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# pla notes

participatory learning and action

## Local government and participation



June 2002

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International  
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# pla notes

participatory learning and action

*PLA Notes* (Notes on Participatory Learning and Action), formerly known as *RRA Notes*, is published three times a year in February, June, and October. Established in 1988 by the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme (SARLs) of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), *PLA Notes* enables practitioners of participatory methodologies from around the world to share their field experiences, conceptual reflections, and methodological innovations. The series is informal and seeks to publish frank accounts, address issues of practical and immediate value, encourage innovation, and act as a 'voice from the field'.

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### Participatory development

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is an umbrella term for a wide range of similar approaches and methodologies, including participatory rural appraisal (PRA), Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Learning Methods (PALM),

Participatory Action Research (PAR), Farming Systems Research (FSR), Méthod Active de Recherche et de Planification Participative (MARP), and many others. The common theme to all these approaches is the full **participation** of people in the processes of **learning** about their needs and opportunities, and in the **action** required to address them.

Participatory approaches offer a creative way of investigating issues of concern to poor people, and planning, implementing, and evaluating development activities. They challenge prevailing biases and preconceptions about people's knowledge.

The methods used range from visualisation, to interviewing and group work. The common theme is the promotion of interactive learning, shared knowledge, and flexible, yet structured analysis. These methods have proven valuable for understanding local perceptions of the functional value of resources, processes of agricultural intervention, and social and institutional relations. Participatory approaches can also bring together different disciplines, such as agriculture, health and community development, to enable an integrated vision of livelihoods and well-being. They offer opportunities for mobilising local people for joint action.

In recent years, there has been a number of shifts in the scope and focus of participation:

- emphasis on sub-national, national and international decision making, not just local decision making
- move from projects to policy processes and institutionalisation
- greater recognition of issues of difference and power
- emphasis on assessing the quality and understanding the impact of participation, rather than simply promoting participation

Recent issues of *PLA Notes* have reflected, and will continue to reflect, these developments and shifts. We particularly recognise the importance of analysing and overcoming power differentials which work to exclude the already poor and marginalised.



**Consulting residents at the Zbojna Commune (see 'Local government using participatory approaches to try to influence and enhance externally-driven initiatives/ programmes' by Wiesia Serwatko, page 46)**

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# editorial

## Welcome to issue 44 of PLA Notes

### Special theme

The themed section for this issue is about local government and participation, and discusses examples of where local government agencies are using participatory learning and action approaches to address issues of concern to their constituencies. While it is frequently national governments that formulate policy, it is usually local governments that are charged with the responsibility of implementing it, whether it is delivering essential social services, carrying out civic improvements or coordinating integrated land-use planning activities. Recently, local government bodies in a variety of contexts have begun to employ a range of people-centred approaches, including participatory consultations, stakeholder dialogues and participatory budgeting, in an effort to involve citizens in the key decisions and actions that affect their communities. The articles selected for this special issue include a range of examples of innovative uses of participatory approaches by far-sighted local government agencies in India, Peru, Poland, Senegal, Scotland and elsewhere.

The guest editors for the special section are **Andy Inglis**, an independent practitioner and trainer, and **Ced Hesse**, a Senior Research Associate in the Drylands Pastoral Land Tenure Programme at IIED. Over the past decade, Andy Inglis has worked as an advisor and facilitator of participatory approaches in over 30 countries for UN agencies, NGOs, national and local governments and community groups. Much of his work has been to do with rural development forestry, but he has also been

involved with the application of participatory approaches in tourism and recreation, health, transport, agriculture, fisheries, social development, housing and local environmental planning and management.

Prior to joining IIED, Ced Hesse worked for Oxfam in Mali and Burkina Faso on food security and early warning programmes, and was a co-founder of the Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN/RITA) based in Dakar, Senegal. His current work focuses on improving pastoral land tenure security through a number of research and training activities on the following themes: community-based natural resource management and planning, conflict management particularly in pastoral areas, community participation in decentralised governance, reinforcement of pastoral civic society and the gender dimensions of pastoral tenure issues.

In their overview, the guest editors examine the many issues surrounding participation and local government, including how local government officials in both the North and the South can learn from each other and how participation can be used to influence new styles of leadership that are more democratic, transparent and accountable.

