

International Community Practice

Local–Global Issues and Strategies

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The objectives of this chapter are to introduce the field and broad scope of international community practice as part of international social work and to present some of the core issues in which international community practitioners often engage and strategies they use to address these issues. The chapter is organized into five sections. First, as part of the introduction, basic concepts such as international community practice, international social work, local, and global are discussed. Second, an integrated perspective approach as a framework for international community practice is presented. The third section discusses the link between the local and global and major issues in international community practice, including increasing poverty, conflict and post-conflict issues, problems faced by refugees and people who are displaced, other particularly vulnerable groups, and the organizations engaged to work with these issues. The fourth section looks at basic programs and strategies employed in international social work and community practice and specific problem-focused programs and strategies. The final section concludes with a

discussion of needs in the areas noted and challenges for international community practice.

BASIC CONCEPTS

Understanding the following basic concepts will provide a foundation for this chapter: *international community practice*, *international social work*, *local*, and *global*. “Community practice is work to improve the quality of life for families and communities and to increase social justice through social and economic development, community organizing, social planning and progressive social change” (Weil, 2005, p. 10). This second edition of the handbook provides in-depth analysis and case studies of many aspects of community practice. Chapter 7 discusses how this practice has been conceptualized and presents eight current models in the context of globalization, human rights, and multicultural societies. These models are neighborhood and community organizing; organizing functional communities; community social, economic, and sustainable development; inclusive program development; social

planning; coalitions; political and social action; and social movements (see Table 7.1 in Chapter 7 of this volume for a presentation of characteristics of these eight models). Each of these models can be employed in international community practice separately, sequenced, or combined in response to local or global needs and avenues for advancement.

To social work, welfare, human services, and development workers, *international community practice* is essentially community practice carried out in international contexts and/or through the auspices of international social work programs or organizations. International community practice efforts can focus at one or more levels of intervention, ranging from grassroots to global; they may employ one or multiple practice models and a broad range of practice approaches.

However, throughout the international social work literature, the concept is defined and amplified from several perspectives. International social work is a commonly used phrase among social work students and professionals, yet there is no single definition accepted by a majority of people engaged in international social work. Although there are multiple definitions of international social work that emphasize somewhat different aspects of the work (see Ahmadi, 2003; Cox & Pawar, 2006; Healy, 2001; Hokenstad, Khinduka, & Midgley, 1992; Hugman, 2010; Johnson, 1996; Lyons, 1999; Lyons, Manion, & Carlsen, 2006; Pawar, 1998; Payne & Askeland, 2008; Xu, 2007), it is useful to compare two relatively recent definitions provided in international social work texts (Cox & Pawar, 2006; Healy, 2008) as they seem to capture the contexts of both the Global North and the Global South and account for contemporary developments. Healy (2008) defines international social work as

international professional practice and the capacity for international action by the social work profession and its members. International action has four dimensions: (1) internationally related domestic practice and advocacy, (2) professional exchange, (3) international practice, and (4) international policy development and advocacy. (p. 7)

Cox and Pawar (2006) define it as follows:

International social work is the promotion of social work education and practice globally and locally, with the purpose of building a truly integrated international profession that reflects social work's capacity to respond appropriately and effectively, in education and practice terms, to the various global challenges that are having a significant impact on the well-being of large sections of the world's population. (p. 20)

Although the two definitions are complementary, Healy's definition emphasizes professional practice in the international context and the social work profession's and social workers' capacity for international action in four areas. These dimensions can be seen as somewhat restrictive or limited because of their very specificity.

One of the interesting aspects of Healy's (2008) definition is that to practice international social work, one need not go to another country, as some aspects of international social work practice, such as international labor migrants, human trafficking, refugee resettlement, and international adoption, can be undertaken domestically. That is, the human problems encompassed in international social work may originate in one nation or set of nations, and through the movement of people or groups the social issues translate or transmigrate across regions or even continents. For example, part of the increase of multicultural societies throughout the world is related to the movement of refugees and displaced persons. Currently, given the impact of globalization, social workers in any setting are likely to be challenged by international/multinational aspects of practice and need to be prepared to work with more multicultural populations and emerging social issues.

On the other hand, Cox and Pawar's (2006) conception of international social work focuses more on social work education and practice at both global and local levels so as to build the social work profession and its capacity internationally in such a way that it is able to address both global and local challenges concerning the well-being of the whole population.

In further analyzing dimensions of international practice, Hugman (2010, pp. 18–20) has delineated five core elements in international social work:

1. The practice of social work in a country other than the home country of the social worker
2. Working with individuals, families, and communities whose origins are in a country other than that where the social worker is practicing
3. Working with international organizations
4. Collaborations between countries in which social workers exchange ideas or work together on projects that cross national borders
5. Practices that address locally issues that originate in globalized social systems

Although these five elements may be implicit in the above definitions, Hugman's (2010) delineation expands the understanding of international social work. Major aspects of international social work are carried out through community practice approaches. Given the prevalence of community practice strategies in international social work, in this chapter, we suggest that the terms *international community practice* and *international social work* can be used nearly interchangeably.

Since the terms *local* and *global* are often employed in international community practice, it is important to clarify their meanings. The term *local* as in "local community practice" has multiple connotations given the range of potential interventions, and the term *community* has been used in different contexts for different purposes (Pawar, 2010a). Seeking to clarify these connotations, Uphoff (1986, p. 11) described *local* as signifying any or all of the following: locality (a set of interrelated communities), community (a relatively self-contained socioeconomic-residential unit), or group (a self-identified set of persons with a common interest). In general terms, local-level community practice is a developmental activity generated and carried out in specific communities. The philosophical base of local-level community practice is that local people, through their community structures, are enabled to assume

responsibility for their own development (Pawar & Cox, 2010; see also Chapter 33 in this volume).

According to Healy (2008), *global* means pertaining to or involving the whole world, whereas *international* refers to interactions between or among two or more nations. While discussing the concept of *international social work*, Hugman (2010) specifies "that 'global' (as in the context of 'globalization,' for example) is a particular aspect of 'international' in relation to social work, implying some degree of integration across the world as a whole" (p. 13). It is useful to note that most of the above definitions have been developed in Northern contexts and are likely to reflect Northern concerns; it will be interesting as the literature further develops to see whether writers from the Global South concur or develop alternative definitions of these basic terms (Pawar, 2010b).

With these basic concepts in mind, we can give deeper consideration to major factors related to international community practice, including conceptual frameworks, value orientations, and applicability to both local and global contexts. Each of these factors is important for international practice. Frameworks need bases in theory and experience, and to be comprehensive in their focus. Value orientations need to be examined for their applicability across cultures; by definition, international community practice approaches need to be grounded in and sensitive to the interrelation between local and global contexts. In efforts to move the field of international practice forward, we (Cox & Pawar, 2006) have drawn from practice experience and wide review of the literature and research to construct a comprehensive framework that integrates perspectives to assist in understanding, analysis, and work in international community practice.

