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"*Those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly*" (Freire, 1970, p. 42).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between project-based organising and the initiatives labelled as 'development' by critically engaging with some unchallenged assumptions inherent in the notion of both *projects* as a means through which social change can be achieved and the wider possibility of *delivering* social good as an objective of development. From a phenomenologically informed critical participatory perspective we focus on contradictions within the practices of community development (CD) by attending to the interplay between the dominant project form of organising that frames those practices and the rhetoric of 'development'. Drawing on two CD examples, we illustrate and discuss the contradictions and damaging consequences of the d*evelopmentalism-projectification* double-act. Our position is that social good is local and contextual and draws expediently and contingently on the means through which it can be achieved by the collective action of those who co-define and co-create the social good. We propose that there is a need to open the dialogue with development practitioners, funders, project managers, project workers, and the recipients and stimulate multiple participation. We believe the critical participatory approach that we have taken to community development project management could be both novel and useful as it refocuses attention to non-performative aspects of CD, arguing for de-naturalisation of project organising logic and encouraging emancipation from dominant epistemic inequalities. With an uncompromising focus on embedded practices, we hope to spur further debate on the important issue of community development and the possibilities of creating 'social good'.

Keywords: Critical Participatory Perspective, Community Development, Projectification, Social Good, Co-creation,

Section 1 Introduction and positioning

In this paper, we wish to examine the relationship between project-based organising and the initiatives labelled as 'development' by critically engaging with some unchallenged assumptions inherent in the notion of both *projects* as a means through which social change can be achieved and the wider possibility of *delivering* social good as an objective of development. Such exploration will inevitably be social, political and ideological: social in that all human action can be seen as social (Giddens, 1984), political in that the achievement of the objectives of collectives / individuals through the use of available resources is, by definition, a political action, and ideological in that the underpinning rationale for knowledge creation and action, and the drive for change can be located in the world views/perspectives of those engaged in socio-political action (Jenkins, 2009).

We will use the notion of *community development* (CD) in order to represent the nature and key intentions commonly assumed by other related expressions, e.g. international development /sustainable development /international aid. This is our attempt to join and contribute to the extant and continuing political-philosophical debate on the meaning and ethics of development and its global projectification. The issues of responsibility for knowledge creation in participatory action towards a better, sustainable world (that is, interdependent, connected, just, prudent, and safe for all concern a variety of individuals and groups in society. Our intention is to encourage a lively dialogue in an inclusive and transparent manner while acknowledging, respecting, and inviting diverse views, agendas and values that are simultaneously at play in the development context (Gladwin et al., 1995, United_Nations, 2015).

We draw on the work Freire (1996), Freire (1970), Banarjee (2000), Banarjee (2003), Fals-Borda (2001), Cooke and Dar (2008), Böhm and Dabhi (2009), Ika and Hodgson (2014) among others, in examining more closely the nature and ethics of creating responsible knowledge that underpins the practices of CD projects. This is because, for us, CD is not only an economic and techno-scientific concern (as implied by various notions of 'capacity building', 'poverty eradication', 'technical assistance' or 'targeted communities') but a moral-ethical concern as it signifies the Idea(l)s of social good and social action. Our reading of the above work has centred our attention to two contemporary phenomena- *developmentalism* and *projectification* that we frame here metaphorically as *two waves of fashionable meta-narratives in a double-act*. Such reification of aspirational ideas (another example is *sustainabilism*, Thompson (2007) promotes the desirability and possibility of a-political, neutral decision making about, and management of, issues of moral–ethical significance. This is through the promotion of a rational, methodological, universal (hence unquestionable) blueprint for the execution and implementation of planned goals (c.f. ideas, Ideals). By promising "*effectiveness and efficiency, lean-and-mean capitalism, ... leaving little room for reflecting on value*" (Freire, 1996, p. 23), the rhetoric of growth redirects attention to the economics of development rather than to the social and the humane (Gladwin et al., 1995, Flyvbjerg, 2001, Hutchings, 2010, Curry, 2012).

Projectification, a term originally coined by Midler (1995), is a phenomenon that has been studied not only in terms of ever more activities being labelled as projects and companies doing more projects, but also as a form of colonising logic and power that comes with so prevailing project / PM discourse which is simultaneously being produced by, and itself perpetuates, the values and discourses of the dominant socio-economic system of capitalism and neo-liberal doctrines (Cicmil et al., 2016). It has also been suggested that realities of projectified work life are often at odds and in conflict with the rights of individuals to have a voice, to make informed choices and to live with dignity (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2007, Cicmil et al., 2009, Lindgren et al., 2014, Cowen and Hodgson, 2015).