Andy and Ced have worked extremely hard to commission, collate and edit the diverse set of articles in the special section, and I would like to thank them and the authors for their insightful and thought-provoking contributions. I would also like to thank **Angela Milligan**, the Editor of *PLA Notes*, who is currently on maternity leave, for coordinating this special issue, and lastly, of course, thanks to the Editorial team, **Cristina Zorat** and **Bansuri Taneja**.

### General section

The general section for this issue has five articles.

**Nagaratna Biradar** and **CR Ramesh** explain the benefits and changes made when IGFRI, the Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute, adopted participatory methodologies to better inform and conduct research to develop more effective technologies to serve the needs of the farmer population.

**RS Saxena** and **SK Pradhan** look at how to train staff, who are used to working in a top-down, authoritarian way, to become participatory facilitators. They discuss issues around training to inform not just knowledge and skills, but attitudes and behavioural change that respect local people's knowledge and experience and enables them to identify with local/project needs and goals.

Assessing what positive gains participation can bring to a rural rice farming community in Nigeria, **Chris Ekong** and **Ndiyo Ayara** write about how Community Development Associations were able to advocate a more equitable sharing of rice paddy plots in swampland for poorer rice farmers, whilst ensuring a growing revenue to be reinvested back into the community farm.

**Benedikt Korf** looks at how PRA was used in a weeklong workshop 'Planning for a Future' in a village community in Germany to develop plans for areas that suffer from environmental degradation, and asks whether or not PRA is an appropriate instrument for participatory community development in societies with functioning local democratic institutions.

Lastly, **Jane Thomas** writes about a project in Bangladesh that focused

on using community participation to design and build flood control measures, which would be sustainable in the long term. The methods used enabled the project to assess power dynamics within the community using power analysis, Venn diagrams and power ratings.

### Regular features

Our Tips for Trainers section for this issue is taken from **Robert Chamber's** new book *Participatory Workshops*:

*A Sourcebook of 21 Sets of Ideas and Activities*, reproduced with kind permission from Earthscan, and looks at some of the issues trainers might encounter when ending workshops. As always, you will find other regular PLA Notes features, book reviews, events, and e-participation in the *In Touch* section, as well as the RCPLA pages.

Finally, regular readers will notice a change in the look and feel of the design of this issue. In response to

your comments, we have made several changes in order to make the format more lively and user-friendly. I would like to thank **Andy Smith** for his advice and assistance with the new design. I would welcome any comments you have on the new layout and on the contents. Please send your feedback to the usual address.

I hope that you enjoy reading this 'new-look' issue of *PLA Notes*.

**Holly Ashley, Acting Editor**



# Overview: Local governments – potentially the most important day to day real-world users of innovative participatory approaches

by **ANDY INGLIS** and **CED HESSE**

## Why a 'local government' special issue?

Since its inception in 1988, *PLA Notes*<sup>1</sup> has published hundreds of articles on the design, application and assessment of participatory methodologies in a broad range of settings. Yet there have been very relatively few articles devoted to the use of participatory methodologies in local government bodies, which is surprising given the mandate of these institutions in meeting the needs and interests of local people.

One reason explaining this situation might be the fact that there has been little to write about since local government bodies started using participatory methods and tools after other institutional players. Participatory approaches for engaging with people and facilitating development have been used in different ways and to varying effects since the 1980s by multilateral and bilateral agencies, NGOs, research institutes and central government departments. Yet it is only over the 1990s that local government bodies have started to apply them with any consistency despite the fact that in many countries they probably have the greatest role in facilitating local development, with explicit responsibilities, often stipulated in law, to consult their citizens in the delivery of appropriate services to meet their needs.

Another reason might be that in many parts of the world,

particularly in poorer countries, multilateral and bilateral agencies continue to cover part of the remit of local government, and often end up operating in parallel and undermining local government. It is also the case that the academic world in general is weak on working with and/or for individual local government bodies in their own countries<sup>2</sup>. It appears that they do not consider them to be big enough players (or payers) in the domestic policy arena.

However, although the situation is improving and there are more and more examples of local governments using participatory approaches in their work, it is equally true that in many parts of the world it is still the norm for these bodies to use traditional ways of working which are extremely bureaucratic and formal in their dealings with citizens and local communities. Why this should be the case, and what are the constraints preventing local government bodies applying more participatory methods in the ways in which they deal with their citizens, is a key issue addressed in this issue of *PLA Notes*.