AN INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVES APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PRACTICE

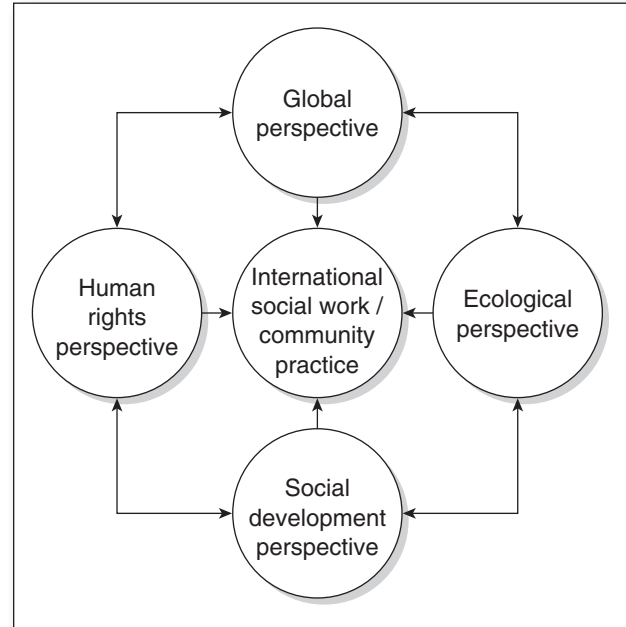
In *International Social Work: Issues, Strategies, and Programs*, Cox and Pawar (2006) conceptualize an integrated perspectives approach combining human

rights, ecological, global, and social development theory and knowledge. This integrated approach, we believe, is particularly appropriate for context and action in international community practice, as it incorporates a global perspective, an ecological perspective, a human rights perspective, and a social development perspective—all of which are central to current community practice (see Figure 30.1). Knowledge of these perspectives and awareness of the synergy produced through their integration will help international community practitioners effectively work with both local and global communities, critique and assess the impact of their own actions, and recognize both linkages and disconnections between the local and global practice and policy efforts. For workers engaged at either the local or global level, practice can be strengthened by visualizing the impact and consequences of their actions/inactions at the other level. In addition, the integration of these perspectives is congruent with the values and principles of social work as indicated in social work's codes of ethics (see also Chapter 4 in this volume). In the following discussion, we present each of these perspectives and their integration in practice.

Global Perspective

Global pertains to the whole world. The global perspective establishes the boundaries of the approach and highlights the essential unity of the earth and its interconnectedness. It includes everybody and everything without overlooking some opposing dimensions and their common derivatives. The global perspective consists of six dimensions, beginning with unity, which refers to one world united, as all human beings derive from the same origins, inhabit the same planet, and exhibit the same basic needs (Cox & Pawar, 2006). Since they are united, they are interconnected, and since they are interconnected, people and their earth are affected by happenings in other parts of the world. Diversity is the second dimension. It recognizes that the united and connected world is diverse in terms of people, culture, geography, resources, political arrangements, economic conditions, and social systems.

Figure 30.1 An Integrated Perspectives Approach for International Social Work/Community Practice



Source: Adapted from Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 26).

The two divergent dimensions, unity and diversity, then converge within the third dimension: interdependence. We hold that the interaction of diversity and unity enables people to learn and benefit from the experiences and advances of others (Cox & Pawar, 2006). Interdependence represents all of us identifying our commonalities while drawing on the benefits of our diversity as we strive to identify and achieve mutually beneficial goals.

The fourth and fifth dimensions of the global perspective are globalization and localization, respectively. Both refer to a range of processes—political, economic, social, cultural, institutional, and technological—that occur in different ways at both levels. Globalization and localization processes need not be antithetical, though at times global processes hold dominance over local. Globalization and localization dimensions are connected by the last dimension of this perspective: world citizenship, which implies equality in individual and human

rights, free and universal political participation, state responsibility to ensure adequate standards of human welfare (U.N. Research Institute for Social Development, 1995, pp. ii–12), and belongingness at both local and global levels.

The Human Rights Perspective

This perspective provides the values and rights basis for international community practice. It is conceptualized in terms of four dimensions, the first of which consists of the values and principles on which human rights are based. These values and principles emanate from our shared humanness (Donnelly, 1993, p. 19). Human rights are based on nine philosophical values: life, freedom and liberty, equality and nondiscrimination, comprehensive justice, solidarity, social responsibility, evolution, peace and nonviolence, and relationships between humankind and nature (U.N. Centre for Human Rights, 1992, pp. 13–19).

The idea of human rights has evolved over centuries and has been classified by European scholars in terms of three generations: first, civil and political rights; second, economic, social, and cultural rights; and third generation rights specified as collective rights, including rights to peace, development, and a clean environment protected from destruction (Ife, 2001; Laqueur & Rubin, 1990; U.N. Centre for Human Rights, 1992). Ife (2001) provides a matrix of human rights in Chapter 4 of this volume that expands beyond the earlier European formulations.

The third dimension of the human rights perspective is the universality of human rights, though this is controversial. Undoubtedly, human rights are universal due to their value base, but some questions arise as to their universal applicability, due to diverse cultural and political contexts. Despite controversy, however, there is merit in treating human rights as universal since they aim to uphold every human being with dignity and worth, and since any cultural practices that oppose such essential values cannot be humanely justified. The final dimension of this perspective is that human rights guide our living and behavior. Cox and Pawar (2006) note that, in very

basic terms, conceptions of human rights set out both how people should treat one another (as individuals, groups, or collectives) and how they should relate to nature. For important discussions on human rights as a guide to development generally, see U.N. Development Programme (UNDP, 2000) and Uvin (2004).

The Ecological Perspective

This perspective focuses on the natural environment, without which we cannot survive. It has been delineated through four dimensions, with the first dimension specified as holism and unity, expressing the assumption that humankind and nature are inherently interconnected, with a oneness or unity between them. In contrast, the second dimension focuses on the diversity of the natural environment in terms of flora and fauna, and stresses the importance of maintaining biodiversity. The third dimension focuses on maintaining equilibrium within the context of unity and diversity. In many respects, nature balances itself, although such natural balancing is often disturbed by human interference. Thus, the fourth dimension focuses on sustainability; the dangers of exhausting land, water, vegetation and species, mineral, and other stocks are very real in many parts of the globe, and only an active concern with sustainability will result in the careful management of all natural resources (see Chapter 9). A major body of research documenting climate change and mitigation and adaptation strategies is relevant and documented in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Reports (see Allison et al., 2009).

The Social Development Perspective

This perspective flows from the logic of a people-centered approach to development. Social development signifies the development of society as a whole, in all its complexity and with all its dimensions (Midgley, 1995; Midgley & Conley, 2010). Four dimensions are combined in this perspective, as social development is value based, proactive in intervention, multidimensional, and multileveled.