Developmentalism is criticized as an approach to community development that places an overly strong emphasis on the Euroentric beliefs and values as they relate to society, the economy and the political rights of people (Shahidullah et al., 2013). The CD sector, as an arm of the 'aid industry' and as an example of developmentalism, has become an ideal candidate for projectification and managerialisation (Cooke, 2004, Kerr, 2008, Ika and Saint-Macary, 2012, Ika and Hodgson, 2014). Once the funding has been allocated, focus turns to the mobilising networks of not-for-profit sub-contractors (including researchers), for the 'delivery' of the project. This network of organizations responsible for the delivery of projects is also held to task with regard to the achievement of project success (as measured against the original plan and funder endorsed success criteria). They also take on the burden of progress reporting on the project for the oversight of the funders or their agents.

Funders require assurances that their money is being spent wisely through the deployment of smart, well-run programmes and projects. However, the idea of projects, and more particularly the ideas of how they should be governed, lead and implemented holds no promise of (co-)creating a better world for those whose 'ills' are the focus of the project, its activity and funding. There have been numerous reports on the alarmingly poor performance of CD projects, focused it would seem more on the operational requirements of funders and their agents than the communities in need that they purport to serve (Sherman, 2015a, Sherman, 2015b, Sherman, 2015c). It has been noted that the UK's Department for Inetrnational Development's budget is 'obese' and the easiest way to 'get the money out of the door as quickly as possible' is to have a few large aid programmes managed by a few suppliers (Sherman, 2015b). There is also concern that the project management/programme management capacity involved in the mass-projectification of the aid/international development (ID), and supplied by the multi-lateral agencies (UN, the World Bank), brings in professional consultants whose costs can account from between 6% to 12% of the overall project budget, with some consultancy firms benefiting from 50% profit margins (Sherman, 2015b, p.1).

There have also been reports on projects that have never been completed because of the way the money has been spent. Funding money often bypasses citizen forums set up to increase local democracy because local elites are "often able to use their status to influence the direction of funds towards their preferred projects" (Patel, 2014, page 1). There is growing evidence that some ID projects worsen the situation in the local community by the way project funding is channelled through those most powerful and least affected in communities and serve to further widening the gap between the elites and the rest. In this way corruption and power interests are further entrenched ensuring the continued marginalization of the communities and individuals the funding was meant to help. This has been portrayed as a complex and at times deadly dance of power, politics and aid (De Mesquita and Smith, 2011).

These concerns about the 'good use' of aid and development funds requires critical examination, especially given the political attention and renewed interest in 'development' as a purposeful engagement with the world and the communities of 'others'. The proposed post-2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and their explicit (and exclusive) support for market based economies (United Nations, 2015) are bound to trigger a number of implementation and evaluation projects with wide implications for communities across the globe whose systems of trade, constitution of society and basis of economy do not conform to, and would be damaged by, the adoption of liberal market based capitalism.

What follows in this paper is framed to emphasise that CD is inherently a responsible calling, one that holds our collective bonds, co-dependence and shared humanity as something to be cherished, shared, built and safeguarded. Such purpose includes the ethical component of human activity and acting-knowing (Freire, 1996). It is opportune then to juxtapose the Ideal of development with that of project and project management (PM) methodologies, to look into existential and epistemic manifestations of inequalities and injustice involved in project-based practices of delivering social good in the context of CD.

We use two concrete examples from secondary sources to illustrate and discuss the contradictions and damaging consequences of the d*evelopmentalism-projectification* double-act. We discuss the possibility of co-design and co-creation of social good, participatory action and social change. In the conclusion, we consider epistemological and Praxis-informed alternatives such as participatory action methodologies and a reimagined nature of CD projects, which may require a profoundly different understanding of the notion of CD goals and of their implementation on the ground.

Section 2. Project-based development – epistemic issues in the projectified delivery of social good

When we speak of critical participatory position, we state a commitment to and engagement with the world that embraces social justice, human emancipation and anti-oppression. We draw heavily upon critical research on organisations including projects (Cicmil and Hodgson, 2006) with three broad commitments:

- giving primacy to issues of morality, equality and ethics over the traditional functionalist concerns of management efficiency and effectiveness

- aiming to denaturalise the dominant current logic of organising of work, economies and societies as natural or inevitable, 'arguing instead that the status quo is a consequence of the prioritisation of the agenda of certain social groups, and benefits these groups at the expense of others' (ibid, p.117-118)

- highlighting and preventing oppression and exploitation in organisations and societies (e.g. of employees, of women, of ethnic minorities, or of the environment).

