monitoring is about keeping an eye on them. Although this might seem a bit negative, it is in fact about appreciative inquiry

DLA is a living agenda of questions that change during a project. This stimulates a continuous process of transformative change. It helps to link theory and practice, and keeps long term objectives in mind, and has attention for short term action(s).

Saskia describes the experiences with DLA, and the differences on how DLA was applied, and what parts of different projects were focused on. She explains how learning questions were formulated and what were challenges.

Discussion

Barbara asks the participants to recall a situation where a tough issue occurred:

- Marion: To clarify people's perspectives on issues, without creating judgement
- Rik: To have and act upon ambitions that do not fit in the current regime (niche activities)
- Bette: Line managers are not part of the monitoring system that is present within the company, and they have different goals than the people that work for them. They translate ambitions into accountable targets and incentives
- Danielle: Is this the 'clash of logics', combined with the politics that come with that, and the ingrained logics – goals of professionals vs managers?
- Bette: People used to working with protocols (inside the box) vs people working through emergence (reflexive).
- Marion: Difference of perspective on contribution to the change, and thus difference in contribution.
- Andrew: Difference in agendas, problem perspectives and goals

Bette asks whether Barbara speaks to separate stakeholders, or discusses problems with them together in a group. Barbara answers that she treats homogeneous (separate) groups first to identify and treat possible smaller issues, and then brings them together.

Rik mentions the difference between long term and short term goals that different stakeholders within the same project can have. He notes that it is difficult to change an action plan, especially those that plan ahead for longer periods of time (such as a year): people are reluctant to adapt it to problems that were encountered.

Bette asks who is responsible for documenting experiences regarding problem solving within projects. Saskia mentions that this differs per project, but that people are mostly asked to help with this. They also video record all the experiences.

Marion asks who decides about the focus – are those the researchers? Who consolidates this process? Do people have the feeling they have ownership over this 'alien' process of DLA within their project? Is there carrying capacity for such an approach within the project participants? Marion states that she thinks that defining leadership and defining roles and functions are very important within such a process. Barbara relates to this by stating that recognizing that something is missing, or something should be done, is already an outcome of DLA.

Bette asks whether a tough problem is always part of the problem, or whether it is part of a process, and who you should work with - being a monitor for DLA – to solve specific problems. Rik states that there may be a difference in learning and project/objectives, and mentions the difference between software and hardware. Danielle asks why it is called a learning agenda, because DLA shows very similar aspects to Dynamic Change (DC) methods. DLA is geared to action, as is DC.

Bette notes that although the goal is to integrate DLA into a project, and letting project managers handle DLA, in practice the DLA process is still always lead by external parties or researchers. Marion finds it hard to identify the project leaders/consultants since they are very fleeting with projects, also as a result of the fact that companies get money to start new initiatives, but not to maintain them.

Conclusions

DLA connects personal learning questions to generic research-, change- and/or learning questions

Future advice/focus: Ask the question: who takes responsibility in RMA for long-term change?

System analyses

Introduction: Barbara van Mierlo, Wageningen University
Minutes: Aniek Hilkens

Participants

Barbara van Mierlo	Wageningen University
Denise Bewsell	AgResearch New Zealand (reflexive monitor in 2 projects; 1 about water and irrigation management and 1 about nutrient management in the dairy sector)
John Grin	Universiteit van Amsterdam / Knowledge Network on System Innovations
Sam Beechener	PhD Candidate Scotland's Rural College
Gertjan Fonk	InnovatieNetwerk
Moussa Bathily	PhD candidate Wageningen University
Walter Rossing	Wageningen University (farming systems)
Suzanne van Dijk	Unique Agriculture & climate change (before Applied Plant Research; involved in 2 projects with RMA)

Introduction

The idea of this session is to share ideas and experiences with the importance of system thinking. The tool we are discussing in this session is 'Collective System Analysis' (CSA). This tool is used when there is a lack of system thinking in projects (e.g.: projects that are initiated by researchers often only focus on (improving) knowledge infrastructure). The goal of CSA is to reveal the systemic failures with stakeholders together. CSA could be used in a project to explore why the use of antibiotics is still high and can be done in a workshop-format during one morning or afternoon. A CSA provides stakeholders with knowledge about factors and actors that counterwork – but also factors and actors that stimulate or support - a transition towards a more sustainable system. At the start of the workshop, the reflexive monitor draws a matrix with relevant actors and relevant system characteristics (see table below). The participants in the workshop formulate barriers and opportunities that are included in the matrix. After completing the matrix, the participants in the CSA-workshop discuss the completed matrix; system thinking is spontaneously happening when discussing the system elements. They furthermore discuss what the consequences of this analysis are for practice: now we know this, what are the consequences for the activities we undertake?