The value base of social development stems from the people-centred goal embodied in the term *human development*, which is at the heart of social development (see Chapter 8 in this volume). The UNDP (1993) maintains that development should be “of the people, by the people and for the people” (p. 3). In another example, Todaro and Smith (2003) suggest three core values: “1. sustenance—the ability to meet basic needs; 2. self-esteem—to be a person; and 3. freedom from servitude—to be able to choose” (pp. 21–22).

Proactive intervention connotes a developmental approach and intervention that seeks to enhance the well-being of some or all sections of the population. Multidimensionality is understood in terms of various sectors—economic, social, political, cultural, legal, and ecological aspects of a society’s life—and of social structures, social relations, social processes, and social values. This concept indicates that practitioners in social development need to think in broad multidimensional and societal terms, regardless of where their specific actions are being directed at any point in time. The final dimension suggests that social development needs to be implemented at multiple levels in terms of the local, regional, national or state, and global levels, and in terms of the individual, family, and community sectors, the civil society sector, the corporate sector, and the institutional sector of a state or nation.

Figure 30.2 illustrates the respective dimensions of the integrated perspectives approach and depicts how these perspectives are mutually connected, reinforce, and complement each other, and how they comprehensively contribute to international social work/community practice, in terms of analyses of issues and action. Any of the perspectives alone would constitute an insufficient guide to international social work/community practice. In essence,

- the global perspective represents the overall context,
- the human rights perspective the value base,
- the ecological perspective the essential link between humanity and nature, and
- the social development perspective the overall guide to action or sense of direction underpinning action.

For international community practice, the integrated perspectives approach can be employed as

- a tool for analysis of aspects of practice in multiple approaches,
- an approach to determining causation and consequences of past events,
- a model for identifying possible responses and their consequences, and
- an overview of the actual intervention process.

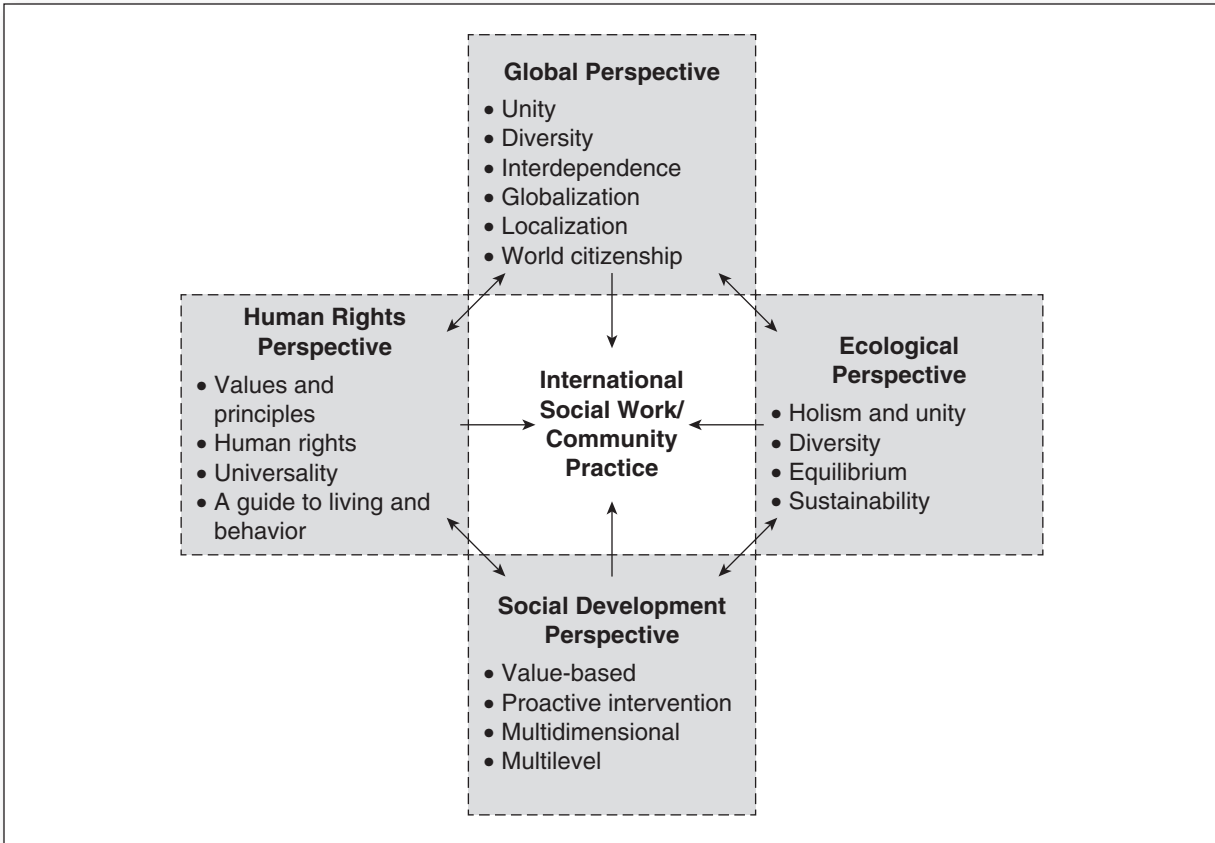
THE LOCAL–GLOBAL CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PRACTICE

This section briefly introduces the global social problems context and the complex organizational context of practice that every international community practitioner needs to understand. What are global social problems? The list is long and will vary depending on specific interests and perceptions. It includes poverty; unemployment; the plight of children, women, and the growing number of elderly; conflict and war and their consequences; natural disasters and ecological degradation; refugees; displacement and the forced migration of people; a range of health concerns; and so on. For this chapter, we will examine a few central issues: poverty, conflict and post-conflict situations, refugees and other displaced people, and vulnerable population groups. While gaining familiarity with these problem areas, international community practitioners need to consider the contexts of problems and appropriate courses of action, strategies, and needed policies to promote effective work in specified areas.

Neglect of Local-Level Development

To gain a better understanding of global problems, international community practitioners should consider local problems and local context, as most global problems appear to emanate from local contexts. From this perspective, a major global problem is the neglect of the local development of villages, communities, and rural and remote areas in most parts of the world (Pawar & Cox, 2010). Residents of these areas

Figure 30.2 Dimensions of the Integrated Perspectives Approach for International Social Work/Community Practice



Source: Adapted from Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 38).

often face extreme poverty and experience difficulty in meeting basic needs. According to the United Nations, national development plans and programs often bypass isolated areas, particularly in the 48 least-developed countries. Of these, 33 are in Africa, 14 are in Asia and the Pacific, and 1 is in Latin America (U.N. High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States [UN-OHRLLS], 2011). For example, least-developed countries in Africa include Burundi, Congo, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, and Sudan, and those in Asia and the Pacific include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and Yemen (view the full list at <http://www.unohrlls.org/en/ldc/25/>).