What does this participation consist of and is it worth it? What levels of participation are required, by whom and for what purposes? What are the different methods and tools being used? Are they of value and can they be replicated in

<sup>1</sup>It was initially called Rapid Rural Appraisal Notes and changed its name to *PLA Notes* in 1995.

<sup>2</sup>The situation is changing particularly in the Sahel where there are examples of university departments from the UK, France and the USA implementing large programmes of action-research on a range of issues in collaboration with local government bodies.

different contexts? Are different approaches and methods required for urban and rural settings?

These are just some of the questions frequently asked not just by local government officials in the course of their duties, but by practitioners using participatory approaches, politicians, the business community and ordinary citizens. The authors of the articles published in this issue reflect this diversity of interest as well as a variety of political and institutional settings, and seek to share information of a practical and immediate value between those working for or with local government.

### What is local government?

First, it is important to consider what we mean by 'local government'. Most countries have a level of government, which is recognised to be closer and more responsive to local needs than either state or central government. In this issue of *PLA Notes*, local government bodies are considered to be 'locally' elected bodies which are town, city or metropolitan councils, regional and district administrations, communes, municipalities, town and city corporations and authorities, county councils, etc. These institutions can own and manage property, land, and other capital resources. They may be responsible for the delivery of services, although this is tending to decline in many parts of the world. They often have responsibility for vital functions such as education, planning, community development, social inclusion, dealing with social problems, managing transport infrastructure, providing conflict resolution services, collecting local revenue and managing its expenditure.

Despite these important roles and responsibilities, and the fact that in many parts of the world local government bodies are operating in increasingly decentralised and devolved political systems, for the majority of citizens their experience of local government is of agencies and institutions with outdated, conservative and non-participatory ways of working. This is unfortunate because if local government institutions could operate in more participatory ways for all their functions, they could offer citizens the opportunity to have their first real taste of meaningful engagement, discourse and interaction with officials who control key processes that affect their daily lives.

### Issues arising from the articles

Most of the articles in the local government special section focus more on the practical ways local government officials and those working on their behalf have sought to engage with their citizens on issues of concern to them. In view of this, the issues that arise concern more the 'hands-on' ways of seeking genuine and useful participation than the under-

lying academic debates about such issues. The guest editors make no apologies for this – the authors of the articles were asked to focus on practicalities as it was felt that these are the details that are of most interest and usefulness to the practitioners who read *PLA Notes*.

### 1. Social inclusion

A major issue that appears in nearly all the articles, be they from Africa, Asia, Europe or the Americas is the one of social inclusion. The question of how, in practice, local government bodies actually implement their rhetoric of participation clearly is problematic. Diakit 's article (Mali) highlights some of the challenges in reaching highly mobile groups such as pastoralists, while Humphries' (England) shows the limitations of consultative procedures that focus just on conventional meetings or on consulting 'local opinion leaders'.

The **cost of participation** is a subsidiary issue of social inclusion. The articles highlight several perspectives on this issue. First, the cost to the public of giving up their time to attend meetings or to fill in questionnaires without any assurance that their views and proposals will be taken into consideration, versus the cost to local government in running a highly participatory consultation process. Turner's 'Clean Edinburgh' article (Scotland) and Serwatko's (Poland) show how **good methodology design and common sense facilitation** can lead to the cost-effective use of participatory approaches. The issue is less to do with trying 'to meet everyone', which is clearly unrealistic, and more to ensuring that the consultative process **reaches a representative cross-section of the community**. Identifying and dealing with local people's immediate problems and needs is also critical as shown by Turner and Humphries.

Conversely, Bangaly's article (Mali) shows how participatory planning exercises that have been carried out with **external support** have created a surge in demand for services and projects for social infrastructure which the rural councils cannot hope to meet from their own budgets. This has led to situations where rural council leaders, mindful of the need to satisfy as many of their constituents as possible, have approved a multitude of very small, partly funded activities that collectively do not contribute to the economic or social well-being of the local residents. And pragmatic local leaders are now asking questions on whether they can sustain the costs of an intensive participatory planning process when external donors retire. The participatory budgeting articles by Menegat (Brazil) and Hordijk (Peru) illustrate attempts to solve problems like these.

