

Tool for Empowerment

The *CASE* Model: An International Framework For Empowerment

This chapter presents the *CASE* Model of the process of empowerment through **four stages** (Creation, Adaptation, Sustenance, and Expansion) that occur at **three different levels** (personal, community, and systemic), as outlined in Chapter 1. There are also specific functional skills that operate at each stage. These four stages and three levels of empowerment must be also be appropriately placed within the cultural contexts of various countries, as outlined in Chapter 2, addressing what we call **critical components** for success. We propose that if this model and the requisite skills for empowerment can be effective in a rapidly evolving social context such as Japan, where the model originated, and which will be explored in detail in the following chapter, then they may well be appropriate for application in many societies around the world. And, as we will see in other chapters from other countries, this framework can help us to see the similarities across seemingly different societies that face the same issue of caring for its citizens across the lifespan. Thus, we may all, hopefully, move in the direction becoming *self-actualized* societies.

In many countries around the world, it is most likely that initially, an “*empowerment culture*” for both individuals and the community must be developed in order to recognize the need to promote mutual help. This may be more or less of a challenge, depending on the history and social/political systems of a specific society. As noted in Chapter 2, existing cultural values may be an impediment to overcome at the outset of an empowerment process. For example, in Chapter 4, we see that the concept of empowerment is a relatively new idea in Japan, a traditionally family-based culture. However, in Chapters 5-8, we see that in other countries, such as Australia, Israel, Sweden and the United States, there has been a long history of commitment to empowering individuals and communities. Even in these countries with histories of positive social attitudes toward empowerment, there are competing interests, such as economic pressures, that provide challenges to those who strive to empower elders. When shifts in cultural values are achieved, this can provide a strong means of influencing people. To change or address any existing social problem, the cultural traditions and attitudes that were perpetuating the unfulfilling situations need to be intentionally faced first. As a result, more community members will at least begin involvement in the empowerment process with a more open attitude to see how things develop. The first steps in the proposed *CASE* model of empowerment are designed to

help address cultural values that may create an initial barrier to action and progress.

FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS FOR EMPOWERMENT

In this new model of empowerment – *CASE* – there are **four stages**: *Creation*, *Adaptation*, *Sustenance*, and *Expansion* (see Figure 1). In the first stage, *Creation*, the desire for change and improvement of a given situation or social problem spurs the idea for how to start an empowerment process. During the second stage of *Adaptation*, the empowerment efforts must be adjusted to circumstances of the particular situation. In the stage of *Sustenance*, empowerment work can get to a steady state, so that processes are efficient and consistent. In the fourth stage of *Expansion*, new outcomes may be desired and articulated, so that the process can develop and expand to include new people and new goals.