By analyzing social indicators, including life expectancy, literacy, education, and standard of living, the UNDP's Human Development Index shows that 42 countries have low human development ratings (UNDP, 2010), many of which are among the least-developed countries. Reflection on local problems in these countries and their relation to global problems emphasizes why community practice needs to be initiated at both local and global levels. Most of the least-developed countries are characterized by a persistently high level of poverty, a large rural-based population, an economy heavily dependent on agriculture, and the lack of capacities required for economic growth. These problems are frequently compounded by poor infrastructure; vulnerability

and acute susceptibility to external economic shocks, natural and man-made disasters, and communicable diseases; a high level of undernourishment; and a significant resources gap (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations [FAO], 2003; UNDP, 2005; UN-OHRLS, 2011). The overall neglect of local development and the related persistence of poverty is the major global problem today; other problems are connected to this neglect. Therefore, international community practice needs to focus at the local level.

Poverty

Undoubtedly, poverty is the No. 1 global problem today (Hulme, 2010). In the midst of some nations' affluence and abundant resources, more than a billion people survive in extreme poverty (Collier, 2011). Reducing poverty has been on the international agenda for many decades, but in qualitative terms little has been achieved. The FAO estimates that in 2008 the number of undernourished people was as high as 915 million—and exceeded 1 billion in 2009. Worldwide, about 25% of infants and children are underweight due to a lack of quality food (U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UNDESA], 2010).

Except for a few countries (primarily in East Asia) poverty levels have declined very little and very slowly by any measures, with the gap between the rich and poor widening. The slowing of poverty reduction has also been attributed to neglect of agriculture in the Asia-Pacific region (U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific [ESCAP], 2008). *The Millennium Development Goals Report* (UNDESA, 2010) states that “an estimated 1.4 billion people were still living in extreme poverty in 2005” (p. 4). Moreover, the effects of the global financial crisis are likely to persist, with poverty rates slightly higher in 2015, and even beyond to 2020, than they would have been had the world economy grown steadily at its precrisis pace (UNDESA, 2010).

More than half the people in sub-Saharan Africa and about two fifths of people in Southern Asia live on less than \$1.25 per day. An analysis using the

Multidimensional Poverty Index shows that about 1.7 billion people from 104 countries—representing a third of their entire population—live in multidimensional poverty. The analysis further shows that half the world's poor live in South Asia (51%, or 844 million people) and one quarter in Africa (28%, or 458 million). Despite economic growth, there are more poor people in eight Indian states alone (421 million in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal) than in the 26 poorest African countries combined (410 million). Niger has the greatest intensity and incidence of poverty, with 93% of the population classified as poor. Nairobi has the same level of poverty as the Dominican Republic, whereas Kenya's rural northeast is poorer than Niger (UNDP, 2010). This suggests that rural poverty remains stubbornly high and that funds, along with governmental and nongovernmental organisation (NGO) investments, are needed to promote global and local programs and strategies to reduce poverty.

Conflict and Post-Conflict Rebuilding

Conflict and violence inevitably cause loss of life, hamper development, and devastate civic institutions and societies. These destructive forces consume scarce resources and divert developmental resources to defensive and offensive activities. Global poverty and extreme deprivation are antithetical to peace—as Mahatma Gandhi once said, poverty is a form of violence. Conflicts are broadly classified into interstate and intrastate, which may include civil war, communal clashes, intergroup fighting, political violence (organized armed violence by the state against civilians), and terrorism (Hazen, 2008). From 2000 to 2009, only 3 of the total 30 major armed conflicts were interstate, though many armed conflicts are international to some extent due to their engagement in international trade in drugs, diamonds, and coltan (Bray, 2005). The BBC News (2011) website reports that every minute two people are killed around the world in conflicts. In 2009, 17 major armed conflicts were active in 16 locations around the world. These included four countries in Africa (Rwanda, Somalia,

Sudan, and Uganda), two in the Americas (Colombia and Peru, while the United States was involved in two wars outside its territory), seven in Asia (Afghanistan, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Mindanao, and Sri Lanka), and three in the Middle East (Iraq, Israel, and Turkey) (Harbon & Wallensteen, 2010). In addition, the BBC list includes Chechnya, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Laos, Nagorno Karabakh, and Nepal. Further conflicts in Libya and Syria in 2011 may also be added to the list.

While the historical context and causes of conflict and violence differ from one country to another, some common denominators for conflicts are claims and counterclaims over disputed territories; political and government control issues; political rights; extreme suppression by ruling elites; discriminatory policies and practices against minority racial, ethnic, and religious groups; corrupt governments (Hazen, 2008); and an unwillingness to share power and see the growth and development of traditionally disadvantaged groups (Pawar, 2010a).

Post-conflict conditions call for much rebuilding and reintegration work, and international community practice is crucial for this (Gray & Mitchell, 2007). An evaluation report by the Operations Evaluation Department of the World Bank states:

The explosion of civil conflicts in the post-Cold War world has tested the World Bank's ability to address unprecedented devastation of human and social capital. Since 1980, the volume of Bank lending to post-conflict countries has increased over 800 per cent, to US \$6.2 billion, and touched every region and economic sector. (Kreimer, Eriksson, Muscat, Arnold, & Scott, 1998)

Alongside post-conflict institutional and infrastructure rebuilding, the rebuilding of personal and family lives, as well as of communities, is equally important.

Refugees and Other Displaced People

The global problem of refugees and displaced people is partly due to ongoing conflict and poverty in many countries. According to the *U.N. Convention*

and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (UNHCR, 1951/1967),

The term refugee shall apply to any person who . . . , owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

A core problem with this definition is that it excludes internally displaced people. Cox and Pawar (2006) state:

Forced migration includes migration situations where a significant force, political, economic or social in nature, is exerted on people to leave their habitual place of residence, in circumstances often of extreme stress, resulting in departure for a comparatively unknown destination and under conditions of travel and entry that frequently offer little if any security to those migrating. (p. 269)

Displaced people can be either in their own country or another, and they can be asylum seekers or refugees (for details, see Cox & Pawar, 2006, Figure 11.1, p. 271). According to the 2009 global trends report (U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2010b), forcibly displaced people in the world numbered more than 43.3 million—the highest number of people uprooted by conflict and persecution since the mid-1990s. Of these, 15.2 million were refugees. The numbers of internally displaced persons grew by 4% to 27.1 million.

Of the three policy measures—repatriation, local integration, and resettlement in third countries—repatriation is given a greater emphasis. However, in 2009, the total number of people repatriated was significantly low (only 251,000), whereas in the past decade around 1 million people per year were repatriated. Ongoing and unresolved conflicts in Afghanistan, Somalia, and Democratic Republic of the Congo, and stagnated situations in Sudan and

Iraq, significantly reduced the chances of repatriation (UNHCR, 2010a). About 5.5 million refugees were in protracted situations and under UNHCR care. About 6.6 million to 12 million people had become stateless. The report also indicated that the number of new individual asylum claims worldwide grew to nearly 1 million, with South Africa receiving more than 222,000 new claims last year, making it the single largest asylum destination in the world. At the end of 2009, 112,400 refugees were admitted for resettlement by 19 countries, including the United States (79,900), Canada (12,500), and Australia (11,100). The main refugee groups resettled in 2009 were from Myanmar (24,800), Iraq (23,000), Bhutan (17,500), and Somalia (5,500). An important new trend is the increasing number of refugees living in cities of the developing world. This trend challenges the common notion that refugees are inundating industrialized developed nations.