Our critical stance encourages us to speak of and to power, in all its forms, as *real* and social phenomena. Our participatory orientation draws on a phenomenological perspective, located in our acceptance of the 'social' as a real happening in which the bodies and the selves of people, as a part of and within the world, recognize each other, and each others' purposefulness and intentionality in shared communion with each other and with the world (Merleau Ponty, 1962). What we understand by the social reflects the dynamic and recursive relationship of our *selves* with the world: and of the world as the mutable and emerging context in which possibilities of the self and others emerge. We take the world to be *out there* and the self to be of and a part of the world. We see the self as accommodating itself to the *throwness* of being and historicity of the self within that world (Heidegger, 1962). Given our position of a world in which we find ourselves to be mutable to our actions and the actions of others within it, together with our commitment to a critical engagement with ourselves and the world, an examination of the mechanisms of power and the possibility of social justice and human liberation becomes more than a possibility, it becomes an imperative. We focus on the interplay between the dominant project form of organising that frames the practices of community development, and the rhetoric of 'development'. This includes interrogating the ideas about the possibility of 'delivering development' (in the sense of project delivery), development that can at times have adverse effect on recipient communities' interests and can endanger 'cultural and biophysical texture of rich and diverse social structures well known and dear to us' (Fals-Borda, 2001, p.27). It can be argued that development itself is socially constructed notion that reproduces economic and social inequalities in a global context (e.g. (Hutchings, 2010)) by giving financially or economically powerful groups the power and legitimacy in deciding who should and who should not be the target of development.

A phenomenologically informed critical participatory perspective, reorients our attention from ideas of prohibition, prescription, cure and eradication to ideas of harm reduction, complex and diverse ways of being and humanization – from practices of seeing and engaging with the behavioural, medical, economic or social 'issues' to practices of seeing and engaging with human beings within complex multi-faceted contexts (Erickson et al., 1996). Through this reorientation we implicitly and explicitly take a critical stance on the various manifestations of injustice, discrimination and oppression experienced by our fellow creatures across the globe. According to Freire, community development initiatives intrinsically draw on the process of pedagogy of liberation and of consciousness raising. Such initiatives become activities in which communities are not targeted but are empowered to participate in defining what 'good' and 'development' is for them (Collins, 2016).

2.1 Conceptualisation of tensions

The projectification of the CD work brings into contact and conflict two differing approaches to work, that of the technical instrumentality of traditional PM and that of the ethically driven focus of 'social good' (Figure 1). The mutual incompatibility of these two differing approaches can be seen in the 'need' for definitive and achievable development goals in CD and the planned and controlled delivery of stated goals and objectives as the central tenets of project execution management as a form of technical instrumentality. Projects appear as discursive technologies of governance in CD, as systems of constraints on agency (by norms, prohibitions), that enable predefined controlled actions that are devised by the funders and policy makers with high hierarchical rank, to be performed by project execution personnel. It is an approach that clearly defines and creates a split between those who decide what is to be done, the funders and their agents, and those to whom it is done, the recipient communities.

Project delivery assumes an intentionality of action where the from-towards concept inherent in delivery presumes the presence or availability of an objective good. This objective good can be seen as an object that can be created, transported or transferred to where it is most needed, most particularly stated as a transfer from funders to the recipient community. The inherent power and judgement involved in the articulation of *the* social privileges the voices, intentions and constructs of those who 'supply' the necessary fiscal resources required in order to achieve its ends – their definition of the social good. The monitoring and control of expenditure and the achievement of funder-defined objectives are taken to be the measures of success or failure. The implicit primacy of capital over communities is thus maintained, reinforced and propagated, as is the dynamic of recipient dependence, and the implied perception of recipients' fecklessness and dis-organization, should they not adhere to the 'discipline' of sound PM and fiscal responsibility in their receipt and use of valuable funds.

Kerr (2008, p.106-9) suggests that CD projects are devised by the Centre, through policy makers with high hierarchical rank, as matters of technical control and surveillance in which managers', team members' and beneficiaries' lived experience is irrelevant. Cooke (2004) has called for further examination into how this instrumental view of PM makes invisible the mechanisms of power that are always at play in CD project relations.

These instrumental mechanisms of social action, and their definition of legitimate social action being limited to only those seen as 'legitimate' social actors by funders and their agents, highlights the hidden power and invisible control that is practiced under the guise of rational CD project delivery models. The definition of communities on the basis of 'needs' and 'problems' together with the projectified organizing of 'responsible' responses to these needs relegates recipient community members to the periphery of decision-making and action in the construction of the solutions to their

problems and the enacting of *remedies* to their needs. The discursive patterns of rationality, responsibility and transparency reside in a particular reduction of social reality and human life to funder given metrics (such as measures and indicators of success), that shape the aspects of reality that 'matter' and that by doing so make mute, invisible, insignificant and illegitimate those aspects of reality and human experience valued and practiced by the recipient 'other'.