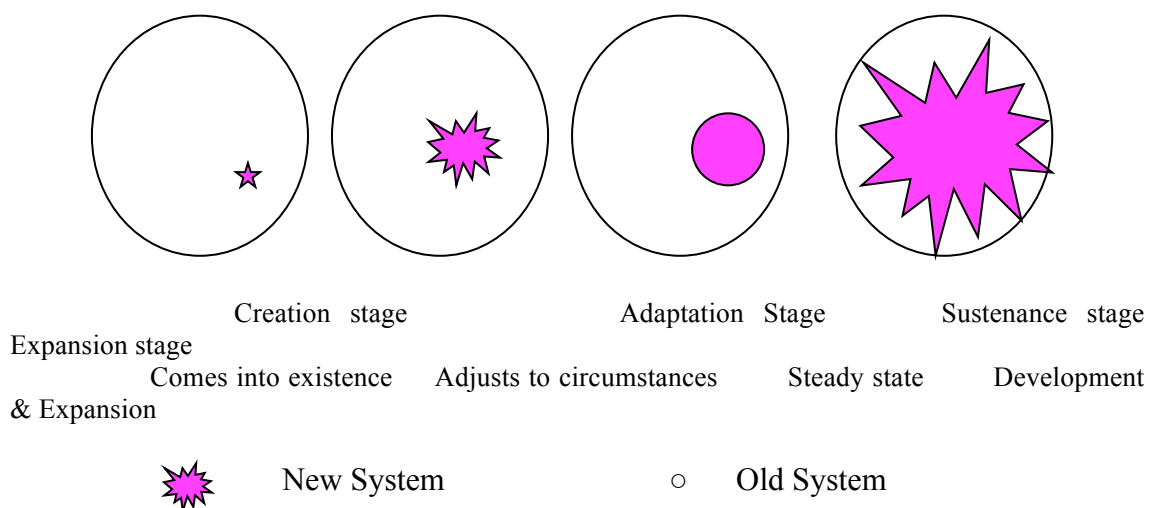


Figure 1. The CASE Model of Empowerment

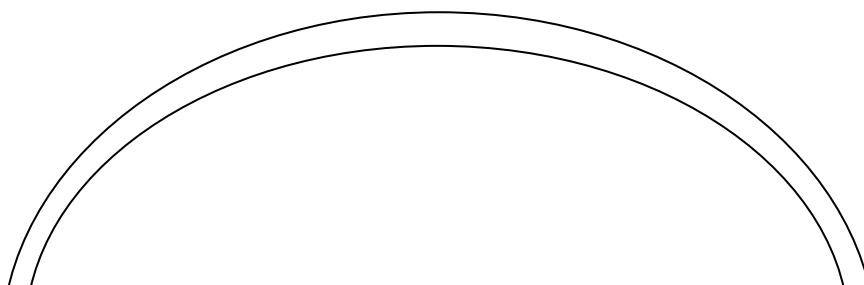
All of these stages take place within a fundamental context of human empathy and cultural values, so that each person is valued and included equally in the work. A visual image of the functional skills of the empowerment model can be seen in Figure 2 below. This representation of the process can be helpful for some people in the community who might have a hard time envisioning what the various components of this process look like. In Figure 2, we show that the functional skills for empowerment are: Targets and Strategies, Processes and Organization, Evaluation, Information, and Effectiveness.

Targets and Strategies help us to plan what our desired outcomes will be and how we can begin to reach those outcomes. The *Targeted Outcomes* that are discussed later help focus our attention on the most important goals. Then we can start to devise our specific strategies for achieving those goals. The strategies may involve new programs, specific types of activities, etc. In future chapters, we will learn about the various strategies that have been used in different countries around the world in trying to reach the *Targeted Outcomes* of a particular empowerment process situation. Over each stage of the CASE Model, the Targets and Strategies may be modified, in order to maximize reaching them over time.

A second key set of functional skills for empowerment is developing new Processes and creating an efficient Organization so that work can get done and people have a clear sense of what is happening, and why, and what is being accomplished. Across the stages of the CASE Model, Processes will be developed that will need to be adapted to local circumstances, and then solidified to be efficient while also being flexible to respond to changing needs. Ultimately, we want to have an organizational model that can work interdependently with other organizations and processes at different levels (e.g., local with national) so that efforts work smoothly together.

Evaluation is a key skill for empowerment at all stages of the CASE Model. If we can identify outcomes early on, and the measures we want to use to assess our effectiveness then we must have ideas about how to evaluate our progress as we move through different stages.

Also important is the kind of information that we collect and share with all members of the empowerment process. Information is a foundational element that underlies the Targets and Strategies, Processes and Organization, and Evaluation skills. If we do not have good information systems, then the other skills will not work well. Information is key for people to understand what is occurring, what outcomes are being achieved, and what they might be able to do to participate in a meaningful way in the empowerment work. Information systems that are clear, consistent, and accessible must be developed throughout all stages of the CASE Model.



