Shared Learning and Participatory Evaluation: The Systematization Approach to Assess Development Interventions.

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Abstract
The systematization approach is a multi-stakeholder strategy to assess development interventions with emphasis on the lessons learnt. Apart from briefly highlighting systematization roots in Latin America, as well as its similarities with other evaluation streams, the paper concentrates mainly on the concept and methodology of systematization, its scope and limitations. Introducing this endogenous approach from the Latin America region may work as an additional block in building the evaluation field in the region.

Introduction

In the Latin American development field there is a wide range of insufficiently known or properly valued experiences. By applying linear cause-effect logic models, evaluation practice has focused on measuring performance and success in its attempt at demonstrating accountability to external authorities. However, development interventions are multifaceted and complex systems, with different actors, interests and values, developed in turbulent scenarios where many factors shape the outcomes apart from the project. In these contexts, those aspects have rarely been addressed by traditional evaluation practice, which cannot capture and map complex systems dynamics and interdependencies.

For that, it is necessary to include in the evaluation agenda an emphasis on in-depth comprehension of processes and shared learning in order to deeply understand with all stakeholders (including funders) what gets developed and learned as a consequence of

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development interventions. Relatively new for the European context, the Systematization Approach can certainly contribute to this aim.

The adoption of Systematization approach lies in the idea that experiences must be used to generate understanding, and that lessons learned can improve both the ongoing implementation and also contribute to a wider body of knowledge. Learning from action does not happen by accident; it needs to be planned for in project design, in staff job requirements, in the cycle of meetings and reflections, in the general project culture, and so forth (Gujit et al., 2006). Most development interventions are not designed to be action-learning processes. Therefore, the challenge is how to promote, design and conduct learning processes for experiences that were not designed with that purpose in mind. This is the core idea at the heart of using the methodology of systematization, a multi-stakeholder evaluation tool developed in Latin America, that brings together participatory research and evaluation.

According to Carden and Alkin (2012), most of the endogenous evaluation work in developing countries is such that the practical origins are not yet formalized into full prescriptive theory. This might be the case for systematization and its three main roots: (a) the field of Popular or Adults Education, a sort of participatory education born in the 60’s with Paulo Freire’s liberation pedagogy that closely linked education with politics; here systematization was seen as way of reviewing the education practice in order to improve its contents and methodologies; (b) the field of Latin American Social Work during the 70’s, where systematization developed as a way to use field experiences as a source of knowledge about society, with the goal of turning social transformation actions into scientific praxis (Palma, 1972). And (c) in the 80’s, systematization was adopted by NGOs in order to get a better understanding of their development practice, as well as to carry on a bottom-up revision of the theories on which development aid was based (Jara, 2012). These different roots makes systematization one of the methodologies oriented to assess the progress, processes and lesson learnt from development interventions.

In spite of its practical origins and its not quite clear theoretical roots, the systematization approach has many similarities with other evaluation perspectives. This is the case with several systemic approaches to evaluation (Boyd et al., 2007; Hummelbrunner, 2011), oriented to obtain descriptions of complex situations based on multiple stakeholders perspectives; and also concerned in packaging messy solutions in a clear manner that facilitates comprehension, understanding and proactive action. The same can be said about the Documenting Experiences approach (Chavez-Tafuret et al., 2007), understood as a process that seeks to organize the information of a development experience, analyse it in detail in order to understand what has happened, draw conclusions oriented to help generating new knowledge, and present the results in an appealing format.

These approaches are in line with a stream in the evaluation field that has stressed a movement from positivist, hypothetic deductive and more quantitative approaches to other constructivist, interpretative and qualitative perspectives. This stream is interested in overcoming linear cause-effect logic models in order to capture and map complex systems dynamics and interdependencies. Here, the prominence on measurement of performance and success is giving place to an emphasis on the understanding of processes from different perspectives.

The systematization approach matches clearly with these more recent tendencies in the evaluation field. Although a lot of reflection and work has been done in order to formalize its
methodology, and more recently new work has been done in order to clarify its history and roots (Jara, 2010), the systematization dialogue and interaction with other evaluation approaches has been quite scarce.

This paper focuses on the systematization concept, usefulness and methodology, and it is organised in two main sections beyond this introduction: the concept and principles of systematization, and the systematization method. Finally, the paper highlights the relevance of this approach and its usefulness in building the evaluation field in the Latin America region.