When we define the purpose of CD in terms of social goodness we state a commitment to a future state of being. As such, unlike the idea of the project that is *done*, the co-creation of the social good might only be accomplished contingently and in part, as an ever-moving realisation and experience of both the social and of the good. Thus the future social good takes shape in, with and through the on-going interaction of beings in relation to themselves, each other and the world, and as such it can be seen as an ongoing accomplishment of collective being (Bourdieu, 1977, Giddens, 1984)

We argue that for the possibility of social good to take hold it must be locally driven, purposefully created, designed and executed in context and remain open to the emergent possibilities of dynamic social contexts. It should be an ongoing commitment to embedded ethical purposeful action.

The centrality of embeddedness in the local context and with it the fundamental recognition of the worldview and the possibilities of action of those who inhabit that context we take to be central to the possibility of the co-creation of social good. We take the social world to be fluid, processual, phenomenological, interconnected and temporal. It is a constant and ongoing emergence that is co-dependent upon the collective and disparate wisdom of those who inhabit the local world and whose actions and discourses impact both themselves and others. It is a worldview that emanates from, interacts with, and helps form the 'reality' of all those who dwell within that world.

(Figure 1 here)

Section 3 Illustrations of tensions

Drawing on two CD examples, we illustrate and discuss the contradictions and damaging consequences of the d*evelopmentalism-projectification* double-act: 1) The delivering of predefined CD goals vs. the engagement in participatory knowing of what 'good' or 'benefit' might mean in the given locality (the ethics of knowing); and 2) The use of project-based structuring vs. the idea of participatory action and social change. We tease out the issue of participation of local communities (beneficiaries) in defining their needs and communicating them to funders, thus taking control over their own development rather than development projects being imposed and taking control of them. We are inspired to develop a critique of epistemic marginalisation– not being allowed to use one's own interpretative resources to justify the value of local 'knowing'- and the inherent injustice and

oppression of being subjects of someone else's knowing rather than one being in and of the world as knowing intentional subjects.

3.1 Case #1

The Ethics of Knowing– Claims to knowledge and epistemic hierarchies

In his short essay on a CD intervention, a Rwandan local speaks about his experience of western mental health and depression treatment to Andrew Solomon (Solomon, 2014). In this short interview the stark contrast is made between the communal Rwandan approach and the individual Western approach to the treatment of mental health issues (full source available at https://underthebluedoor.org/2014/08/18/).

The differences in these treatments to depression not only exemplify a stark difference in attitudes towards mental health issues but they also illustrate the differences in claims to knowledge and in the hierarchies of knowing. (c.f Figure 1)

The CD initiative, framed as a project with an objective to assist those suffering from depression (to cure their depression), demonstrates the idea of the 'delivery' of social good. In this case mental health treatment is delivered by an expert in the field of mental health to the recipient. This 'transfer' of a social good across boundaries from one cultural context to another (Carlile, 2004) is indicative of the view of recipient cultures being non-problematic 'application' areas for an assumed universal agreement of both mental illness and approaches to its treatment. It is also indicative of the implicit assumption of epistemic superiority from the West to *the Rest*. There is within the Western treatment model itself a social dynamic reliant upon the hierarchy of knowing between expert and patient. The approach used in the CD intervention required the social isolation of the recipient and her submission to the directed questioning of the expert outsider, thus clearly establishing an imbalance in power between expert and patient. This establishment of emotional and social distance between a detached professional expert and the emotionally exposed patient is demonstrative of asymmetric power relationship that is both illustrative of the medical model in use and of the project approach being deployed. The patient as object of expert judgment and the 'treatment' she is required to engage in is that of a forced reflectiveness and self objectification, these acts of self-distancing that separates the 'talking head' from the 'feeling heart'.

In contrast to this project based Western CD treatment of the depressed individual, the Rwandan approach of community based drumming and dancing demonstrates an approach to the self as embodied, social and co-participative in the journey of self-healing. The situatedness of 'being there', with others and for others, as a shared knowing and nurturing community of selves, neither privileges

one over another nor does it isolate the pain and depression of the person as belonging to her, and her alone. This approach recognizes a shared responsibility for others in a community through a giving of the self to and with others, not merely as a 'resource' (however expert), but as a co-participant in the healing of another and of the collective to which all belong and all are equally expert.