### 2. New styles of leadership

All the articles point to the fact that **good governance** is the

critical issue if **local government** is to deliver pertinent and cost-effective services to their citizens. Good local government is as much to do with relinquishing control and devolving responsibility for certain tasks – to other bodies such as private sector, community groups, etc. as Burra and Patel's (India) article explains – as it is to ensuring visionary leadership and long-term planning that go beyond the specific political mandate they have received (Diakité, Hordijk, Hercz, Humphries). Principles of accountability and subsidiarity are essential. Local government bodies can and should have multiple roles ranging from decision making to facilitating dialogue among multiple stakeholders (Hercz, Humphries, Diakité, Reid, Bangaly and Serwatko).

However, there are major political as well as technical challenges to overcome in changing local government and others' attitudes. To date more attention is paid to building the technical capacities of local government staff in participatory planning (e.g. how to develop a plan for the construction of a community health clinic) than to broader processes of civic education and building the capacity of local people to participate in public affairs and facilitate participatory processes themselves. Yet it is only when ordinary citizens have the confidence and the skills to hold local officials to account that one moves from a situation of 'participatory' to an 'accountable' government.

Experience has shown that accountability is of prime importance in ensuring the cost-effective delivery of appropriate services to local people. Local government bodies do need to acquire the skills to implement participatory planning processes to ensure that the interests of all their constituents are taken into account. But, more importantly, they need to be held to account through a system of incentives and sanctions, baseline studies and monitoring (which of course can be participatory – see Turner's article) to deliver appropriate services.

In general, there are major problems with regard to the degree to which local leaders are genuinely accountable to their constituents. In some cases this is because local people are unaware of their rights. In other cases local people are unaware who their community representatives are, especially when they are not elected. There is a long tradition in many parts of the world for self-appointed activists to be the only contact with officialdom (a situation which usually suits both parties very well) and where activists and the most vocal citizens are the main players (sometimes even the only players) in processes that are called 'participatory'. In many such situations there is no felt need and no attempt made to engage beyond activists:

- elected representatives tend to come from activist backgrounds so do not perceive any problems with minimalist

engagement processes;

- in the local media there is no pressure to change because activist-only systems tend to sit very well with conventional journalism.

So it is sometimes left up to local government officials to make the case for wider participation and to try to build capacity to change attitudes and broaden the process of consultations (for examples of this see Humphries and Turner). Occasionally enlightened, non-traditional political party leaders come to the fore and they can be an effective catalyst for improving social inclusion mechanisms (see Hordijk).

### 3. Appropriateness of pre-packaged participatory tools

Interestingly, only one article (Bangaly) explicitly raises the problems associated with local government structures in Mali using pre-bundled participatory 'tools' and pre-determined prescribed processes in a mechanistic way. This is probably because we set out by trying to find and illustrate examples of innovative, specially designed use (fit for purpose) participatory methods and processes rather than the unthinking use of pre-packaged systems. Our selection therefore probably doesn't highlight enough a major real-world problem – the pressure put on local government officials to adopt off-the-shelf participatory planning processes, which are claimed by their disseminators to be suitable for all purposes.

In the Sahel these were first introduced by the World Bank in the 1980s within the context of the *Gestion de Terroir* local development approach. In East Africa an example is the eight-step PRA process introduced and disseminated by Clark University. Off-the-shelf packages like these, despite their well-recognised weaknesses, are now being mechanistically promoted by multilateral and bilateral agencies and national governments for local government planning within the context of decentralisation. In the UK similar problems exist for packaged processes such as Planning for Real and, to a lesser extent, Future Search.

In Mali, for example, local consultants have been hired by central government with the support of the FAO to design and test a 'toolkit' of participatory processes to enable rural councils to establish council-level environmental management plans. The approach and the majority of the tools being proposed come from the PRA/PLA family and are to be used on a village-by-village approach to build up a council level environmental plan. This approach fails to consider a number of key issues.

First, the cost of applying these packaged participatory approaches on a regular basis in order to monitor and plan for the dynamics of environment change in Mali. These tools have been designed and used by resource-rich Northern organisations to support participatory processes within well-



defined project areas. This will not necessarily be the case for poor rural councils in Mali whose populations may be scattered over thousands of square kilometres.

In the first instance efforts must be made to convince existing users of these packages that they are not sacrosanct and that they can and should be adapted to meet local financial realities and political contexts. Secondly, the promotion of these pre-packaged processes must be curtailed. It is more important that local government bodies, which are intended to be around for the foreseeable future, are given good, effective, grounded, tailored advice and support even if this will take longer than advocating the quick-fix use of off-the-shelf packages.