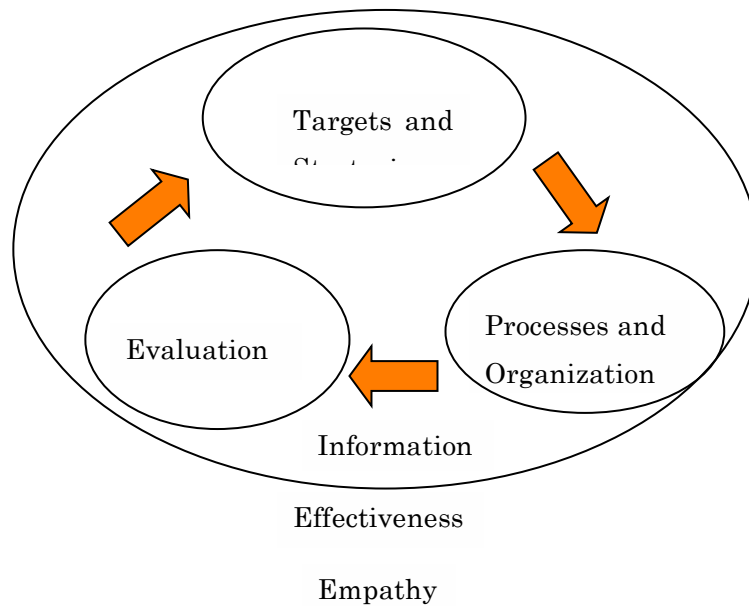


Figure 2. Diagram of Functional Skills for Empowerment

Another underlying factor for functional skills in empowerment is Effectiveness. Clearly, one ultimate outcome of empowerment is the effectiveness of new programs and processes that we put into place to achieve our goals. In the first stages of the CASE Model, especially if we are designing new programs, we must be open to seeing how we can improve effectiveness over time. This will be especially a challenge if one is working in an environment where initially, a culture of empowerment does not already exist and so sometimes creating new collaborations and working with new teams of people does not seem so efficient. But this will change over time, as people move through the later stages of the CASE Model.

And, finally, the most fundamental skill for empowerment is a sense of Empathy for other people that we can relate to as other human beings. Understanding and being sensitive to the cultural context in which we are working, and having feelings for what other people are facing, will help us finally achieve our goal of a self-actualized society, where all people feel supported and able to develop their ultimate potential.

Table 1 below summarizes the different functional skills across the four stages of the CASE Model. This can help visualize what is appropriate for people to be aware of at each stage, and what can be the focus of their efforts for each skill in each stage.

Stage	Creation	Adaptation	Sustenance	Expansion
Targets & Strategies	Articulate desired targets for outcomes and devise new strategies for how to achieve them	Share the vision as a team and create logical and flexible strategies	Implement the strategies with high quality and consistency	Develop a new vision and strategies for new targeted outcomes
Processes & Organization	Create new processes and organization to achieve outcomes	Adjust the processes as a team and design logical and flexible organizations	Implement new processes and organizations with consistency and flexibility	Expand new processes and organizations to utilize comprehensive approaches for complex situations
Evaluation	Design initial measures for meaningful evaluation of targets	Adjust the measures as team based on early feedback	Conduct regular evaluations with established measures	Utilize evaluation results to expand empowerment targets and strategies
Information	Discover what new information is needed to share targets and strategies with people	Adjust the information and communication for individuals, the team, and the community to use easily	Share important information with consistency and flexibility	Comprehensive use of the information for communication and evaluation
Effectiveness	Create clear indicators of effectiveness	Adjust the indicators of effectiveness based on initial feedback	Pursue the effective use of resources	Expand ongoing effective use of resources for targets

There are also a set of what we call *Critical Components* in any empowerment process. These include the *Identified Community* for a particular empowerment project, which agrees upon a set of *Targeted Outcomes*. These outcomes are always within a set of *Contextual Factors*, which will help identify both challenges and opportunities for moving through the CASE stages. In addition, *Initial Resources* must be identified so that both the *Contextual Factors* and *Initial Resources* can be effectively incorporated into and addressed throughout the empowerment process.