The claims to knowledge of the CD mental health expert are universalist and reductive, and by being so are amenable to being codified, abstracted and diffused, as part of a 'market' of knowledge objects (Boisot, 1995). This construction of knowledge 'goods' as disembodied, reductive, universally valid and open to being harvested and stored by enquiring others, plays into the possibility of CD projects and the 'from-to', 'expert-novice', 'have-have not', 'powerful – powerless' dualities inherent in CD projects and initiatives. Thus dualisms of knowing and ignorance also helps establish hierarchies of knowing that privilege the abstract, codified and disembodied knowledge objects over the contextual, ambiguous, and contingent embodiment of lived experience and knowing as a process of being. This objectification of knowledge as an artifact also allows for its ownership, transport, sale and delivery. It is thus highly amenable to project approaches that deal in the mechanics of delivery in universal time – months, days, hours - and space – kilometres, metres and centimetres,. In contrast to this universalist and reductive concept of time and space, being and knowing that is local, social, contextual, and human views time in terms of the tempo and rhythm of human social interactions – temporal concepts such as next, before and after feature as they do when we tell each other stories – and space can be thought of as significant places in which the suitability of congregation, social interaction and action is paramount – such as public, private and sacred spaces. These universalist and reductive mechanisms of time and space in instrumental PM displace the more local and contextual notions of time and space, and in doing so displace the local, contextual and human elements of local knowledge and knowing and the legitimacy of local social practices in favour of abstract universalist and instrumental time and space concepts (Goffman, 1959, Bourdieu, 1977, Schatzki, 2006).

The 'idea' of knowledge as infused in the constitution of social structures that run through social practices (in the form of legitimacy, domination and normalization) requires us to critically examine the structures that are inherent in the unstated mechanisms of projects' social practices. Given that epistemic hierarchies can give rise to the (re-) production of oppressive and unfair social structures and relations, we argue that their unconscious adoption in the service of social good is not only unhelpful but also potentially harmful as they silently and irresponsibly reproduce the conditions of oppression while loudly proclaiming an intention to alleviate inequality (Bourdieu, 1977, Giddens, 1984).

3.2 *Case #2*

The use of project-based structuring vs. the idea of participatory action and social change

In the article "If It Doesn't Fit on the Blue Square It's Out!' An Open Letter to My Donor Friend" (Win, 2004), an activist within a recipient Zimbabwean organization laments the change that has come over a person she first encountered as a student volunteering in the community, and who she now interacts with as a representative of a funding donor. The article is written in the style of an open letter to the 'donor friend' where the journey from the contextual, participative, and engaged to the reductive, directive and disconnected is personified in the changes that have taken place in the approach and character of the donor friend.

The journey of the donor friend, Christine, from immersed student volunteer to all knowing expert of gender in Southern Africa signals a view of expert knowledge as the achievement and harvesting of knowledge of others. It is an exercise that is accomplished through the collection of that which can be readily classified, catalogued, codified and abstracted out of time and away from the context of lived experience. It is a form of 'banking' (Freire, 1970) in which the lived experience of others is stripped of their voices, denuded of its context and appropriated from its owners as it is brought into service as 'data' or empirical evidence in the creation of an edifice of abstracted expertise for the use of expert others. The rapid journey of Christine as learning volunteer within one local Zimbabwean community to all-knowing expert of gender on Southern Africa is characteristic of this view of knowledge of the lived experience of others as an exercise in data collection, interpretation, extrapolation and appropriation (Win, 2004).

As well as, and associated with the ossification and appropriation of others' lived experience, is the requirement of recipient communities to 'speak the language' of their donors in terms of terminology and narratives unrelated to their everyday reality and frame of reference and discourse. This points to the 'epistemic colonization' inherent in the grant submission writing expectations and donors' project reporting requirements that recipient communities are subjected to. As such, this approach can be seen as both epistemic marginalization and colonization, a usurping of the right to expertise and narratives of the self, and of the community to which one belongs. (c.f. Figure 1)

The initial participative dialogical approach taken by Christine morphs into a hierarchical directive role that positions Christine the donor as the patronizing judge of the lived experience of others and as occupying a privileged position in examining this failure of recipients to achieve social good, on the funders' terms, in a timely manner. The expectation of social change to the 'drum beat' of the donor, without regard to the ebb and flow, and everyday rhythm and concerns of recipient communities is a demonstration of power and control (Bourdieu, 1977) that further marginalizes and oppresses those whom the funders espouse to care for, liberate and 'improve'.

The non-participative, objective driven, timeline oriented approach to 'delivering social good' is ironically referred to by the local activist writer as "If it doesn't fit in the Blue Square, it's out!". This disciplining of the narratives and actions of the recipient community, the mechanisms of social control and oppression remain uncritically examined by the donor community as they create, recreate and impose reductive universalist models of the reality on recipient communities without regard to their appropriateness or relevance, and without consideration of the burden they create on these communities in terms of administrative overhead, the forced use of alien narratives unreflective of lived experiences and the displacing of 'local' narratives of the self and the social .