**Systematization: a Useful Multi-stakeholder Assessment Tool**

“**Sistematización! What’s that?**” This is a common response on hearing this strange sounding term for a Latin American methodology oriented to critical reflection and shared learning. Translated into English, systematisation, which has its origins in Latin America in the 60s, loosely means the act of organizing something according to a system or a rationale. Through systematisation, the people critically reflect on and make sense of development experiences, turning the lessons we derive from that reflection into new knowledge, that is explicit, which can inform the new round of practice, and be communicated to others who may also benefit (Barnechea-G and Morgan-T, 2007; Jara, 2006).

When thinking on ‘knowledge’ it is necessary to think also on ‘reflection’ and ‘learning’, as both reflection and shared learning represent core concepts in systematization. For this approach, learning is a social and collective process; learning should be focused on practice; learning involves questioning what we know and building new critical knowledge for change; and learning flourishes best in supportive learning environments. Systematization, as a methodology, has all these core elements.

The process of learning and generating new knowledge from the experience is not an individual act. The process of systematization encourages participation by implementing collective reflection on how a shared experience developed. It strengthens the abilities, skills and capacities of the main actors and other stakeholders to look at the evolution of the experience and identify lessons and insights for future interventions.

**Systematization: an Operative Concept**

In general terms, systematization is the participatory and thoughtful process of reflecting about different aspects of a specific project or intervention: its actors, actors’ interaction, outcomes, results, impact, problems, and process. It is a methodology that facilitates the participatory on-going description, analysis and documentation of the processes and results of a development project (Selener, 1996). According to the Fondo Mink’a de Chorlaví (2002), systematization is the process of reconstitution and critical analysis of a development experience, carried out with the active participation of the agents closely involved with it, in order to draw lessons that may make it possible to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of that and other development processes.

For Oscar Jara (2006), systematization involves a critical reconstruction and interpretation of an experience. It is aimed at explaining the logic of the project, the external and internal factors that influenced the experience, and why it had the results it did. For
Morgan and Quiróz (1988) systematization attempts to identify lessons from the experience by describing, organising and analysing the development of an activity in different aspects (such as the theory of change and the project methodology, the institutional, social and historical context, the relationship between local and external social actors) and describing the organization process, including obstacles and facilitators as well as results and impact of the intervention.

In general terms, systematization intends to answer the following questions:

- What was the nature of the project/programme? What was the experience about? Who were the actors? How do they relate to each other?
- What was done, how, why, for what purpose and for whom?
- How did cultural, economic, geographic, institutional and political factors influence the intervention?
- Which expected and unexpected processes and results occurred during the experience?
- What were the results and impacts of the intervention or project and why did they happen?
- What were the problems the project had to face and how they were addressed?
- Which were the factors that facilitated or hindered the achievement of objectives?
- What lessons did the different actors involved in the experience come out with?
- Which lessons can be communicated or taken into account for future experiences?

It is important to recognize that in most of the cases interventions do not happen as planned in the proposal. The path to achieving project outcomes and impacts is not a straight road but a bumpy and turning one; or, as Long and van der Ploeg (1989) put it, “[…] intervention never is a ‘project’ with sharp boundaries in time and space as defined by institutional apparatus of the state or implementing agency”. Thus, the systematisation of our interventions is useful because it allows us to learn from the curves and the bumps on the project road (Schouten, 2007).

As mentioned, multi-stakeholder involvement is crucial in any systematization process, since critical reflection and the identification of lessons cannot be done in isolation. It needs to be done with partners and communities, as they will bring new dimensions and interpretations to what we are learning; they will bring their stories of how they lived the experience that will be, in sum, the story of the project or experience. The story of a project or experience cannot be told by one actor alone, but by all the actors involved. Through the interpretation and the telling of the project’s story, systematization puts the power of the story’s reconstruction on the ones that were involved. This is one of the key contributions and the richness of systematization.

Systematization, as a methodology that proposes shared and participatory group dynamics, creates a space where people can share, confront, and discuss opinions based on mutual trust. While there is no single way of learning, there is a critical engagement in the interpretation of the experience and mutual and collective learning. A multi-stakeholder approach requires that, for instance, the institutional staff may learn with and from other
people (usually poor and excluded people). In this sense, systematization encourages to open the room for all actors be heard and fully represented in the construction of the story. In sum, systematization is a methodology that helps project staff and stakeholders to carefully track meaningful moments and events in the project’s life or experience. It enables reflection and analysis of key moments and events, and allows to put in practise a basic principle of multi-stakeholder assessment, that is, the principle of critical engagement and mutual learning by stimulating and encouraging the reconstruction of the experience and production of new knowledge built on practice and reality.