Second, the tools have been designed for sedentary populations on the assumption that local people derive their livelihoods from using resources within the village territory. In Mali, as the rest of the Sahel, the majority of rural people have highly diversified livelihood strategies which often depend on gaining access to resources that may be hundreds of kilometres away from their home (e.g. transhumant herders). Similarly, the resources upon which communities may depend, particularly common property resources such as forests or rangelands, do not neatly fall within the jurisdictions of the rural councils, but may transcend several council or regional boundaries. To overcome these problems training must be given to local government officials to be able to be flexible and innovative in their use of participatory approaches and methods (e.g. given awareness of basic participatory working principles and basic process design skills).

Third, there are no plans to transfer the skills associated with pre-packaged models of participatory planning below the level of local government to communities and their associations. Participatory planning thus remains a process controlled by local government according to their values and interests. They frame the issues around which local people will participate rather than supporting processes whereby citizens are given the skills with which to identify and respond to their needs. As some of the articles show (Serwatko, Humphries, Turner) it is not difficult to add value to participatory processes and also build significant local social capital by recruiting and

training local citizens and stakeholders to be facilitators (although care has to be taken in terms of ensuring neutrality and there will inevitably be some issues for which the deployment of local citizens as facilitators will be perceived to be inappropriate).

### Conclusions

A point, which has struck us from the articles in this issue, is that it appears that local governments in the North could learn a lot from those in the South in terms of trying to use participatory approaches to empower their communities and citizens (rather than just consult them) through direct involvement in major decision making (especially participatory budgeting). On the other hand it looks like local government officials in the South could learn from those in the North about the use of participatory approaches to get beyond 'the usual suspects' (self appointed activists, most vocal and confident individuals, etc.), and also with regard to building local capacity (e.g. training local government officials and workers and local citizens to be participatory approach facilitators) instead of building reliance on (usually) expensive consultants and (usually) unaccountable NGOs.

In terms of the importance of this *PLA Notes* special issue, the initial lack of interest by the majority of local government officials in participatory approaches seems to have been matched by the initial lack of interest and priority given to engaging with local governments by the proponents of PRA/PLA, capacity builders and trainers in participatory ways of working.

This is changing, and the guest editors of this special issue have tried to capture examples of these trends in a way that will give a helpful pulling hand to those local government officials trying or wanting to work in more participatory ways... and to give a gentle push, hard shove or even a wake-up call to those participatory approach advocates and good practice disseminators looking for people to collaborate with whose legitimate day to day work involves trying to change people's lives for the better and making society and public services more open, participatory and accountable.

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# 2

## Participatory democracy in Porto Alegre, Brazil

by RUALDO MENEGAT

### Introduction

Porto Alegre is the capital city of Brazil's southernmost state, Rio Grande do Sul. Since 1996, it has consistently had the highest standards of living of all Brazilian metropolitan areas (Exame, 1996). In the context of the present crisis afflicting marginal and dependent economies, and increasing levels of poverty, unemployment and corruption in large South American cities, Porto Alegre's progress is inextricably related to the way in which the city has been managed over the last 12 years. The last four mayoral terms in Porto Alegre's Municipal Government have been coined 'Popular Administration' (*Administração Popular*). The key characteristics of popular administration include the adoption of techniques for participatory democracy, a high level of citizen involvement in allocating the municipal budget, the reorientation of public priorities by citizens, the integration of public environmental management policies, and the regeneration of public spaces.

The most important and widely publicised technique for participatory democracy is participatory budgeting, initiated in 1989 under the mayoral term of Olívio Dutra (1989-1992), and continued under the administrations of Tarso Genro (1993-1996 and 2001-2004) and Raul Pont (1997-2000).

Participatory budgeting is defined as a 'civil, not state, form of governance', and its introduction in 1989 marked the beginning of a significant experience with real participa-

tory democracy. Although there is a municipal government authority responsible for participatory budgeting, the Department of Community Relations, the process is accepted as an autonomous form of public participation. It is based on a number of forums in which citizens are able to control and steer the municipal government and its spending. Communities participate in assemblies organised by geographical district and sectoral theme to determine their needs and priorities. In addition to defining the municipal budget, communities also manage the implementation and timing of the public interventions.