The shaping of discourse in recipient communities by donor organizations through the restriction of access to funds for those "who do not play the game", becomes an element of domination and a perversion of social good that is an inevitable consequence of a projectified approach. It could be argued that the CD projects serve the purpose of meeting the needs for control, domination and status for funders to a far greater extent that they serve the need for the creation of social good in and for recipient communities. As such the 'ends' of these project, their true purpose, is revealed as serving funders while the 'means' to these ends are the lives, needs and aspirations of recipient communities.

The practices engaged in that marginalize and oppress recipient communities in terms of knowledge, and knowledge holders can only take hold where universalist, reductive knowledge of the lives and needs of others is afforded a status greater to that of the local knowing of those lives that are being lived. The affordances of a technology of knowledge (Hutchby, 2001), such as that inherent in critically unexamined project approaches, objectify others and capture, bracket and 'tame' their being and knowing to fit neatly into the mechanisms of projects and their delivery. (c.f. Figure 1)

Section 4. Towards participatory methodologies of knowledge creation in CD

"*To be in the world implies being with the world and with others*." (Freire, 1996, p. 33).

Our position is that social good is local and contextual – drawing expediently and contingently on the means through which it can be achieved by the collective action of those who co-create the social good. In contrast, the instrumental tradition of projects and their management emphasise a functionalist view of the world, where the functions served are the abstract, rationalistic and largely quantifiably reduced objectives that have been specified and set by project sponsors, who we suggest can now be seen as the true beneficiaries of some of the CD projects. Project organising and structuring of CD can serve to take the power of critical active agency away from recipients of the project deliverable by constructing the notion of a 'beneficiary community' as a complex mechanical

object to be broken down, understood and put back together again (Collins, 2016) with improved or more sustainable patterns of living conditions. Such imposition of social realities from ***us*** to ***them*** can be seen as a form of oppression and disciplining disguised as an extension of kindness with the hoarded resources of the world being drip-fed by the rich to the poor in a manner that ensures their relief – that is, the achievement of limited 'good' as defined by outsiders,- but not their freedom.

PM methodology and discourse, the mechanism of projectification (Cicmil et al, 2016), holds the promise of pragmatic delivery of objectives that gives to the funders an illusion of guaranteed control over work and output, and a measure of confidence in the accountability of project implementers. If the purpose of CD is to transform the social reality of those whose lot is in need of improvement, the instruments used to achieve this transformation should reflect the ends to which they are engaged. According to Mitroff and Linstone (1993) and Gladwin et al, (1995) *Ideals*, such as human development, are about aspirations rather than goals. They serve as spiritual aids as well as critical intellectual, moral, and aesthetic benchmarks. They are desired ends that one, it is hoped, approaches indefinitely; even if one can never achieve them completely. The recognition of the unfolding possibilities of social organizing, the complex nature of project phenomena and the contexts of project action all point to the incongruence of the rational functionalist model of PM to many, if not all, CD project situations. What we then seek to achieve is the unfolding relational reality of actors engaged in their and our own changing. This can only be achieved through its enactment, and can only be manifested through its practice (Freire 1970). We propose that participatory action research and practices of *vivencia* (Fals-Borda, 2001) could provide a deeper understanding of the contradictions we have discussed and have the possibility of addressing epistemic inequalities than hinder the co-creating social good. The notion of vivencia, has been argued for by Fals-Borda, (2001) as a philosophy of life, an empathetic (less bureaucratic, and less hermeneutically / temporally unjust) involvement in processes of research, knowledge production and implementation where deep respectful observations in localities are essential. Epistemic equality can only emerge though dialogue and empathy in participatory situations where a social 'space' is created for understanding one's own voice, being willing to listen, and thus developing an awareness of one's own point of view and those of others (Collins, 2016). The dominant forms of managing and researching CD projects seems to share the same set of epistemic assumptions and ethos as the forces of historical capitalism which has resulted in unbearable life conditions in the communities around us, with poverty, oppression and violence for much too long (Fals-Borda, 2001, Banerjee, 2003). Project based structuring and organising of CD seem to redefine development and aid as *doling out* help, in pursuit of funder self-interest rather than as a participation with the marginalized in the creation of a better world for all.

In the drawing together of our phenomenologically informed critical participatory position and our examination of the two illustrative cases, we consider alternatives to the project based approach to CD and of the possibilities of reimagining project and PM in the CD context. What might it mean to

deliver a social good for others as an authentic, deep commitment of ***all*** to the co-creation of the social good by practising critical action learning (Cooke, 2004, p. 623) and participatory production of knowledge (Fals-Borda, 2001, Collins, 2016)? We explore how a participatory action approach can provide some helpful practical answers to the questions of co-creating social good. This means overcoming the marginalisation of many individuals, groups and communities by acknowledging their status as participants (equal knowers) in the production of responsible knowledge, rather than them being objects of critically unexamined knowledge, methodologies and organising forms that oppress them). For CD practitioners this would mean developing interpretative resources and frames through which peoples experiences of themselves and their worlds can be articulated and shared.