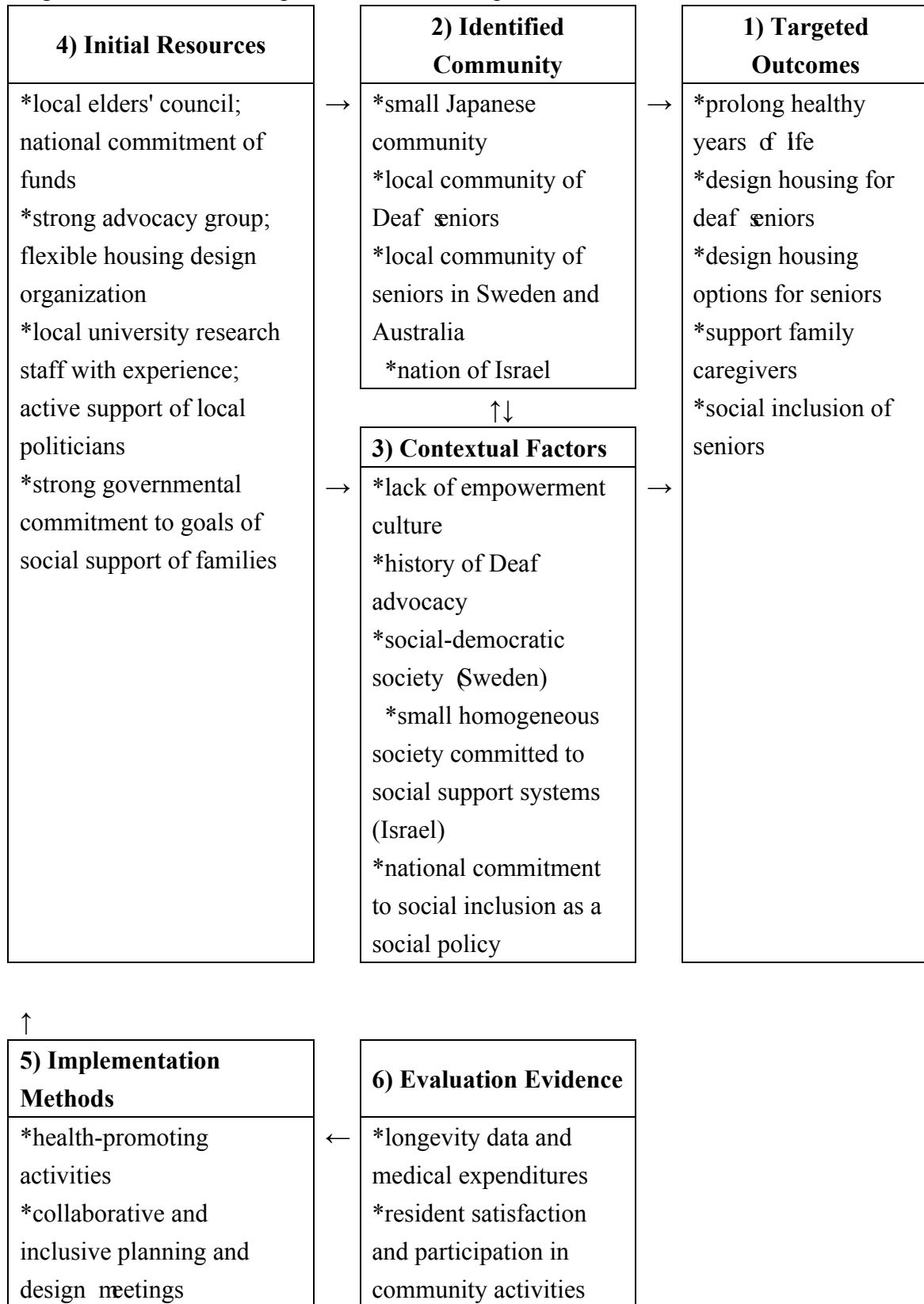
Identified Community. Initially, or sometimes at the same time as the general problem/outcome specification, the community that will be involved in the empowerment process must be identified. This may range from a very local neighborhood (such as in Australia, Sweden or Japan) or specified group (such as Deaf seniors in the United States) to a nation itself (such as Israel, and in some ways, Australia, as well). Who in the community should be specifically involved may take some time to delineate, as often there are either competing interests in a given community, or some members may feel that they are not relevant to a particular problem (e.g., why should young adults be involved in programs for older adults, or vice-versa?). Thus, there is often give-and-take between the *Identification of the community* and the specification of the *Targeted Outcomes*.