When both the communities' district and sectoral priorities and the government's own requirements have been established, a proposal is drawn up to be discussed with the Participatory Budgeting Council. Once approved, the budget proposal is sent to the City Councillors. In the meantime, the Participatory Budgeting Council and the municipal government begin drawing up the expenditure plan based on the budget proposal. The expenditure plan sets out all the public works to be carried out in each district for that year and the government authorities responsible for their execution, and is printed and distributed to the public. In 1989, the priorities defined by the district public assemblies were sanitation, land tenure regularisation and street paving, with land tenure still at the top of the agenda, but this time along with housing, in 1997.

### Participatory budgeting: structure and process

The municipality is sub-divided into 16 districts based on geographical and social criteria and existing community organisation. Each district acts as a unit for the distribution of resources and is allocated a budget quota in proportion to its population size. The sectoral priorities for each district (basic sanitation, housing, street paving, education, social welfare, green areas, health, traffic and transport, sport and recreation, street lighting, economic development and culture) and their respective public interventions are defined at district public assemblies. The municipal government participates in the whole process, providing technical information and presenting its own requirements, which are generally interventions and priorities of a citywide nature. It also uses the assemblies to publicly account for its management of the city and budget expenditure.

Each district also elects representatives (delegates) to form the groups that participate in the various decision-making stages of the participatory budgeting process: (a) the Forum of District Delegates; (b) the Forum of Sectoral Delegates; (c) the District Popular Councils; and (d) the Participatory Budgeting Council. The Participatory Budgeting Council is responsible for establishing the general criteria for allocating the budget among the districts, and for overseeing the implementation of public interventions.

As part of the extensive restructuring of participatory budgeting in 1994, sectoral public assemblies were introduced to give citizens the opportunity to discuss specific issues relevant to the city. Discussion forums were set up around five sectoral themes: (a) urban planning and development, sub-divided into environment and sanitation, and city planning and housing; (b) traffic management and public transport; (c) health and social welfare; (d) education, culture and recreation; and (e) economic development and taxation. For each discussion theme, the plenary assemblies enable citizens to discuss the city's strategic planning and sectoral policies in greater depth. Representatives are also elected at the sectoral plenary assemblies to participate in (a) the Participatory Budgeting Council and (b) the Forum of District and Sectoral Delegates.

The ongoing implementation of participatory budgeting also led to significant changes in the city's culture of urban management. While local issues raised by the public were put on the city's agenda, issues of a citywide nature were neglected. In order to acknowledge and integrate these issues, the 'city conference' was launched in 1993, which proceeded to be held on a periodic basis. The city conferences brought together representatives from civil society, identified by various means including the participatory budgeting initiative. There

### "Participatory budgeting has completely reversed the traditional patronage approach that characterises public administration in most Brazilian cities"

have now been three city conferences. They are now held to coincide with the four-yearly planning exercise, which had previously only been done by municipal planners and technical staff. For the first time, the 2000 plan involved the general public in setting targets for the next long term.

#### Stages and process

The process of discussion and decision-making follows an annual cycle of two main stages: (i) defining priorities and proposals for public spending in plenary assemblies, in which all citizens can participate; (ii) drawing up the budget proposal and expenditure plan, in which the priorities and proposals approved by the citizens should: (a) be developed enough for submission to the state legislature as the Municipal Budget; and (b) be technically sound enough to be converted into an expenditure plan detailing the works and services to be undertaken by the municipal secretariats and departments. The whole process is observed and monitored by the municipal government and the representatives elected through the participatory budgeting process, namely the Participatory Budgeting Council and the Forums of District and Sectoral Delegates.

The first stage comprises two large rounds of general and sectoral plenary assemblies. Citizens can participate in all events, at which they have the opportunity to present their requests and proposals for the annual municipal budget destined for their district or a certain sector. Between the two rounds is an interim phase, which consists of numerous more specific meetings based on each of the 16 districts and five themes, and their respective sub-divisions. These meetings are coordinated and facilitated by the delegates elected in the district and sectoral assemblies, and allow the communities to discuss in greater depth their needs and priorities, which will be decided during the second round of assemblies.