In addition to the above displaced population, it is also important to consider people displaced due to national development projects or natural disasters, as well as voluntary migrants caught up in a range of exploitative situations.

Specific Vulnerable Populations

According to the UNDP (1997), “vulnerability has two faces: external exposure to shocks, stress and risk; and internal defencelessness, a lack of means to cope without suffering damaging loss” (p. 12). Often, such populations are also marginalized and include children—street children, child laborers, child soldiers, trafficked children, children with AIDS, orphans—indigenous minorities, the mentally ill, the disabled and the elderly, youth, and women. In many situations, they are dependent, exploited, and oppressed to different degrees and in different contexts. These populations are at great risk in terms of health, often have little education, and most often suffer poverty. Their loss of family, friends, and support networks may result in an endangered sense of identity (Cox & Pawar, 2006). Their situation is often intensely precarious in the least-developed countries, conflict and warzone regions, and in natural disasters. These groups form an important part of

the global problems context, and their rights, needs, and problems provide ample scope for international community practice at local and global levels.

Organizational Context

The organizational context of international community practice is complex and includes a range of international government and nongovernment organizations. Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 55) list the main categories of organizations as follows:

1. National governments and the agencies they establish for international work (e.g., foreign aid departments, bilateral arrangements, U.S. Agency for International Development, Australian Agency for International Development, U.K. Department for International Development).
2. Intergovernmental agencies established by groups of nations, including regional associations (such as the European Union, African Union, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, Arab League, and Association of South East Asian Nations).
3. The U.N. system established and supported by the great majority of states (U.N. Security Council and its Economic and Social Council; the World Trade Organization and independent institutions—the World Bank and International Monetary Fund). According to its Charter, the United Nations tries to promote
 - a. higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development;
 - b. solutions to international economic, social, health, and related problems, and international cultural and educational cooperation; and
 - c. universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

Many U.N. agencies work toward achieving these objectives. These agencies are the UNDP, World Food Programme, World Health Organisation, U.N. Environmental Programme, U.N. Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNHCR, Human Rights Commission, Commission for Social Development, FAO, U.N. Children’s Fund, ESCAP, and the U.N. Centre for Human Settlements.

- d. Corporations, especially the transnational or multinational ones.
- e. NGOs operating internationally (e.g., Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, Oxfam, Community Aid Abroad, Action Aid, World Vision).
- f. Other organs of global civil society, such as social movements, labour movements, religious movements, and cultural associations.

In addition, some professional associations have their own international bodies, which also form part of the organization context (in social work, for example, the International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Federation of Social Workers, International Council on Social Welfare, International Consortium for Social Development, and the Katherine Kendall Institute of International Social Work as part of the Council on Social Work Education in the United States). Some of these organizations have consultative status with the U.N. system and engage in international activities according to their aims and objectives.

This listing cannot convey the convoluted connections among these organizations and the interorganizational problems related to conflicting methods of operation, internal bureaucratic problems, political pressures and issues related to the dominance of the North versus the South, and ongoing issues of funding cuts. Many of these organizations—for example, the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization—come under considerable criticism, and some of their policies and programs have been resented. Hence, examining them with an integrated perspective framework is important. Having an understanding of organisational and interorganizational relations is important, because these contexts shape methods of work and opportunities for international community practice.

Basic Programs and Strategies for International Community Practice

Programs and strategies may be delineated into two types. First, irrespective of the problem context, whether it is local-level development, poverty,

conflict, or refugees, there are certain basic programs and strategies that can be effectively employed across any of the problem contexts. Second, specific problem-focused programs and strategies can be designed to dovetail with the context of a specific problem. Six essential strategies for international community practice are empowerment, capacity building, self-help and self-reliance, enhancing social integration or social cohesion, income generation, and community development.

1. *Empowerment*: An empowerment strategy is important because individuals, groups, or communities often lack power or control over their circumstances and alone are not able to change those circumstances (see Freire, 1972). Most often intervention strategies need to focus at multiple levels—individual, family, group, community, and structural. Community practitioners need to examine any practice strategies to ascertain risks of disempowering vulnerable people and determine ways to maximize empowerment efforts. For example, Lee (2001, pp. 402–403) suggests three empowerment processes that are useful for both individual and structural issues and for liberation in the face of oppression: consciousness raising; empowering group process; and the process of praxis—action-reflection-action.

2. *Capacity building*: Capacity building is the essence of community practice and has several connotations and levels. Yadama and Dauti (2010) identified three variations in capacity building focus: capacity building as a pathway to economic growth, capacity building as a pro-poor approach, and capacity building as a community-driven approach. Community practitioners can engage in capacity building at the individual, group and community, or systems and organisations level. At whatever level they engage, they first need to assess and then develop human capacities. At the individual level, this may include building confidence, self-esteem, awareness, literacy skills, basic education, specific knowledge, and vocational skills. By assessing the group and community-level capacity, community practitioners focus on building group/community cohesion and identity, participation, local leadership, organizational structures, resources, external linkages (Laverack, 2005,

2006), and community-based organisations. At the systems and organisational level, practitioners must understand the objectives and goals of organizations, operational and delivery issues, and barriers to processes and outcomes, and, accordingly, mobilize both internal and external resources to strengthen systems and organisations.

3. *Self-help and self-reliance*: The effective implementation of the strategies noted paves the way for self-help and self-reliance, which are closely connected. The self-help group (SHG) is a form of community-based or peoples' organizational through which a small number of people come together, establish norms, stay together, and work toward shared goals. They engage in mutually agreed, need-based cultural, social, economic, or political activities to improve their own standard of living as well as that of their communities. SHGs can be effectively used for a range of community development activities across health, education, and other sectors; they have become very popular in promoting microcredit and asset-development schemes. These include small economic enterprises that directly benefit individual members of the SHGs by lifting their income levels, which in turn positively impacts (though gradually) other aspects of life such as health, education, and housing, with long-term goals of lifting people out of poverty, improving their standard of living, and making them self-reliant. A range of social group work skills can be employed to form and activate self-help groups and build self-reliance and confidence in local capacities, and these can foster community development and promote relations with useful external agencies.