	Actor 1	Actor 2	Actor 3
Knowledge infrastructure			
Physical infrastructure			
Hard institutions			
Soft institutions			
Interaction			
Market structure			

Discussion

The group identified some pressing issues for the discussion :

- How to conduct CSA under time pressure?
- Kitchen secret: from barrier to opportunity
- Which stakeholders are involved?
- How to conduct CSA at distance?
- How to get a diversity of users converge ideas in an abstract framework?
- Start / focus on barriers or opportunities during workshops?

First, the participants discussed whether one should focus on barriers or opportunities during a CSA-workshop. Barbara explained that if first barriers were formulated and then discussed the participants often start redefining the barriers into opportunities. Then the question arose: is that the trick? Is rewording the trick or is it more about reinterpretation for example? One remark was that there are two tricks to achieve the formulation of opportunities: 1) There is already an opportunity for the system to change. This opportunity is formulated by participants in the workshop 2) If it looks like there is no opportunity for the system to change, as there is no opportunity formulated by the participants. In this case, the reflexive monitor should try to transform thinking.

Then the discussion shifted. Someone remarked that in his organisation, usually, no collective system analysis is done at all. He thinks a system analysis does not provide you with concrete action. He still wonders, how does system analysis help in practice? According to Barbara, system analysis can help in several ways; participants can for example find out how they themselves are constraining in achieving a transition in the system. By CSA participants redefine their own roles which could lead to a change in thinking. Concerns were expressed about loss of energy in a group of stakeholders during the execution of a system analysis. One noted that you should show / focus on what are opportunities as soon as energy flows out.

Then the discussion shifted towards stakeholders: what stakeholders to involve? A limited group or a diverse group of stakeholders? Someone remarked that in her experience, it was good to separately involve government and farmers: first building trust with farmers before having sessions with all stakeholders together. Timing is crucial. Someone else remarked that it depends on the case whether to involve a limited or diverse group of stakeholders. He prefers to have a limited group of stakeholders involved (who would like to work on a radical idea) to keep the energy in the project. It was noted that it often is NOT useful to do CSA-workshops with all ‘stakeholders ’ from one value chain, to prevent lock-in and increase the chance of new ideas.

Conclusions

Follow-up of CSA is very important (to achieve concrete action). Therefore, it is important to only do CSA in long-term facilitation of innovation projects. Energy in a group is a pre-condition! Managing expectations is also key. The CSA-tool furthermore needs to be embedded in ‘people management’.

It was concluded that it is key to have participants redefine barriers into opportunities, in that way the energy stays in the project and it is possible to translate reflection outcomes into actions.

Furthermore, an important point for the future is the question: how to translate CSA to other contexts; for example in developing countries where the level of illiteracy is very high.

Integrated learning analysis of discourse

Introduction: PJ Beers, Wageningen University
Minutes: Janina Klein

Participants

Frederic Sanders	DRIFT – Dutch Research Institute for Transitions
Janet Reid	Massey University – New Zealand
Emma van Sandick	TNO - Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research
PJ Beers	Wageningen University
Jorieke Potters	Wageningen University
Frederiek van Lienen	Wageningen University
Jaco Quist	Delft University of Technology

Introduction

The major part of the session consisted of PJ Beers' presentation, which introduced the project Responsible Innovation. Research on Social learning within private networks was conducted, documenting the learning process on the go. The framework of 'knowledge-relations-actions' for discourse was explained and the group agreed that writing open notes for everyone to see and ask questions on them could help the learning.

Discussion

The introduction of this research project started a discussion about the role the RM monitor should have. In this project the role was beyond merely observing and commenting on the learning process. It involved e.g. teaching, discussing and interviews as well. PJ Beers explained that by taking these roles, the legitimacy to be there was given.

As a case study the STAP initiative and its difficulties throughout the process were discussed. It was noted that a perceived 90% of people would not change, but usually do not consider themselves as conservative. It is useful to work with the about 10% of people that would be open to change. Further lessons learned from the initiative are that a change process can include phases of silence and unforeseen triggers for new activity.