4.1 Knowing as being in the world with the equal others

The first step to address is the inherent epistemic injustices and hermeneutic oppression of non-participatory project based technologies (as our examples above show) by attending to ordinary people's knowledge in the communities 'needing development' (Fals-Borda, 2001). Fals-Borda's (2001) idea of 'vivencia' and the participatory co-creation of knowledge give voice to activism and advocacy in local efforts of educational and cultural revival. Vivencia based practices challenge and counter-balance the dominant view on relationship between science, knowledge and reason. Re-casting the CD projects as socio-politically engaged social acts and reimagining project practices and activities as ways of being with and in the world, participatory inquiry may bring us a step closer to creating better scientific, technological and social ways of improving living conditions in the globalised world. As Collins (2016) asserts, ultimately, the definition of benefits – what they are and how they should be created for the better life conditions of the communities, should be openly developed *with* them as partners in the process rather than *for* them as passive recipients.

This is always a process of knowledge negotiation and co-creation among human beings/strangers, who might hold different values and views, have different vulnerabilities or perceptions of risks, and who can become embodied in local cultures and the biosphere. In cases where the accomplishment of social good is the objective of a project, we need to accept that success is less easily defined and likely to be more problematic to achieve, as is the case with many multi-party social actions. Discovering the self and others not as resources and objects *but* as subjects and agents, that is all those community members, PMs and researchers, who are self-conscious human beings who can negotiate interventions and emerging outcomes via co-intentional solidarity, active reflection and liberating dialogue.

4.2 Accountability in enabling social change and epistemic equality

There is accountability that makes an explicit commitment to the humanization of the processes used to achieve CD project objectives. This means asking different sorts of questions in evaluating the progress of CD projects, the expectations from those who manage the implementation and what they

are accountable for: What has been achieved, rather than have the original goals been achieved? What kind of other elements of the project plan had to be put in place to make it more effective in the changing concrete circumstances? Which body of evidence was and can be used as the basis for such adaptation decisions? This would ensure that the objectives put forward for project success include a serious commitment to the rights of others, the well-being of the environment and the possibility of positive social change.

In practical terms, enabling social change and redefining the creation of 'social good' in CD projects requires the redefinition of projects and PM as a participatory virtue, beyond methodology and as 'a philosophy of life which converts its participants into "thinking-feeling" persons' (Fals-Borda, 2001, p.31). It means developing ethical practical wisdom through the co-creation of knowledge that reflects the polyphony of voices typical of development and social intervention initiatives. We need to open the dialogue with development practitioners, project managers, project workers, the recipients (and the excluded non-recipients), we need to listen to their voices and lived experience without modelling it in advance; we should encourage dialogue, ask questions to stimulate multiple inputs, listen carefully to what practitioners have to say, and be mindful to highlight challenges, useful techniques or crises that they have experienced (Linehan and Kavanagh, 2006).

In this process, we should discard our learned jargon (including project/PM language and artefacts) and learn to do participatory research/development with local communities, practicing dialogical leadership towards an emancipatory social reconstruction, as Paolo Freire puts it

> *"No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption" (Freire, 1970, p. 54).*

This would be an important way of addressing 'head on' the divide between the privileged (donors, funders, agents) and the beneficiaries (marginalized, oppressed, voiceless) created via the imposition and normalization of certain languages/vocabulary/discourse, procedures, and dominant views and practices which compromise the possibility of genuine participation of those communities whose lives are to be improved /changed (figure 1).

Section 5. Concluding thoughts

> *"Leaders who do not act dialogically, but insist on imposing their decisions, do not organize the people - they manipulate them. They do not liberate, nor are they liberated: they oppress"*
>
> *(Freire, 1970, p. 178).*

Participatory inquiry is an orientation that aims to combine knowledge and action to stimulate social change (Heron and Reason, 1997, Stoecker, 1999) where planning, action and results are inseparable. A fundamental contradiction between participatory principles and the efficiency and effectiveness driven, de-contextualized logic of project organising poses a real risk in that the objectives driven performance does not allow for the flexibility needed when, on the ground, one discovers that actually, there are other bigger, more important issues for the 'targeted' community than the problem framed by the funders. Instead of freedom and flexibility, the project form, perceived by most as the best and perhaps the only way to optimise performance and minimise risk for funders, becomes a tyranny of target deadlines and efficiency-obsessed systems of measurement and evaluation of outcomes, to be resisted or wriggled around in the pursuit of real change.