**Basic Guiding Principles of Systematization**

Based on the brief conceptual framework presented above, the following set of basic principles can be used to guide a systematization process.

- **It is a process of analytical thinking and critical reflection over an experience.** It focuses on what was done, why it was done, why it was done in this specific way, what were the results and impacts, why these results were useful or not, how sustainable the results are and the likelihood of the experience being sustainable and replicable.

- **The purpose is to learn from the successes and failures of interventions.** The conclusions drawn from the experience should contribute to generating new knowledge that could be useful for other interventions.

- **Emphasis is given to the process.** Systematization is a structured and focused way of capturing the process of change that a project aims to bring about, the activities and interactions between stakeholders, the issues and contextual factors. Results and impacts are important, and their analysis is part of the systematization, but they are not the central focus of the analysis. Rather, it is more important to explain ‘why’ certain results were obtained. Systematization tracks the process of an intervention: what happened, how it happened and why it happened.

- **As a systematic and analytical process,** systematization involves organizing information in such a way that different stakeholders have an opportunity to reflect and learn about the process. The whole experience has to be organized by identifying different elements connected with the experience. No only does the project have to be explored but, for instance, the context, project objectives and results, activities, etc. Systematization is a systematic way to reflect, analyse and discover patterns that help or hinder change.

- **The more pluralistic and participatory the process, the better the result.** The systematization should involve as many stakeholders as possible, not only to get different points of view but also to widen the angle of analysis and bring in different dimensions (political, economic, cultural, social, etc.). Knowing that different people have been involved in the experience, and that each one of them would have different viewpoints and interests, it should be expected that there will be different opinions regarding what was done and achieved. As Chavez-Tafur et al. (2007) state, rather than aiming to achieve a consensus, it will be easier to identify lessons learnt and

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3 It could be explored the potential links between systematization and other methodologies adopted in developing countries, as the Most Significant Change approach (Davies and Dart, 2005), and Outcome Mapping (Earl et al., 2001).
generate knowledge if that diversity of opinions is taken into account and it is fully represented.

- **Systematization distinguishes between conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.** A ‘conclusion’ is a synthesis of confirmed facts that relate to a certain situation (e.g. project ‘X’ did not fulfil its objectives). A ‘recommendation’ is a specific idea about how to deal with concrete problems or take advantage of concrete opportunities in a given situation (e.g. in order to improve the quality of water supply, technological innovations should be adopted). Finally, a ‘lesson learned’ is a generalized statement of what is likely to work and/or what has to happen to achieve (or prevent) a certain result (e.g. collective guarantee systems based on group credit have been shown to be an effective instrument to improve repayment rates with poor rural communities in Central America). Systematization focuses on lessons learned.

**How to Systematize an Experience: the methodology**

Recognising that there are various methodological approaches to systematize experiences, this paper introduces a basic ‘method’ that has been applied in different projects and it is based on the authors’ personal experience (Tapella, 2009, 2010; Rodriguez-Bilella and Tapella, 2008) as well as in the work of other authors like Cadena (1987), Morgan and Quiroz (1988), Berdegue et al. (2000), Jara (2012), and Vela (2010).

This approach adopts a multi-stakeholder assessment perspective and involves different inter-linked steps. As shown in Figure Nº 1, the starting point is the selection of a project or experience carried out by a team or group. This step is called identifying the object of study and its main aim is to set the boundaries of the experience to be systematized. The second step concerns the identification of key social actors involved in the experience. In the third step the initial situation of the experience as well as the context are described. Step four is related with identifying the main objectives of the experience and its description. Step five is dedicated to the analysis of the final or current situation. Finally, step six refers to the analysis of the achievements and lessons learned.

These six steps include different aspects that should be documented and analysed during the systematization process by using tools for gathering of data. Some of these tools are: (a) interviews with the people directly involved and other stakeholders, (b) participatory observation, (c) analysis of secondary information, (d) focus group, meetings and workshops, (e) discourse-based valuation, (f) participatory mapping, (g) construction of future scenarios, among others.