The following discussion included clarifications on the term 'discourse' and the distinction between different types of interaction: antithetic and synthetic interactions. Issues discussed where how to recognize these interactions, which sort of interaction leads to change, whether both forms are needed and how to balance them when both are used. While the emphasis in literature often is on building common ground, the group found that there must also be possibilities to confront each

other, in the setting of an open and safe environment. This is in order to shake things up, create a void and make space for new institutions to be built.

Again the discussion about the role of the RM was picked up. The assumed role of the RM is to recognize patterns in interaction, not to provoke them. The following questions were raised: Can a line be drawn between RM research and facilitation? Does an initiative per se have more survival chances with facilitation? Does more learning by default lead to more change? Is all learning good for change?

Conclusion and future outlook

How can mutually critical interactions be enabled? The RM should make room for critical conflict in order to shake things up.

Are all kinds of learning good for change and does more learning always mean more change? Investigate which kinds of learning are helpful to make change happen. (At least three dimensions of learning exist.)

Process and impact indicators

Introduction: Anne Loeber, UvA Universiteit van Amsterdam
Minutes by: Annemiek Leuvenink

Participants

Anne Loeber	UvA - University of Amsterdam
Tracy Williams	Plant & Food Research New Zealand
MS Srinivasan	NIWA - National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research New Zealand
Bruce Small	AgResearch New Zealand
Sabine van Rooij	Wageningen University
Pieter Seuneke	Wageningen University
Murat Sartas	Wageningen University

Introduction

Anne Loeber introduced the topic of process and impact indicators by means of a Powerpoint presentation, but the session was a joint search process for answers. Anne Loeber started with introducing relevant issues and participants are asked to add. These were ‘how can we measure impacts?’ And ‘what are the indicators that we can communicate to the outer world?’.

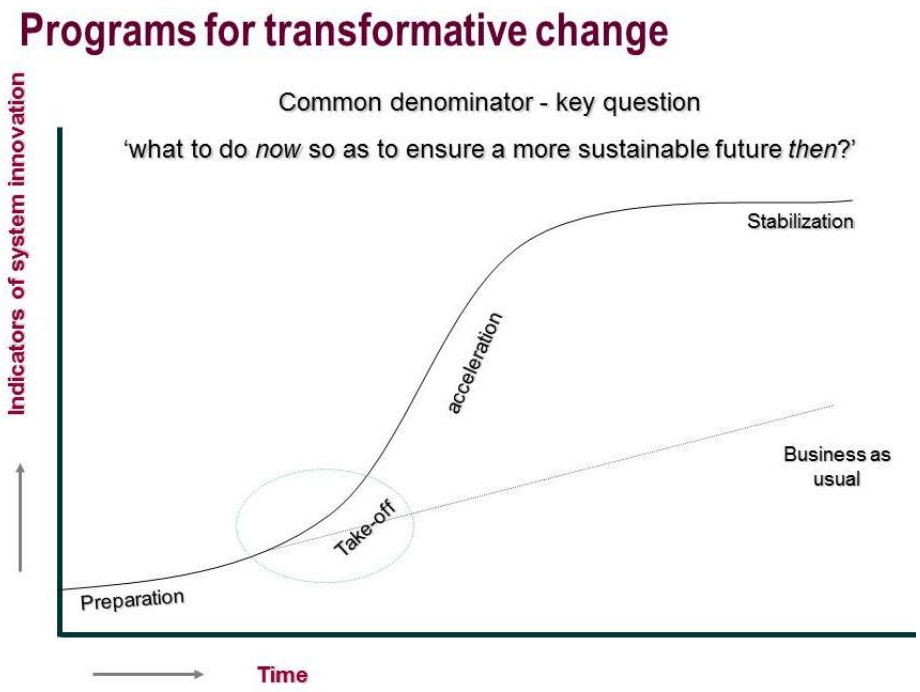

Figure 1: slide from Powerpoint-presentation by Anne Loeber, 9-4-2014

Anne Loeber explained the following about figure 1. If we want to make a change to a more sustainable change, then our projects are at the start, at the "take-off". What do we do in our projects so that our changes come about? Here the indicators of system innovation come in. It is important to show stakeholders the difference between 'business as usual' and the 'stabilization' phase. A comment from the audience was that in reality the goal is often not to change the whole system but just a small part. Anne Loeber's advice was in that case, to help move the participants to have more ambitious goals.

Anne Loeber spoke about three clusters of challenges. How do you deal with sets of challenges?