Targeted Outcomes. It is vital for empowerment efforts to work that specific and measurable outcomes be identified from the start – whether they are health and well-being outcomes (Japan and Australia), housing (Sweden and the U.S.), or family care-giving support (Israel). It is vitally important that the people who will be most directly affected are involved in the delineation of those outcomes. There is a long history of “outsiders” coming into various communities and specifying what they perceive as a desired outcome, only to find out that that particular outcome is currently irrelevant to the members of that community. This is where sensitivity to and understanding of cultural values (both local and societal) plays a major role. For example, the recognition that the needs of lifelong citizens vs. immigrants will differ (i.e., in Israel) is a critical area of sensitivity. Participation by *all* community members, from a perspective that acknowledges what is not just logistically, but culturally important to them, is critical to identifying outcomes that they will be invested in pursuing and making real.

The realities of the *Contextual Factors* of the *Identified Community* must be acknowledged and articulated. For example, what are the demographics of the community – in terms of age, gender, and income distribution? What is the physical location of the community and how does that impact empowerment efforts (e.g., is it remote? Close to other population areas? Accessible to local resources like government and non-governmental agencies and support services?). What has been the local history in terms of the targeted outcomes – have people tried to address the issue before? What contributed to success and failure?

Initial Resources. Once a community and targeted outcomes are identified and the background factors understood, then related factors must also be uncovered and intentionally examined. These *initial resources* include who holds informal power in the specified community, and what resources are already available, both in and outside of the community. Identifying these related factors must occur early in the empowerment process so that the leverage of local and other resources – individually, socially, and institutionally – can be mobilized throughout the process. Figure 3 below provides a visual image of these various factors.

Figure 3. Critical Components for the Empowerment Process



*Future Workshop method with broad representation
*ongoing examination of governmental policies in light of social changes

*ongoing use of Future Workshop method and actual housing changes
*increased quality-of-life for older persons and family caregivers

The CASE model – Stages and activities.

FIRST STAGE. The first stage in the CASE model is the *Creation* stage, where the specification of *Targeted Outcomes* occurs through collaborative dialogue with the identified community members. In this stage it is vital that as many members of the identified community as possible are involved in the conversation and development of the proposed solutions. At this beginning stage of the process, establishing shared values and common interests is most important and critical to creative positive energy towards the targeted outcomes.

Important activities in the Creation stage are:

A) Create a representative project team. Societal values regarding elders in a society range across the four stages as delineated by Moody (see Chapter One): Rejection, Social Services, Participation and Self-actualization. The ultimate goal is to develop an empowerment culture that begins by promoting inclusion of all people (vs. rejection of any particular group), and finally realizes self-actualization for all community members over their lifespan. To start the process, a project team should be established which includes various community stakeholders – including community members, local authorities such as the leader(s) of any local associations, professionals from the community in the specified area of focus (i.e., health or technology), and academic authorities. In this way, multiple perspectives on the *Targeted Outcomes* are included, and community members have confidence that their voices are being heard

and incorporated from the initial stages. It is vital that all team members identify with the goals of the project team and feel a strong investment in future community development. This also helps to share the load of responsibility, develop mutual cooperation and eventually create an interdependent basis for the ongoing functioning of the new processes put in place.

B) Utilize a scientific approach to evaluation. The development of individual and community empowerment draws strength from a foundation built on reliable and objective data. This addresses people's concerns that decisions or directions are being set by someone with an outside "agenda" that is not realistically based on what is happening in the local circumstances. The reliable data of the information about the empowerment activities makes it easy for people to accept the program. The incorporation and utilization of data are examined in each chapter, ranging from very local data to comparative national and international data.

C) Establish a new program(s) for meeting targeted outcomes. After a needs assessment and system development process of whatever length (from a few months to a few years), some clearly identified place/program/process must be constructed as the core of the empowerment-related activities. The purpose of this focal point is to facilitate true empowerment of the people, not just at the "participation" level of social values, but also at the "self-actualization" level. The functions of the focal point must be based on the input of the residents themselves, the data analysis of what factors are related to the targeted outcomes, and the financial and organizational resources available through local and national governments and other agencies (e.g., non-governmental organizations that may be operating in the community). Setting the place or program physically near people's homes, can help the residents easily notice the effects on individuals and the sense of empowerment that is emerging. This provides concrete evidence to motivate people to take advantage of the opportunities newly available to them.

