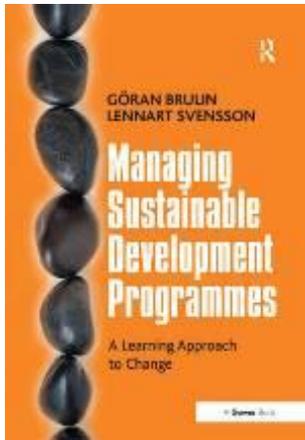


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW¹



Book Title: ***Managing Sustainable Development Programmes: A Learning Approach to Change***

Author: **Göran Brulin, Lennart Svensson**

Publisher: Gower Publishing Limited

List Price: \$170.00 Format: hardcover, 232 pages

Publication Date: 2012 ISBN: 9781409437192

Reviewer: **Jemillatu Lewally**

Review Date: November 2023

Introduction

In this book, Brulin and Svensson use their experience from the EU Structural Funds programme (Regional and Social Funds) in Sweden to discuss what they refer to as “a more rational and effective” way to implement public development programmes. The main takeaway is that for development projects to be sustainable, they must move from the traditional programme management methods to one that puts more emphasis on the long-term impacts created, rather than on successfully achieving goals and activities developed.

Overview of Book’s Structure

- List of Figures and tables
- Foreword
- About the Authors
- Chapter 1 – Running Programmes for Sustainable Development
- Chapter 2 – Models of Change and Evaluation
- Chapter 3 – Key Research Findings
- Chapter 4 – Evaluation for Sustainable Development
- Chapter 5 – Lessons from Earlier Programme Initiatives
- Chapter 6 – Lessons from Competence Initiatives
- Chapter 7 – Innovation and Regional Fund
- Chapter 8 – Owning, Steering and Evaluating Large Programmes
- Afterward
- References

¹ How to cite this work: Lewally, J. I. (2023). *Managing Sustainable Development Programmes*, book review, *PM World Journal*, Vol. XII, Issue XII, December.

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Highlights

- The distinction between **activities, results and goal-achievements and that of long-term effects** in the implementation of sustainable development programmes. The book emphasizes that long-term effects determine sustainability as opposed to the focus on the achievement of prescribed activities and results/goals. However, “The problem in evaluation contexts is that it is very difficult to really pinpoint the contribution that a project makes in creating a multiplier effect.”.
- Successfully achieving the implementation of activities can often be seen as the goal in itself for sustainable development. Sustainable development can lead to **learning and long-term effects** while activities are the instruments used to achieve the goal.
- **Project organization** should be the starting point for sustainable development programmes instead of project management. This is because project organization focuses on active ownership and involvement of the people who are to manage, as well as benefit from the project results.
- Sustainability in programme management is achieved through **ongoing evaluations and learning** from previous and ongoing projects to ensure that sufficient knowledge is available in the initiation, prioritization and implementation phases.

Highlights: What I liked!

The hypothesis that long-term impact should be the focus of sustainable development projects, not ticking boxes of project/programme management activities successfully achieved. The book focuses on public involvement, ongoing evaluation and learning in all phases of programme management, during implementation and beyond.

Who might benefit from the Book?

- Development practitioners, Government agencies, NGOs and their implementing partners
- Students of Public Policy, International Development and Non-profit Management

Conclusion

Brulin and Svensson did a good job identifying mechanisms for sustainable development project/programme implementation and explore the challenges and lessons learnt from their experience in and outside of the EU structural fund and regional growth fund programmes in Sweden. They emphasize the significance of

ongoing evaluation and using the results for learning that will improve and steer development work in the right direction. Collaboration, active ownership and development learning must be at the center of it all.

For more about this book, go to: <https://www.routledge.com/Managing-Sustainable-Development-Programmes-A-Learning-Approach-to-Change/Brulin-Svensson/p/book/9781409437192>

About the Reviewer



Jemillatu I. Lewally

McKinney, Texas, United States



Jemillatu Lewally is a PMP certified, multi-skilled Project Manager, passionate about international development and ESG-focused project management. She has over 20 years of experience in international development management, public policy and governance, particularly in citizen-state engagement. She has coordinated and managed several socio-economic development projects in various sectors from health, gender, agriculture and construction.

Jemillatu has volunteered by providing project management services for the PMI Atlanta Chapter, Community Consulting Teams of Atlanta and the Hope Foundation in Georgia. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, a Master of Public Policy from the Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA and a Master of Arts in International Development Management from the University of Bradford, UK. She can be contacted at jemilla2@yahoo.com

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