1º) **Identification of the object of study**

Since systematization is a process for producing knowledge, it is necessary to define the “object” of knowledge, that is to say, to determine what is going to be systematized. This step helps us to set the boundaries of the experience. As it is quite difficult to systematize the
whole experience, it is needed to define the problem or aspects of the experience to be analysed, highlighting out the most significant aspects for our systematization.

The idea is to first select an experience; it could be the project implementation in itself, a particular moment of the experience like a training activity, a fundraising initiative, a particular sub-project within a programme, a particular methodology that crosscut the whole intervention, etc. Then, it is necessary to define the main items or aspects or parts of that experience that we will be looking at.

2º) Identification of the key actors

People’s participation in experiences and projects is not the same; some have a more direct participation than others, some participate more at the beginning than in the end, etc. As mentioned, systematization is a multi-stakeholder assessment, so it seeks the opinion and points of view of a large number of the actors as all have different visions, opinions, perceptions and interpretations of the experience. As there will not be time to interview all of them, we should try at least to involve the most important actors or those who we know have different points of view and can enrich the reflection.

Once these actors have been identified it is necessary to decide who will be most relevant to be involved in the process. Some of them may be only a source of information for specific aspects, while others should participate in the whole process. It is also necessary to identify a coordinator, someone who will be responsible for coordinating a plan of work and ensuring that the different activities take place, meetings are called, and objectives are achieved. Some questions for this step are:

- Who managed the project and who took the core decisions in respect of the experience?
- Who provided human, material, financial and technical resources?
- Who are the actors involved in the experience? How did they relate to the experience? In which moments?

3º) The initial situation and the context

All experiences and projects have a starting point (an initial situation), in which at least two aspects should be identified: (a) the problem to be addressed by the project or intervention, and (b) an opportunity, that is, the change/s the project wanted to achieve (more employment, less poverty, women integration in decision making process, adoption of a new technology to make agriculture more sustainable, etc). In this step it is necessary to describe the problem and the opportunity or change before the intervention.

There are also external factors that influence the project’s life and are not controlled by the actors. Those are called the context and they are made up of the issues that surround the development of the project. According to Chavez Tafur et al. (2007), these factors can be economic, political, social, geographical, environmental or others (e.g. local election processes taking place in a particular moment, migration trends, drought or heavy rainfall conditions, etc.). For the purpose of the systematization, it is necessary to focus on the factors that have limited the local agency to address the problem and those that contributed to the success. The following questions can guide this step:
What were the historical, social, political and economic contexts in which the experience took place?

How did the context influence the project and the participants? What particularities did the context have that need to be taken into account in the reflection? What was the situation at the beginning of the experience?

What was the institutional context (institution, objectives, scope and organizational structure, human, technical and material resources)?

What was the relationship between the stakeholders and the organization funding the project/experience? How was power exercised among the various stakeholders?

What were the participants’ expectations at the beginning of the experience?

4º) Intentionality and description of the experience

To understand and learn from an intervention, it is necessary to analyze its main purpose, that is, to get a clear idea of what drove the programme or project. It is also necessary to analyse the project, methodology and intervention’s approach. Then it is needed to reconstruct and analyse the experience to get a general picture of the project, the dynamics of its process and implementation and the changes that occurred. This step is closely linked with has been called the building of the program theory, that is, making explicit the underlying assumptions about how particular program or projects should work and then using this theory to guide the evaluation (Funnell and Rogers, 2011).

The intention of the project or program is worked by the identification and analysis of the objectives of the project over the short, medium and long term. The following questions can guide this step:

- What were the changes that the project expected to obtain?
- What were the beliefs about the nature of the problem and the assumptions that guided the project intervention?
- What were the problems prioritized by project participants and why?

Background information on the organization and a general framework of the project or experience will be useful (what the organisation is about, why it is working there, what is the project’s team composition, what is the relationship of the organisation with other actors in the geographical area such as grassroots organisations, government and other local authorities, etc.).

In order to understand the nature and characteristics of the project, many aspects should be integrated in order to describe and analyze how the project was organized and formulated. Some key questions to consider are:

- What was the orientation, approach or strategy followed by the project
- How did the idea of the project come out?
- What methodologies were used to design and formulate the project?
- How did people participate in the identification of the main problems and the formulation of the project?
- What types of activities and strategies were designed to assure the sustainability of the project?