The second round is coordinated by the Participatory Budgeting Council, made up of councillors as follows: (a) two members and two deputies from each of the 16 districts; (b) two members and two deputies from each of the five sectoral forums; (c) one member and one deputy from the Porto Alegre Municipal Workers Union; (d) one member and one deputy from the Union of Porto Alegre Residents' Asso-

**Table 1: Sectoral distribution of budget over the last 12 years**

Sector	Budget in the first year of each mayoral term (millions of Reais <sup>†</sup> )			
	1989	1993	1997	2000 (budgeted)
Urban development, basic services and environment	134.7	189.3	307.0	385.8
Economic development	2.7	3.1	6.6	8.6
Social services (health, education, housing, welfare)	91.2	152.6	314.8	361.6
Culture, recreation and tourism	2.6	5.5	17.9	15.1

<sup>†</sup> Brazilian Real (pl. Reais); US\$1.00 = R\$2.50 approx. (February 2002)

ciations; and (e) two representatives of the municipal government, but without the right to vote. The councillors' term of office is one year and re-election is permitted for one further consecutive term. A councillor's term can be revoked at any time by the Forum of District and Sectoral Delegates, which is also able to approve the substitution of a councillor when this decision is backed by at least two thirds of its members.

The district and sectoral delegates, who make up a larger number of members than the Participatory Budgeting Council, play an important role in the second round of assemblies. They meet monthly and serve the following functions: supporting the participatory budgeting councillors; recording and circulating the issues discussed and outcomes reached; coordinating the interim meetings; overseeing the execution of public interventions through the Commission for Public Works; and assisting in the consolidation of the District Popular Councils.

All these representatives are responsible for synthesising and reconciling the requests and priorities decided upon, and helping to formulate a budget proposal to be submitted to the City councillors, who are responsible for the final approval of the municipal budget and the expenditure plan.

### Results of participatory budgeting

The participatory budgeting process is undergoing constant development and improvement since its introduction in 1989, under the administration of the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*) in coalition with other parties of the Popular Front (*Frente Popular*) that continues to govern Porto Alegre. During this time, the municipal government has allocated between 15-25% of the total budget to public spending. The rest is designated to municipal staff salaries and municipal government administration.

**Table 2: Development of indicators in different sectors between 1989 and 2000 (only the first year of each of the Popular Administration's four mayoral terms are cited, except where indicated)**

SECTOR / INDICATOR	UNIT	1989	1993	1997	2000
Drop-out rate for basic education in municipal schools <sup>1</sup>	%	9.02	5.41	2.43	1.46 (1999)
Number of municipal educational establishments	Schools	37	69	87	90
Investment in housing <sup>2</sup>	R\$ millions	3.436	4.439	18.696	14.959
Leakage in the municipal water network <sup>3</sup>	%	50 (1991)	47	39	34
Sewerage network coverage	Km of sewers	768 (1988)	n/a	n/a	1,399
Proportion of treated sewage	%	2	5	15	27
Green areas <sup>4</sup>	m <sup>2</sup> per resident	12.5	n/a	13.35	14.11
Public involved in activities of the Municipal Culture Secretariat <sup>5</sup>	People	398,950	n/a	n/a	1,732,900 (1999)

(n/a = not available)

<sup>1</sup>Azevedo, J.C. (2000) "Escola cidadã: políticas e práticas" in Pont, R. (Coordinator) & Barcelos, A. (Organiser) Porto Alegre, uma cidade que conquista, Artes e Ofícios, Porto Alegre, pp. 111-122.

<sup>2</sup>Silva, F.J.H. da (2000) "A política habitacional no terceiro mandato da administração popular" in Pont, R. (Coordinator) & Barcelos, A. (Organiser) Porto Alegre, uma cidade que conquista, Artes e Ofícios, Porto Alegre, pp. 153-164.

<sup>3</sup>Dutra, A.L. (2000) "O DMAE e a qualificação do saneamento ambiental" in Pont, R. (Coordinator) & Barcelos, A. (Organiser) Porto Alegre, uma cidade que conquista, Artes e Ofícios, Porto Alegre, pp. 199-206.

<sup>4</sup>Lüdke, M.C. (1998) "Evolução das áreas verdes: dos largos às praças e parques arborizados" in Menegat, R., Porto, M.L., Carraro, C.C. & Fernandes, L.A.D. (Coordinators) (1998) Atlas Ambiental de Porto Alegre, Edufrgs, Porto Alegre, pp. 119-130 and Lüdke, M.C., Mohr, F.V., Menegat, R. (1998) "Mapa de áreas verdes", idem, pp. 131-132.

<sup>5</sup>Kiefer, C. (2000) "Cultura: onde o povo está" in Pont, R. (Coordinator) & Barcelos, A. (Organiser) Porto Alegre, uma cidade que conquista, Artes e Ofícios, Porto Alegre, pp. 11-27.