D) Work with local authorities. Members of the local community should be involved in the initial stages in order to gain their cooperation and buy-in, to sensitize all members of the community to the importance of the targeted outcomes, and to solicit their input for appropriate ways to address the issue. Training of local leaders and the identification of a community coordinator or executive committee also need to occur at this stage. Empowerment will be much more effective if, from the Creation stage, local

leaders, both formal and informal, are an integral part of the leadership of the process. As noted by Bartle (2008), awareness must be raised throughout the community of the targeted outcomes and the beginning of the empowerment process. This may include advertising, both formal and informal, in community settings, and through word-of-mouth by neighbors, service providers, etc. The utilization of multimedia messages is also helpful, as the various ways in which people process information (verbally, visually, etc.) must be incorporated into awareness-raising activities. In addition, an initial Community Action Plan (CAP) (Bartle, 2008) should be developed, as a primary guiding tool for priorities, specific activities and goals to accomplish those priorities and articulation of responsibilities and accountability for those priorities. Included in this Plan should be specific and concrete measures for progress and monitoring of the implementation of the Plan at all three levels of empowerment - personal, community, and systemic. A concrete worksheet for such a plan is presented in the final chapter of this book.

SECOND STAGE. The second stage, *Adaptation*, is when the initial ideas and programs are adapted or adjusted to local circumstances, and the first responses and feedback from the community members are solicited and analyzed. The community/executive team must modify and continue to develop the new empowerment systems. After setting up the program or focal point, systems to manage the functions of those more efficiently need to be developed to continue the process of empowerment. One key component must be an effective and clear set of *information systems*. Information is the lubricating oil for the total system, supplying the necessary means to keep the system fluid and working. Effective usage of information can be a proactive means to empower community members. In some community situations, it may be helpful to set up one core center and then establish several branches for information services or to have a “one-stop shop” for people to utilize throughout the empowerment process. Monitoring of the first stages of implementation must be done and reported back to the community as to the effectiveness of the programs is critical.

An effective information system must also have the flexibility to distribute and diffuse any data as soon as possible. Precise and up-to-date information are important to maintain the reliability and validity of the system. Again, concrete measures of progress on the three levels of empowerment must be included - personal, community, and systemic. At this stage, *ongoing recruitment of community members* continues as many may still be reluctant to participate, or still don't understand the purpose of the given

program. Sharing information gathered in the Adaptation stage will provide many community members with specific and concrete evidence that these empowerment efforts are worth participating in. Thus, it is important that communication efforts to share initial results are consistent and widespread, again including multiple methods of sharing out information – local newspapers, radio, television, and informal communication as well.

Another key factor in the Adaptation stage is *promoting mutual peer and community support*. Individuals in a society where cultural values support independence or interdependence may be able to establish a real mutual support system more easily, but it is much more challenging for a dependent culture such as Japan, a culture based on the historical “Mura” or village concept. As noted in Chapter 2, these social ties have been gradually disintegrating over time, especially in big cities, where most people have lost the old type of community spirit. As a result, in the past, dependence on family-oriented care has been the only choice for many people. Clear limitations of contemporary family care opened new fields in social support – e.g., “co-ops” and Public Long Term Care Insurance. Furthermore, a mutual support system is strongly desired not only by the government, but also by the people themselves now (Anme, 1993). To promote this mutual support system, methods must be developed such as education for volunteer leaders, information resources for volunteers, and establishing places for exchanging information. These methods create means and opportunities for community members to have to turn to each other for information needed for accomplishment of the targeted outcomes. This prevents the dependence on “professionals” only to provide information.

The *Adaptation* stage is a post-creation period and whether the new system grows stagnates, or shrinks depends on how much the individuals and the community stay energized in this stage. It is critical to provide participants with various images of how the empowerment activities are working for them, and for individuals to envision how their connections to other individuals and programs are occurring. Analysis of empirical evidence of their activities can increase confidence in the prospect of achieving their desired outcomes and create deeper relationships with others engaged in the same processes. Thus, empirical analysis that demonstrates the effectiveness of their chosen activities in terms of the targeted outcomes keep community members motivated and understanding the impact of their choices. This reinforces the reality of personal and community empowerment as effective.