The systematization of an experience is mainly based on the description and analysis of the project’s cycle and life, so the main aim here is to look at and reflect on the experience of
the project’s implementation. This allows for its description and analysis in order to learn from the project’s dynamics and results. In this stage we identify the activities and achievements during the selected period of time. It includes: (a) the ‘components’, the main areas around which the work was organized, the boundaries of the experience to be systematized (step 1); (b) the ‘activities’, a list of the most important activities for each component, indicating the role played by different stakeholders and number of events; (c) the ‘main achievements’, the results in relation to objectives of the project, including people’s different points of view; (d) the ‘difficulties’, all problems or negative factors which affected the implementation of the project as a whole or some of its activities; and (e) the ‘unexpected results’, positive or negative results that were not aimed at the beginning but later on proved to be relevant.

Some questions that may help during this stage are:

✓ What was done (activities)? With what resources and at what cost?
✓ When was it done (organization in time)?
✓ Who did it (the actors)? How did the different actors participate in the process?
✓ What monitoring and evaluation was implemented, and to what extent did it help to improve the project and its results during implementation and in the long run?
✓ How was it done? What were the main methods and tools? Why were those methods and tools chosen and how well did they work? What were the expected and unexpected results? Which external factors influenced the project’s outcomes and impact?
✓ What were the project’s strengths and weaknesses? What were the team’s strengths and weaknesses?
✓ What changes, if any, were introduced during the project’s life in relation to objectives, methodologies, tools and resources? Why?

5) Final or current situation

Although systematization is far from being a results or impact evaluation, in its process it is important to identify, describe and analysis theses aspects in case that the programme was previously assessed with this aim. This mainly serves to later identify which processes leads, facilitates or limits to what results or impacts.

The results of the experience are presented comparing the initial situation with the current or final situation, or the situation ‘with’ and ‘without’ intervention. Positive and negative results should not only be considered regarding project objectives, but also in relation to the process. It is important to highlight both the achievements and the causes and conditions that contributed to them.

Some of the key questions to ask here are:

✓ What can we say about the current situation compared with the initial situation?
✓ What was improved? What did not and why?
✓ What are the tangible and intangible results? For whom?
✓ How do people see or think on the results? What they will do now that the project is over?
6º) Achievements and lessons learned

As it was mentioned before, one of the main purposes of systematization is to produce knowledge based on the experience, so in this step we need to identify the new knowledge that came out of the experience. This knowledge is important for the actors and stakeholders involved, such as the target group, local authorities, government representatives and people from other institutions. This knowledge is also important for other institutions who might eventually implement a similar project in another context or region. Identifying lessons is basically the attempt to scale up the analysis from the immediate context of the project.

Conclusions, lessons and recommendation should be analyzed with the organization that implemented and supported the project and the stakeholders, and the findings of the systematization should also be communicated to those people external to the project. This will bring new insights to others as well as opening space for them to comment on the lessons learned, which will enrich the systematization’s outcomes.

In order to take advantage of the lessons drawn from the experience, the new knowledge has to be properly communicated and socialized by taking in mind the points described in Figure Nº 2.

![Figure Nº 2. Basic aspects to consider when communicating lessons learned](image-url)

As highlighted by Guijt et al. (2006), the following points should be considered when thinking on conclusions, lessons and recommendations.

- It is easier to find ‘conclusions’ and ‘recommendations’ than ‘lessons’.
- To identify ‘lessons learned’ it is necessary to discard some specific features and focus the analysis on underlying logics and ideas.
- Although this makes a considerable demand on the analytical capacity of participants, it is the only way to scale up the analysis from the immediate context of the project.
- Lessons should be relevant knowledge that can be shared among all stakeholders, since they represent generalizations on the main components of the intervention that are common to most projects, leaving out project-specific aspects.
To be sure the lesson is comprehensible for others, it is important to include a description of the context in which the lesson was learned, the topic under study, the project, the group and the audience of the documented experience.

As mentioned, the final stage of the systematization process is not just the action of drawing knowledge from the experience and communicating the lessons learned. This new knowledge needs to be institutionalized and integrated in the life of the organization. This step has many times –like with evaluation in general- been considered with less attention than the previous ones. As we understand this as a serious mistake, we will discuss it with detail below.

**Stakeholders, participation and communication in systematization**

Until now, this paper has introduced the concept and methodology of systematization as a particular multi-stakeholder evaluation approach that basically aims to organise available information about a particular intervention, analyse it in detail in order to understand what has happened, draw conclusions which will help to generate new knowledge, and present and share the results in a chosen format. The intention of this dissemination has to do with making available the main results of the systematization for the key stakeholders involved in the project or program in order to improve future interventions.