1. Formulation of sustainability transformation ambitions and long-term objectives?
2. Formulation of process and impact indicators of transformative programs?
    a. Process indicators provide information on the action necessary for situation improvement
    b. Impact indicators provide info on the enduring effects of an interventionist action
3. 'Reflexivity' of/in programs make objectives a moving target, how to institutionally accommodate 'fleeting' indicators?

There is this booming literature in this field, both in academic work as developments in private sectors, like in CSR. There are nascent epistemic communities. Three approaches can be used in monitoring and evaluation. (1) measurement approaches, (2) interpretive approaches and (3) systems approaches/integrated perspective.

Discussion

One response from the audience was that one of the institutional barriers is the requests for pre-set milestones and deliverables. The whole focus is changing. How do you cope with that? A participant told to be working with regular reviews and revise the milestones. "The commissioner agrees if you

can explain it that it will give you more success." One other option mentioned by Anne Loeber is back stacking; you set the vision and go back on the timeline and indicate the indicators. Cees Leeuwis responded that the notion is that we can pre-plan change. But change does not happen in that projective way. Due to strategic reasons we make indicators, but we should not take it too seriously. "I think at the end they will not judge it on the metrics but on the story. Have the people become enthusiastic, are they engaged, even though doing something very different. You cannot avoid the metrics, but I think we need a side strategy to make it visible what is happening. How to make visible the invisible stuff." Anne Loeber referred to expectation management.

Anne Loeber started to described her example from the NIDO project; the National Initiative for Sustainable Development. She explained that this initiative included 10 projects at the same time, under the government, and all these projects were so different that it was difficult to design a learning environment between the project managers. Talking with all project managers separately they came up with what bound their way of working. They asked what the roles were of the NIDO managers, the change makers. They mentioned positioning, adding value, knowledge creation, and impact force. Then they thought about impact indicators for these four functions. All project managers were at the end able to discuss their experiences. A website was developed (www.transitiepraktijk.nl) where others could also learn from this process. However, politicians pulled out the finance of this project because this kind of learning was 'not strong enough a story' and the project stopped. A participant agreed; "my manager is not interested in the learning, but in the outcomes". Someone else mentioned "learning itself is not a guarantee for an outcome". "The manager is not looking for the learning. He wants to have the outcome." Cees Leeuwis interrupted by stating that learning is an outcome. "One strategy I am exploring, is whether you can document shifting conversations, and how does that change over time?" A participant added that not only the learning is interesting, but also you want to make the social network stronger. They (at Alterra) use the concept of social ecological networks. There is only a change in the physical world, if there is a change in the social network. They are now changing measuring in the real world to measuring in the social networks: numbers of stakeholders involved, quality of the conversations. Another person added the example of her PhD-project on the 'internal score board'. Each stakeholder scored the other based on indicators that they had agreed upon themselves. This was done throughout the project. At the end of the project, they could be compared (like openness, trust etc). In this way perceptions about each other over the long run could be compared.

Anne Loeber posed the question "How to relate impacts in the sociological dimensions to those in the natural world?" A response was to use the timeline concept for the changing relationships. Over time you can see how they change. Someone else added that in logic theory, you characterize the world, 'when we think about networks, we see them as interactions'. It includes a lot of statistics, measuring and modelling. To try to define impact pathways and to use the alternative pathways; scenarios, that is another way. In New Zealand they have started to implement the idea of a roadmap, which looks like a metro map. If you click on a station, you see the indicators for the corresponding phase in the process. It is a nice way for weaving other dimensions in it in both fields; the sociological and physical dimensions.

Conclusions

The main challenge is twofold: (1) how to combine information on impacts in sociological dimension (learning, networking) with that on psychical dimension and (2) how to convey relevance of both to funders/institutional context.

In the future, we should put on the agenda developing insights in (1) (see aforementioned) how to combine information on impacts in sociological dimension (learning, networking) with that on psychical dimension and how to convey relevance of both to funders/institutional context, (2) the increase of appreciation for learning as an outcome and (3) the way to be held accountable that fits project ambitions.