We have argued in this paper for the need to re-examine the approaches to and mechanisms of governance and delivery in CD projects, with a particular focus of the unrecognized power and knowledge asymmetries at play in all phases of project based work from initial concept through to delivery and evaluation. We also believe that a phenomenologically informed approach to understanding community development projects encourages a re-engagement with embodied humanity that could helpfully become a feature of project and community development education. Our argument and perspective has drawn upon two illustrative examples of CD projects from the literature. We make no claim to their representativeness of CD projects, and would argue that the possibility of representativeness of CD projects is both problematic and debateable.

Our insights will hopefully resonate with (and serve) not merely project managers but practitioners at all levels of the CD project hierarchy, with the aim of 'initiating some transformation in how actors perceive themselves, their voice, their broad responsibility and their influence in shaping their own social place.' (Hodgson and Cicmil, 2008). Further similar studies would we believe help in developing the argument further, and would usefully complement and challenge more instrumental and functional research and analysis of CD projects.

We neither expect nor require that readers will endorse or agree with our position and analysis. We do however believe that what we put forward is helpful in encouraging a critical engagement with the logic of projects and the Ideal of CD. Our hope is to stimulate further interest and research into the socio-political aspects of project practices that take the human elements of organizing in community development contexts, and while doing so to critically examine the mechanisms of power inherent in the roles, methodologies and narratives that dominate the fields of project management and that might serve to undermine the possibility of co-creating social good.

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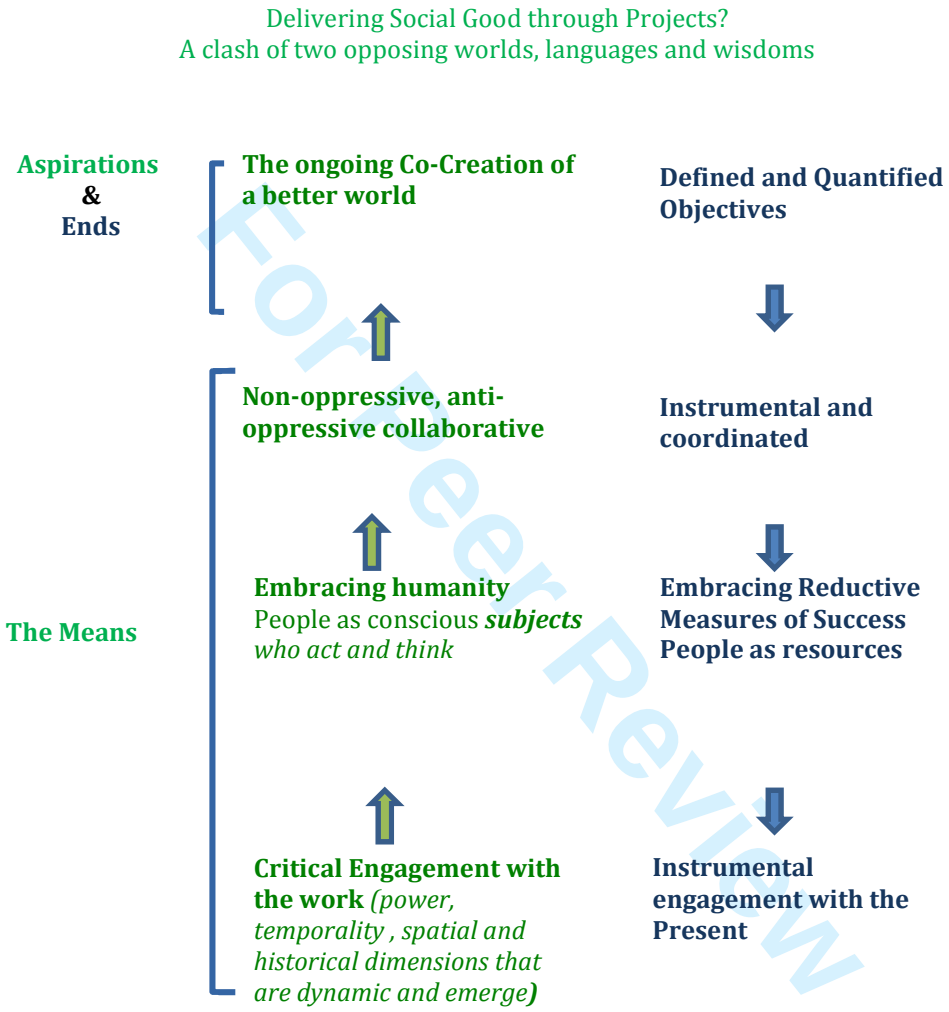

Figure 1