As mentioned, the core principle of any multi-stakeholder assessment is ‘participation’. At the time of identifying the stakeholders that should take part in the systematization, all sectors should be contacted, not only programme staff and donors but also local government, other NGOs, academia, community and other sectors or groups that might be interested on the issue. It is quite important to adequately manage people’s expectation from the very beginning, adopting principles of inclusion, transparency, partnership and empowerment (Duraiappah, 2005).

On the other hand, a multi-stakeholder perspective should avoid becoming ‘stakeholderism’, that is, the motion that stakeholders should be there, everywhere, just because. As Leeuw (2001) writes, as danger as no-stakeholders is to have too many stakeholders being involved just because you are in the time of “please, give me a stakeholder”. In these cases it is very difficult to manage how to respond to so many perspectives or opinions, and consequently risking to waste participation or a real stakeholder involvement. One lesson learned by the practice of systematization is to identify and select only those stakeholders -social or institutional actors- whose perspectives or opinions will be taken into account in some way or another.

Another difficulty is having several stakeholders with quite different positions or antagonist interpretations on the case under systematization. Sometimes, the systematization faces the risk of creating a sort of ‘boxing ring’ where people might fight for what believe is the truth. In these cases, the facilitator of the systematization should act as a moderator of the stakeholder’s participation, someone ‘neutral’ that give spaces for participation but focusing on clear questions or points.

For stimulating participation, the use of participatory tools or games has been widely adopted in systematizations. However, not always they have contributed to get a deep involvement of different stakeholders. The mental and institutional willpower to open participatory spaces are the key issues for taking in mind, as there is not a set of ‘successful’ tools ready to be applied in every case. The experience and creative understanding of any particular situation may help a lot, as tools rarely can be applied in a ‘pure’ way, as they
appear in the book or manual. According to the situation, is necessary to adapt tools by modifying them partially or totally.

Systematization, as a particular kind of multi-stakeholder assessment, contributes to understand crucial factors that influence the nature of the problem and the project’s life, promotes the strengthening of all stakeholders’ capacity, and helps to share recommendations and lessons learned with a wider audience working on development.

**Final Remarks**

This article has introduced systematization as a general framework which aims to help improving future interventions, enabling projects to raise issues of general interest and stimulate reflection and debate in wider society (Schouten, 2007), seeking to make development experiences more relevant, effective, replicable and sustainable. The systematization approach has been used to document single and short-time project as well as longer and more complex programmes or development interventions, being carried out by community-based groups or organisations, NGOs, networks or larger institutions.

Beyond this characterization of systematization, the purpose of the article is in line with building the field of evaluation in the Latin America region, as a critical factor to effective use of evaluation in the global south (Carden, 2007). Following Katherine Hay (2011:3-4), we understand that:

"**Evaluation practice** is the 'doing' of evaluation. **Evaluation capacity** is the ability to do evaluation, and **evaluation use** is the application of evaluation to some change process. **Evaluation field building** refers to the range and diversity of efforts to strengthen practice, capacity, and use."

With strong roots and history in Latin America, the practical origins of systematization has not given place for its formalization into a full prescriptive theory, and the building of the field of evaluation in the regions has to do then with building both a more comprehensive knowledge of its development. This is the key invitation made by Carden and Alkin (2012) while analysing the second edition of Evaluation Roots (Alkin 2012), as they recognise that the book has not a single chapter on evaluation development theory in low and middle income countries.

For this, they seek to identify approaches and evaluators of the global south, and to situate them in the same Evaluation Theory Tree (Alkin and Christie, 2004, 2012) introduced in the book. Beyond recognizing the contributions of the adopted and adapted approaches and methodologies in the low and middle income countries, they also identify endogenous methodologies, as those specific to certain regions, with little or no contact between them, and with strong theoretical and practical roots with its original context. In this scheme, the systematization is presented as an endogenous approach from Latin America, sharing some characteristics with the other endogenous methodologies: they are specific to certain regions, they have none contact or interaction with the other regional approaches, they have strong theoretical and practical roots with its context of origin, and they were primarily developed by groups of individuals rather than single writers.

As we begin our reflection about building the field of evaluation in Latin America, which we hope it will include a more nuanced understanding of the different streams of systematization in the region, this article is a first building block in this enterprise, in order to have a more clear presence in the global evaluation community.
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