4. *Enhancing social integration or social cohesion*: This is an important strategy for addressing the global problems context presented above, particularly for the extremely poor, the displaced, refugees, and post-conflict communities. Social cohesion requires community practitioners to act both at the macro and micro levels. Cox and Pawar (2006) suggest seven key strategies for achieving social cohesion:

- A buoyant economy
- National identity and citizenship campaigns
- Antidiscrimination legislation and policy arrangements

- Promotion of a multicultural society
- Participatory democracy
- Local-level applications of the above strategies
- Mediation and reconciliation strategies

5. *Income generation*: As a consequence of modernization, industrialization, and globalization, cash income has become increasingly important both in developed and developing countries, particularly in subsistence economies. Income security enhances inclusion and well-being in many respects. Community practitioners can employ the following key strategies for income generation: appropriate training and education to assist in establishing income-generating enterprises; implementing micro-credit, people's banks, and asset-development programs; and encouraging ongoing community collaboration and collective action.

The first strategy may include providing knowledge about improved agriculture practices and high yields, local handicrafts, marketing, etc. Second, for landless laborers, credit schemes are important because they usually are not able to attain credit. Here the main focus should be on how poor people can have easy access to credit without asset requirements. Third, depending on the community need and potential, it is important to facilitate microenterprises for the benefit of local communities. Along with credit, poor people are likely to need technical know-how and appropriate external linkages to ensure microenterprises are successful. Finally, one of the important roles of community practitioners is organizing collective action to address common issues of the community as determined by community members.

6. *Community development*: Community development processes form a broad umbrella and embrace multiple strategies. Cox and Pawar (2006) have recommended four key strategies to involve people in community development:

- Cultivate desire and commitment to change.
- Identify the marginalized people within a community.
- Employ processes of empowerment, participation, and building local organizations.
- Work within the wider context of cultural and political realities.

PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

In response to the great need for grassroots development across many nations, international community practitioners need to consider a comprehensive local-level social development approach that encompasses nine dimensions—cultural, political,

economic, ecological, education, health, housing, equity groups, and citizens—and their institutions within the integrated perspectives framework (see Pawar & Cox, 2010, Chapters 2 and 3; see also Midgley & Conley, 2010). Multiple strategies and programs including these identified by Cox and Pawar (2006) must be employed to make progress in all dimensions of the local community.

LOCAL-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT: PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

- Basic literacy courses
- Primary school education
- Basic health care
- Adult education, basic training, and people's capacity building
- Awareness raising and empowerment
- Local income-generation programs (includes microenterprise schemes)
- Credit schemes and people's banks
- Community-based welfare programs
- Self-help groups and promotion of self-reliance
- Collective responses to specific situations
- Sustaining local-level ecosystems
- Leadership development
- Local organization and institution promotion and capacity building
- Linking local organizations to government agencies and international structures
- Comprehensive community development programs

The following case example illustrates the use of several of these strategies:

LOCAL-LEVEL COMMUNITY PRACTICE AND DEVELOPMENT AT RALEGAN SIDDHI, INDIA

Mr. Anna Hazare, then a common man committed to village development, initially sacrificed his own resources to renovate a temple. That renovation resulted in mobilizing voluntary labour from adults and youth and enabling their access to government institutions at *taluka* (the government's administrative office base between the village and district) and at district levels to understand and disseminate the government's schemes for development of villages. By engaging local people, several community-based organizations were formed (e.g., The Sant Yadav Baba Education Society, the Yadav Baba Milk Producers' Association, several women's groups, a credit society, several committees). All important issues were discussed and decisions were and are taken at the village assembly (*Gram Sabha*), and tasks were assigned to members and groups by consensus. By combining the villagers' voluntary labour

(Continued)

(Continued)

and government schemes, several watersheds were developed to conserve water, soil, and vegetation. This participatory natural resource management significantly improved agricultural production. Earlier water was not sufficient for 150 acres of land, but now more than 1,500 acres of land received sufficient water for cultivating two crops. The produce increased from six- to eightfold. Previously, 85% of people did not harvest sufficient grains. Now there is an 85% increase in the output, ending the necessity of buying grain from outside. Milk production increased from 300 litres to 3,000 litres per day. Per capita income increased from Rupees 200 to 2,000. A nonagriculture cooperative bank was established without the help of any financial institution.

Before this development, there was a school up to year 4, but now education is available up to year 12. Many girls have been able to access education, and some have become teachers. Several school buildings and hostels have been built by mobilizing villagers' voluntary labour and support. By imparting health education and by developing healthy practices (clean house, water, clothes, environment, and personal hygiene), the health status of villagers has been significantly improved. "In the last 20 years, two or three doctors have abandoned their practice due to lack of patients." Without any government funding and through community participation, a piped water system was developed for household water consumption. A grain bank now operates to help those in need. The villagers have also contributed to cultural development by instilling a sense of discipline, celebrating the village birthday and honouring achievers and newcomers, arranging low-cost community marriages, wiping out blind-faith practices, and almost eliminating many undesirable habits (alcohol, tobacco, etc.). Except for Indian government schemes, no other outside aid was used. In fact, a donor's cheque was once returned. All community development activities have been continued, governed, and managed by community people themselves, though the success of this village development has been attributed to the committed leadership of Mr. Anna Hazare, who has successfully contributed to the realisation of human rights, self-reliance, self-determination, and participation of villagers in their own and the community's development. This is a good example of community practice and comprehensive social development at the local level.

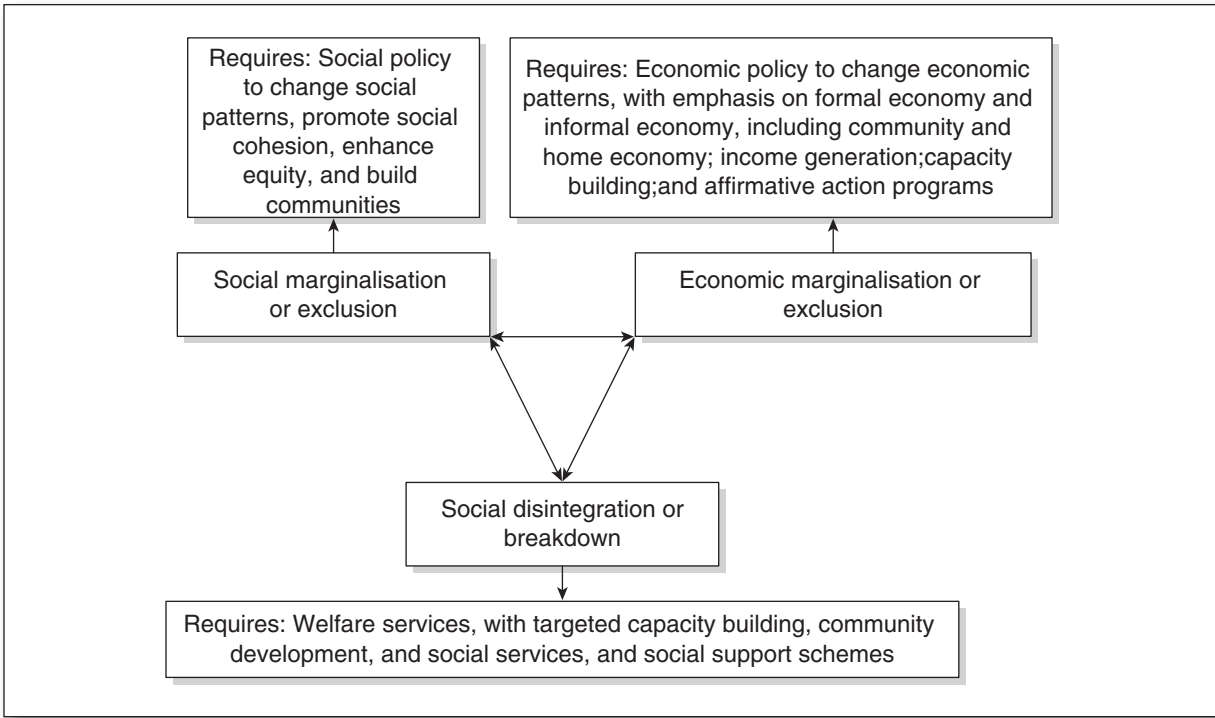
Sources: Hazare (2003); Pawar (2010a); personal communication, December 14, 2008.