Parallel sessions on domains

Plant sectors

Introduction: Suzanne van Dijk, UNIQUE forestry and land use
Minutes: Janina Klein

Participants

Suzanne van Dijk	Unique Agriculture & climate change (before Applied Plant Research; involved in 2 projects with RMA)
PJ Beers	Wageningen University
Frederiek van Lienen	Wageningen University
Denise Bewsell	AgResearch New Zealand
Pieter Seuneke	Wageningen University
Anne Loeber	Universiteit van Amsterdam
Jorieke Potters	Wageningen University
Walter Rossing	Wageningen University

Introduction

The session was structured by three questions, which were given by PJ Beers beforehand:

1. What is specific to horticulture from a Reflexive Monitoring (RM) perspective?
2. What are the main challenges the sector is facing?
3. What does this mean for the role, value and necessity of Reflexive Monitoring?

Discussion

It was stated that 'sustainability' as a goal to achieve, urges reflexivity on old habits and new options: Where does the sector stand and where does it want to go? The plant sector faces a different sort of

urgency than the animal sector for the future, since it has to deal with its own kind of ethically complex issues and perceptions by the public. Further, reflection is needed on the meaning of the concept 'sustainability', which includes questions about the capacity of the earth, environmental impacts, which kinds of production are 'natural' and what kinds of production might be appropriate under the circumstances of urgency. The growing cycles of the plant sector also require rapid learning, to which RM can be helpful.

Three challenges were identified:

1. Tensions exist between the public and the private interest in agriculture.
2. In most regions farming is not considered a young and innovative field. In order to change practices, it is crucial to reach every actor.
3. The sector is fragmented. Fragmentation levels vary for different regions, the value chains can be complex with many actors involved and some actors might have limited room for manoeuvre.

It was agreed on that RM can contribute to change the thinking of farmers having to take all responsibility and create coordinated action between the many stakeholders involved. It can help to build congruency by reaching actors in different ways that fit their interest and make them work together.

The main approach discussed was reaching change makers within bigger companies and provide them with an action perspective. The role of RM can be to build and tighten networks, connect more company members to the cause, identify motivation, leverage points and the right timing to build on initiatives already existing within companies. The question was raised whether any facilitation of change is RM. It was concluded that RM brings recognition rather to the value of the process (monitoring) instead of the impacts (management). This is problematic, because the more successful the RM is, the more invisible they are. The ultimate aim is to not having to be present anymore, while the change process continues, so the RM needs to legitimize their role.

Conclusion

The fragmentation levels within the plant sector can vary, which has an influence on the change process. Therefore approaches should be adapted to different circumstances and settings.

Challenge for the future

The RM has to legitimize their role and the money spent on change initiatives. Ideas are: Making change commitments with the commissioner beforehand, keeping record of changes and presenting success stories.

Animal husbandry

Introduction : Rob Brazendale, Dairy NZ
Minutes: Aniek Hilkens

Participants

Rob Brazendale	Dairy NZ

Gertjan Fonk	InnovatieNetwerk
Bruce Small	AgResearch
John Grin	Universiteit van Amsterdam / Knowledge Network on System Innovations
Sam Beechener	PhD student Scotland's Rural College
Rik Eweg	Van Hall Larenstein
Barbara van Mierlo	Wageningen University

Introduction

In this session, we looked at challenges in the animal husbandry domain and how Reflexive Monitoring in Action (RMA) could help to find solutions for these challenges. Rob Brazendale works for Dairy NZ (industry good organisation of the dairy sector in New Zealand) and introduced the topic from his perspective. An important challenge for the dairy sector and thus also Dairy NZ is the following: how to manage animals to achieve profit, animal welfare and low environmental impact? If these three goals are not achieved in the dairy sector, there is no license to produce in New Zealand society. However, according to Rob: difficulties are that lower environmental impact and more animal welfare lead to higher costs. Most NZ milk is exported to China and China is not interested in more animal welfare or lower environmental impact. China wants cheap and safe milk. Conclusion: conflicting tensions in the industry (NZ society versus consumers in China).

Discussion

The discussion was about how to find solutions for these tensions. It became clear that by using RMA, the complexity of issues becomes clear. Some complicating factors were mentioned: Liberalisation of international trade may change the economics in this sector. What does that mean for the dilemmas? Probably in the future, energy will be a major cost factor, which means that intensification will be under pressure.

RMA is also about involving the different stakeholders: One asked whether China was involved in discussions about environmental problems concerning dairy production in New Zealand, as most dairy products are exported to China and other Asian countries. The demand for milk is growing, so farmers need to raise production. Raising production can only be achieved by things society disapproves. However, placing the production there where the consumption is, could be (part) of the solution (for example: Dutch bulb-breeding companies are also producing in US – also NZ dairy farming could be done in China).