THIRD STAGE. The third stage, the *Sustenance* stage, is when initial feedback has been incorporated and some sense of maintenance or steady state of the programs/initiatives has been achieved. This is the stage in which new collaborations between community organizations/agencies may emerge to meet the needs of the members in relation to the targeted outcome or new services designed to meet “next stage” needs of empowering individuals and the community. Clarification of roles and responsibilities can occur as refinement of methods to meet outcomes develops.

Specific activities at this *Sustenance* stage should include a *reiteration of the common values and targeted outcomes* of the empowerment process and programs. Reminding individuals and community groups of the initial values and goals, and any that were added during the Adaptation stage keeps people mindful of the purpose and process. *Clear sharing of information* about progress with easy-to-understand formats is critical to motivating continued involvement and empowerment.

First efforts at *creating specific measures for evaluation* must be made and feedback from community members incorporated to devise a measure for ongoing evaluation. The various levels of the empowerment process and outcomes need to be delineated. First there is the *personal level* analysis, the individual client or community member, who must be evaluated in terms of whether targeted outcomes are being met. In addition, there is the community level that must be evaluated and then the systemic level which must also be assessed in terms of effectiveness. Specific methods must be assessed – are the particular activities aimed at the various levels of empowerment working efficiently and effectively? For example, are health programs successfully tailored to the individual? Is the program content consistent but also flexible to meet changing needs? Such questions allow uniformity of measurement across individuals in order to assess effectiveness of general program development.

At the *community level*, there must be some specific assessment of how the agencies (new or pre-existing) are actually functioning in terms of the targeted goals – how well are agencies communicating and collaborating? Are there the appropriate services/activities now being offered to individuals? Is there adequate representation of interested and identified community members continually involved in the emerging and sustained empowerment processes? The efficiency and effectiveness of any interdisciplinary team should also be included.

At the *systemic level*, similar questions of consistency yet flexibility need to be evaluated, as well as the ability of the organizations to secure adequate resources and make appropriate connections across the community to leverage resources to meet the personal level needs of individual members. System factors such as access, appropriateness of time, quantity and quality of services provided are also critical in the assessment phase.

Bartle (2008) also enumerates several elements of community strength that can be evaluated, including altruism, common values, information available to members, intervention services, networking opportunities, communication of information about services and their effectiveness, confidence (both personal and organizational), and broader contextual factors such as changes in political power, trust, unity, and control over local resources and wealth. Thus, evaluation methods should be multi-method and occur at multiple levels.

FOURTH STAGE. The fourth stage, the *Expansion* stage, is when more systematic and consistent evaluations must be formalized, with the goal of expanding and further defining the most appropriate and effective means to meet the targeted outcomes. Community members should be constantly informed about the evaluation processes, who is involved, what is being assessed, and how they can participate to provide input and feedback. Evaluation of any empowerment process must take place at multiple levels, especially since, ideally, empowerment has been occurring at multiple levels, as well. As noted in the previous stage, there is the personal level of the individual, where each community member should be included in the evaluation process to see if their sense of personal empowerment has increased. There is the second level of the community, where community resources can be assessed to see if there are more resources available or the existing resources have become more effective in meeting the needs of members. There is the broader interdependent systemic level, where examination of whether policies regarding access to services, for example, have changed, or if funding systems have improved over time.

At this stage of *Expansion*, new strategies may be needed to articulate new *Targeted Outcomes* or new directions to move in. The community may have to redefine the new position and get community members' agreement. Thus, the participatory process begins anew. This may require the development of multiple structures, training

new community coordinators and leaders, finding new ways to motivate people over a longer period of time, and creating new activities and ongoing programs to meet evolving needs. Systematic evaluation and sharing of information and outcomes is essential to moving into new areas of empowerment. For example, objective cost-benefit analyses can give community members strong motivation for continuing to invest in and work to advance past and future goals.

In the next few chapters, we will see how the CASE Model was initially developed in Japan and how it can be fruitfully applied in other countries – Sweden, the United States, Israel, and Australia. We then provide a counterpoint perspective on empowerment which reminds us that maintaining a broad view of how empowerment affects everyone involved (e.g., not just the elder, but their caregivers, families, etc.) is imperative to achieve the self-actualizing society we hope for.

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