Strategies and Programs for Poverty Alleviation

Dealing with the complexity of poverty requires programs and strategies from multiple sectors and levels, and local-level interventions are critical. A broad poverty alleviation model may be followed to develop effective programs and strategies to deliver welfare services, build capacity, develop local infrastructure, provide social support, and create socio-economic and political opportunities. Figure 30.3 presents a poverty alleviation model that can be adapted to diverse local contexts. In this work, it is important that community practitioners follow basic principles such as participation, self-reliance, sustainability, and empowerment, along with the

basic strategies presented above, and further follow certain basic processes involving small-cell formation (for people to discuss, critically examine their situation, and develop critical consciousness), an action focus (to ensure that awareness leads to action), the development of people's organizations, adult learning, and a team approach. Depending on the community context, such processes can create community-based social services (such as health clinics, primary schools, child-care centers, and playgrounds) and mobilize government and nongovernment welfare services for specific groups such as disabled people and unemployed youth to increase their opportunities and provide pathways out of poverty. The case study presented above provides examples of these programs and strategies.

Figure 30.3 A Model for Poverty Alleviation



Source: Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 195).

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

Post-conflict reconstruction is a challenging field for community practitioners and more so if they are from another country. Community practice approaches are needed to prevent further conflict, to promote peace, and to develop or rebuild basic infrastructure, harmonious networks, and participation in governance issues. In post-conflict situations, most community practice approaches are directed toward peace building as a foundation for further development. Toward this end, it is important to coordinate work on basic needs, practicing people-centered approaches, and building democracy (O'Brien, 2005). Adapting Lederach's (1997, cited in O'Brien, 2005) work that draws on experiences from South Africa and Northern Ireland,

O'Brien further suggests the application of a multi-track approach that includes three levels of leaders and three levels of strategies for practicing peace building and community development. The first track targets the top leadership (political and military leaders) and focuses on strategic high-level negotiations with them by the elite group. In the second track, middle-level leaders (religious, academic, business, and NGO) are identified and involved in problem-solving groups/workshops and peace commissions. The third track focuses on grassroots leaders (local leaders, community developers, and leaders of indigenous NGOs) and engages them in conflict resolution skills training and work with local peace groups. Timing is the most important factor in intervening in a post-conflict situation, and it is important to ensure that each track influences the others.

For community practitioners working in post-conflict situations, Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 244) have suggested three categories of strategies that strengthen people's capacities, rebuild communities and civil society, and facilitate income-generation initiatives. Most important, as people experience conflict, war and trauma, deprivation, and loss of meaning and control, community practitioners need to arrange psychosocial programs involving therapies, reconciliation and conflict resolution approaches, and traditional healers and local religious organisations. Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 254) recommend the following seven key strategies for community rebuilding:

- Take steps to ensure communities are active participants in as many of the reconstruction programs as possible.
- Develop a community-based component within as many reconstruction programs as possible.
- Ensure that all steps possible are taken to facilitate the healing of people and communities.
- Be aware of what active communities are doing, acknowledge their actions, and incorporate them within wider plans wherever possible.
- Be aware of which communities are inactive, assess reasons, and encourage NGOs to implement appropriate programs to redress such situations.
- Direct some basic resources to communities in need of rebuilding, and facilitate their involvement in their own rebuilding.
- Encourage the organization of training workshops for local leaders on community rebuilding, including, as appropriate, credit schemes, income-generation opportunities, and the formation of local organizations.

For case examples, see Cox and Pawar (2006, Chapter 10).

PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES FOR REFUGEES AND OTHER DISPLACED PEOPLE

Under any forced migration situation, generally peoples' vulnerability and sense of helplessness increases, particularly that of children, women, the

elderly, and the disabled. Community practitioners need to plan a range of programs and strategies and employ them according to the needs, issues, and circumstances of individuals, families, and groups in the context of their current location (for example, refugee camps), place of origin, and future destination, in terms of returning to the place of origin or settling in a second location or country or even a third country. Time between forced displacement under desperate circumstances and final settlement can be long, and complex circumstances vary significantly. To respond effectively to a range of forced migration situations, Cox and Pawar (2006, p. 293) have suggested the following general and specific programs, listed in Table 30.1.

Under each of these categories, further programs and strategies can be developed and employed to work effectively with people. As the wide range of programs in the table suggests, community practitioners can play important roles in mitigating the problems of refugees and other displaced population groups.

CONCLUSION

The scope of international community practice is broad, and the integrated perspectives approach provides a useful framework for analysis of local-global issues and for action at all levels. This chapter has introduced important issues for international community practitioners, including frequent neglect of local-level development—particularly in least-developed countries—and needs for interventions in situations of extreme poverty, conflict and post-conflict reconstruction, services for refugees and displaced people, and for specific vulnerable populations. Many international organisations are engaged in addressing these issues, and, taken together, their organizational context is complex and some of their actions are controversial. Around these core issues, the chapter has delineated general and specific strategies and programs found useful by community practitioners.