RMA is also about helping stakeholders to think differently: there is also a lot of (food) waste. If it is not possible to achieve a more sustainable production with at the same time higher yields, can we also reduce food waste and thus achieve that there is no necessity to increase milk-production?

Conclusions

The discussion was mainly about HOW the system is working. Trends are taken for granted, as if it is not possible they will change. However, it is also important to critically look at global trends: is it probable or desirable to break a certain trend? Now, it seems as if there is a trade-off between profit

and animal welfare / environmental sustainability. However, if you look more closely, there are also positive trends towards sustainable development. In addition to system analyses, it is thus important to be aware of important trends (and the fact that they could break); it could thus be important to bring scenario's in reflexive monitoring, in addition to system analyses.

Health

Introduction: PJ Beers en Marion Heerens
Minutes: Thomas Hassing

Participants

Marion Herens	NL instituut voor sport en gezondheid (Dutch Institute for sport and health), Chair group 'Health and Society', Wageningen UR
Emma van Sandick	TNO, strategy and policy – system innovation, transition monitoring
Frank van Steenbergen	Drift – Erasmus University, bureau jeugdzorg (youth care services)
Danielle Zandee	Sustainable development Nijenrode Universiteit, emphasis on social sustainability and innovation ('how to achieve change from the insight?')
Nienke van Veelen	Athena Instuut VU, junior researcher – youth care services, health research, community care, Amsterdam.
PJ Beers	KTI Wageningen University, socially responsible innovation, making interaction processes part of scientific studies ('what type of learning is right'), guest researcher Drift

Discussion

Marion tells about a project she is involved in, which is called 'Moving communities' (Gemeenschappen in beweging), how this project started and how it developed. Emma asks whether a certain target group is involved, which is not the case.

Marion investigates the effectiveness of the intervention. It is a national project, but responsibilities for the different actors (national government, municipality, 'local actors', health care organisations, housing cooperatives) in the project have changed. Furthermore, the project has ended – it is unclear who is responsible for the execution of this project. Therefore, it is unclear what should be measured to find out the effectiveness of the project. Emma remarks that Marion is now measuring 'quality of life'. The question remains how measuring 'quality of life' relates to the project 'Moving communities'.

PJ suggests to look at the current state of the Dutch health sector. Questions arise about the definition of a 'community' and what are key locations concerning social interactions in communities. Nienke explains about alternative health care. In line with Nienke's explanation of alternative care, Marion talks about 3 different perspectives on care: curative care, caring and preventive care.

Marion mentions that sometimes, group processes lead to unpredictable results. As a consequence, money is spent on achieving other goals than the sponsoring institution's initial goals. The expenses seem useless then, which is not true.

A consequence of the decentralisation of health care is that a lot of knowledge is lost. Municipalities do not look at results and yields, but only at justification ('what is the money spent on?'). Officers who never took any decisions about health care issues, are now responsible for taking decisions in this sector. Therefore, 'the local gymnastics teacher' is becoming increasingly important.

Danielle mentions an interesting observation that in transition processes and 'chaos', people are inclined to fall back to 'machine thinking' or trying to fix everything in rules and protocols. Also 'island-thinking' becomes evident (everybody his own small task, working separately), instead of everybody cooperating and combining expertise to achieve an unambiguous aim: for example 'how do you ensure a safe home for a kid?' Nienke mentions that she luckily also experienced situations in which people do collaborate constructively.

PJ mentions that it is important that people are aware of the power of cooperation / their network / interdisciplinarity and responsibilities of executing organisations. Danielle illustrates this point with an example in which the importance and key position of the general practitioner.

(Governmental) guidance is increasingly done on the basis of parameters, increased bureaucracy and risk shearing. Time and money are becoming increasingly scarce, with the consequence that cooperation becomes increasingly difficult. Policy that on the one hand makes health care costs invisible and on the other hand, benefits of health care execution invisible.

Conclusion and future outlook

General conclusion: The costs of the current policy regime are hard to visualize, and the benefits of alternative community initiatives are difficult to bring to light

Future advice/focus: Creating awareness for both policy (makers) and communities about their own role in creating and sustaining the current situation through the use of their network

Development

Introduction: Mona Dhamankar, KIT Royal Tropical Institute
Minutes: Annemiek Leuvenink

Participants

Mona Dhamankar	KIT Royal Tropical Institute, PhD student Wageningen University
Saskia van Veen	Athene Institute
Frederic Sanders	DRIFT – Dutch Research Institute for Transitions
Bette Harms	IUCN - action oriented program on ecosystem management
Sabine van Rooij	Wageningen University
Janet Reid	Massey University
Moussa Bathily	PhD candidate Wageningen University

Introduction

Mona Dhamankar is a PhD-student at Wageningen University in innovation studies which she started 4 years ago. She looks at the role of intervention mediation to come back the effect of globalization in India livestock. She is also a social advisor in rural services at KIT in Amsterdam.

The scope of this session is rural development. The session started with the introduction of three issues:

1. Results = emergent properties "whatever happens is a result" is like R.M. seems to propose. How practical is this? We are accountable for results. For who is the result?
2. Network changes => social institutional context > and vice versa
3. Project activities – (relating to?) –> long term effects (sustainability ambitions). How to proof that things are happening or not? How is it in developing countries? In developing countries we focus on getting people out of poverty. In developed countries they focus on sustainable/ environmental goals. These have to be aligned, because they are different.

Mona Dhamankar started by providing an example case from her PhD-research project in India and Nigeria. They were addressing five different sights of action research. The traditional technology transfers were taking place at these sights. Then they started redefining the problem from a reflexive monitoring perspective. They realized that the problems were defined differently in the five areas. The learning was very practically facilitated by on one side 'what to do next' to 'where to get the funding from'. On the other side they analysed the network; who were coming in, who left, and they monitored the learning process. The farmers were asked to come up with parameters and they came up with about 15, like trust, communication, openness, appreciation of values. The group scored each other on those parameters and themselves. Each 3/6 months this was done, for 3 years. They had two score cards, for for themselves, one for others. These parameters became key for the project. "Intuitively we could see links between physical results and the scores." This research project needed to proof development outcome and this internal score system helped a lot. Donor did not think learning as an outcome was good enough.

Discussion

Question from the audience: did you make an investigation in the parameters? The answer was no. The person from the audience responded with that parameters should be evidence based. "What is tested and proofed before should be a good first step." Someone else added that you can bring into the group some evidence based parameters to convince farmers. However, someone else responded with that then it would not be reflexive monitoring anymore. "I used reflexive monitoring for my master thesis. You cannot have pre-set parameters. You have to be flexible enough to see new parameters. Than you miss out the emerging issues."

The diagnosis of the problem has to be done in a multi-stakeholder group. What is the problem? Is it a political issue? Define, then come to an approach. Key is the multi-stakeholder approach. Someone responded with stating that the discussion that we were having now included different perspectives on reflexive monitoring: the one from a project architecture perspective which you adopt at the beginning and a perspective that you use for monitoring for your donor. A participant reacted: "I see

it as an approach that gets formed by your methodology. It helps you to relate theory and practice." But someone else added: "but it is also used for accountability, but maybe it is not made for that". It was said that you can link short term goals to long term goals and in that way be accountable. An important thing added was the statement that donors should be considered part of the process and that it is very important to keep them involved, because they are the once that can pull the plugs out of the project.

A participant repeated what Barbara van Mierlo had said in the plenary session; you need a group that is willing to change and you give the push. As the researcher you are involved in the process and you have impact. The question then arose; 'but you have to be a neutral researcher'? Someone responded that it comes back to legitimacy; the need for clarity of roles. You do not mix the roles. Also in the project team you also have to reflect on your roles and the decisions you are taking.

Mona Dhamankar wanted to know: is reflexive monitoring suitable for rural development? Which parts will work? A participant said it depends on the characteristics. And you need to create an understanding so there comes a willingness to change. According to this participant reflexive monitoring is a management approach and not a monitoring tool. But others did not agree "it is monitoring but more than that." "Coaching" someone else added. If you are monitoring you can see whether you are on the right track. The only problem is that you cannot say where you will be exactly, when, because it is a highly participatory process. A non-social scientist added that reflexive monitoring is like a feedback that you create in the project. And that this is the strength of reflexive monitoring.

Conclusions of the session

- Is reflexive monitoring a monitoring tool or intervention approach?
- The donor is also a stakeholder that needs to be included.
- What is the relationship between reflexive monitoring and its outcomes?
- The name reflexive monitoring is confusing.

Agenda/future: there should be dialogue between the theorists of reflexive monitoring, the practitioners on the ground and the donors.