The need for and challenges of international community practice are many—a fact that makes this work interesting and engaging. The magnitude of the

Table 30.1 General Programs and Specific Areas’ Programs in Forced Migration Situations

<i>General Programs</i>	<i>Specific Areas Programs</i>
<i>Pertaining to prevailing conditions</i>	<i>Pertaining to families and family members</i>
Advocacy programs Outreach programs Humanitarian aid programs Health programs Programs designed to humanize existing conditions	Children’s education and psychosocial programs Services for refugee women Family services programs Family reunion programs Inter-country casework programs
<i>Pertaining to people’s past experiences</i>	<i>Pertaining to specific needs</i>
Trauma counseling programs Rehabilitation programs Support programs Social and recreational programs	Repatriation and reintegration programs Integration programs Human rights programs Legal-oriented programs
<i>Pertaining to group situations</i>	
Self-help programs Community building programs Community relations programs	
<i>Pertaining to future needs</i>	
Education programs Skills development and capacity building programs Income-generation programs	

Source: Cox and Pawar, 2006.

local–global issues and the need for both immediate responses to crises and long-term work for problem alleviation require knowledge and strong commitment from workers. In this rapidly globalizing world village, engaging in community practice without compromising diversity is another important challenge. Human diversity is a resource that contributes to global richness and makes all our lives better; however, within and across nations there are some elements and forces that are intolerant, disrespect people or groups they view as “different,” and actively work to reduce opportunity and prevent social and economic progress of marginalized groups (Ledwith & Asgill, 2007). Working to facilitate intercultural communication and multicultural programs that build understanding and collaboration is an increasingly important responsibility for international community practitioners (Chambers, 2005; Gutiérrez, Zuniga, & Lum, 2004; Hessle, 2007).

There is a personnel shortage in the field of international community practice, and more well-trained and committed people are needed. Before venturing into international community practice, it is very important to understand the challenges and adequately prepare to take on the range of roles needed in specific areas. Although distinctions between West and East, North and South, and developed and developing status of nations are blurring, imperialistic attitudes remain (Hoogvelt, 2007). In communities it is important to take a “learning approach” rather than a “giving” or “expert” stance. Social/welfare/human-services/development workers are among the many professionals engaged in international community practice. It is critical to develop the skills of harmoniously working within multidisciplinary teams and multifaith and multicultural communities (see Chapters 19 and 20 in this volume).

AUTHOR'S NOTE

It is important to qualify the contents of this chapter and state its limitations. Much of the content of this chapter builds from an international social work text by Cox and Pawar (2006), and I am grateful to Professor David Cox for his ideas and his consent for me to write this chapter. Many topics, issues, and strategies in this chapter are not detailed to the extent needed because of space constraints. Readers who would like to know more may go to the Cox and Pawar (2006) text. Also, the chapter covers neither all important global issues nor all successful strategies and programs. Despite these limitations, we believe that it has achieved its objectives and will help readers move into international community practice.

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Women and Leadership in Development, Planning, Organizing, and Social Change

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Over the past two centuries, increasing advocacy efforts by women have advanced women's status in numerous areas of the world. These efforts have been diverse, often originating through active struggle to achieve access to education, rights to participate in public life, and opportunities to improve their lives, the lives of their children, and the well-being of their communities. Necessary acts of resistance, advocacy, and civil disobedience have eroded the force of patriarchy, which has traditionally protected the power of men over the lives and opportunities of women. Progress for women has varied depending on many factors, including women's ethnicity, socioeconomic status, caste, location, and the impact of violent conflicts within their nations. Increasingly, women have won the right to vote, and, in nations as diverse as South Africa, Mongolia, and Sweden, a percentage of parliamentary seats are designated for women. Despite these changes, there is often great distance between the enactment of progressive laws and the actual attainment of rights and opportunities.

Since its 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—which had strong

support from women leaders, including Eleanor Roosevelt—the United Nations, with ongoing pressure from women's movements, has come to recognize rights and promote opportunities for women across the world. The U.N. Decade for Women launched during the first World Conference of Women in Mexico City, concluded in 1985 in Nairobi, Kenya. This conference took place alongside an international NGO (nongovernmental organization) forum that gathered more than 14,000 women from 150 countries (Petchesky, 2003) and focused global attention on women's rights and women's issues. That historic moment, Petchesky (2003) affirms, “marks the foundation of a truly global women's movement” (p. 32).

The United Nations' 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development brought together world leaders, NGO representatives, and U.N. agencies in a major step toward recognizing and codifying the importance of actively integrating women's well-being into broader development strategies. The conference's final report states: “Experience shows that population and development programs are most efficient when steps have

simultaneously been taken to improve the status of women” (United Nations, 1995, p. 22). Given the correlation between women’s conditions and the well-being of their families (see Sen, 1999), the report determined that it was imperative for development goals and projects to focus on building the active participation of women, supporting their decision-making and income-earning capacities. The conference concluded that women’s economic independence, civic involvement, and decision making in all spheres—particularly sexuality and reproduction—were building blocks for the emergence and progress of women’s leadership, defined by their own experiences and perceptions (Stead & Elliott, 2009, p. 9).

This chapter focuses on women’s leadership in community organizing, development, planning, and progressive social change across continents. Building from discussion of women’s rights—particularly reproductive rights, which are essential for women’s empowerment and full participation in society—case examples in each section illustrate that similar struggles and achievements by women engaged in community practice are found in countries across the globe. Before summarizing women’s leadership in major approaches to community practice, we briefly describe the evolution of women’s roles—from exclusion to increasing inclusion—in different models of development. We discuss how the recent formulation of the Gender and Development (GAD) model creates a gender-based perspective on leadership, which is fundamental to understanding women’s progress as well as the obstacles they face in their respective cultures and communities. Finally, women’s leadership and contributions are examined through human, social development, and feminist theories.

The economic models employed by nations govern their definitions and shape their efforts to improve the well-being of their populations. Congruent with this book’s presentation of community practice models and development theory (see also Chapters 8, 9, and 10), the concepts of development that guide our discussion of women’s leadership follow the central principles of Amartya Sen’s (1999) human development theory and feminist

theory focused on development. While we focus on examples of women-led development, we bear in mind the inevitable political nature of development (Leftwich, 2000), which shapes policies and programs affecting the status and opportunities of women and girls (Escobar, 1995).

In earlier international development models, women were ignored, discounted, or considered passive recipients. These approaches reflected national policies that excluded women from planning and decision making (Escobar, 1995; Moser, 1993; Sittirak, 1998). Elson (1995) further illuminates external forces of international organizations and Western economic institutions that have influenced participation and the range of roles available to women. Over time, and with major advocacy efforts for women’s inclusion, these roles have evolved from total disregard of women, through active discrimination, to empowerment of women, as illustrated below:

- “The invisible woman: man is the pattern of society.” This view derives from historical political and religious systems. Population differences are not considered.
- “The mother woman: all women are mothers.” The role of motherhood may be venerated, and programs for mothers are presumed to benefit all women, although women who have no children do not benefit (Moser, 1993).
- “The woman as economic complement.” Women are seen as a “helpmate” to men, and programs are focused on promoting economic sufficiency and diminishing poverty. This model has led women into productive roles that are simply an extension of their work in the domestic sphere, with little profitability (Moser, 1993).
- “Women integrated into productivity as a resource.” With a strong equity and empowerment focus, this approach aims “to empower women through greater self-reliance . . . , and seeks to meet strategic gender needs indirectly through bottom-up mobilization around practical gender needs” (Moser, 1993, p. 74).

These descriptions represent the evolution toward the GAD model, which introduces perspectives that