Over the last ten years, public works totalling more than US\$700 million have been implemented through participatory budgeting. The highest priority during this period has been basic sanitation (see Table 1). Between 1990 and 1995, the number of households served by the drinking water network in Porto Alegre was expanded from 400,000 to 465,000, and at present 98% of households are connected.

**Table 3: Participants in the District and Sectoral Assemblies of the participatory budgeting process and the City Conferences**

Year	District assembly	Sectoral assembly	City Conference	Total
1990	976	-	-	976
1991	3,694	-	-	3,694
1992	7,610	-	-	7,610
1993	10,735	-	2,048	12,783
1994	9,638	1,609	-	11,247
1995	11,821	2,446	3,031	17,298
1996	10,148	1,793	-	11,941
1997	11,908	4,105	-	16,013
1998	13,687	2,769	-	16,456
1999	16,813	3,911	-	20,724
2000	15,331	3,694	8,780	27,805

Moreover, the sewerage network expansion has been greater still. In 1989, only 46% of the population had sewer connections, but this has now almost doubled to 85%.

Street paving has also been a high priority for citizens, especially in the less developed districts. Around 30 kilometres of streets are paved annually, and this is always accompanied by drainage and street lighting. In low-income districts, this intervention has not only improved access by

public transport, but the increased traffic has helped to deter organised crime. Furthermore, it has raised the inhabitants' sense of dignity, and they now feel a real part of the city that had previously neglected them.

Increased spending on education doubled the total number of pupils enrolled between 1988 and 1996. A significant improvement in the quality of teaching was achieved through radically democratising the school system and revaluing the teaching and administrative staff as professionals. In the health sector, the municipalisation of health clinics produced a significant improvement in the level of service by ensuring unrestricted access for all residents.

In addition to the impressive figures for the different sectors (see Table 2) and districts, participatory budgeting also brought about a fundamental change in the political culture of Porto Alegre. This change signified an end to the traditional top down approach, the redefinition of public priorities in line with citizens' views, a return to citizenship, and the transition to an inclusive city. The level of citizen participation has increased with each year, with around 150,000 people now involved in the process, whether in District or Sectoral Assemblies or in the City Conferences (see Table 3).

Participatory budgeting has completely reversed the traditional patronage approach that characterises public administration in most Brazilian cities. As an indicator of this, in 2000, the participatory budgeting process involved approximately 30,000 citizens, thus ensuring that public interventions corresponded to the priorities of the population.

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# 3

## Participatory budgeting in Villa El Salvador

by MICHAELA HORDIJK

### Introduction

Villa el Salvador – a poor district of roughly 300,000 inhabitants in Southern Lima – is famous for its tradition of ‘self-management’ by the population. Villa El Salvador is the result of a massive invasion in 1971. The left wing military government of that era relocated the squatters to a desolate empty desert area, 32 kilometres from the city centre. There was nothing but sand, and the promise that this would become a prosperous satellite city of the capital. For the left wing dictatorship, Villa El Salvador had to be the role model for the country, demonstrating self-management by the population, so the government set up a system of popular participation. Housing blocks elected representatives, which together formed territorial-based councils, the ‘self managed communities of Villa El Salvador’. These neighbourhood leaders had a say in the allocation of the investment budget in various modalities throughout the history of Villa El Salvador.

In 1976 the first urban development plan was developed, under the lemma ‘Factories first, then houses’, indicating: first employment opportunities, then the basic needs. In the period 1986-1988 a second urban development plan was formulated, under the lemma ‘Villa El Salvador: Productive City’. In 1999 a young mayor was elected. He considered it a priority to formulate a third development plan of the district, and to

do so in a participatory manner in order to strengthen the social ties and organisational culture, and transform the relations between local government, the private sector (micro-entrepreneurs) and the population.

### Martin Pumar (31), Mayor of Villa El Salvador

*‘It is my objective to create a new leadership. Villa El Salvador has a long history of leadership, but we do need new people, we do need a transformation of leadership. Here it helps that I myself am young. When the people see me, they say to themselves: “okay, if the mayor is young, we can also have other leaders that are young and new”. We need a leadership that strives for peace, tolerance, democracy. Many people think that since the terrorist violence is over, violence is over. But in daily life there still is a lot of violence: domestic violence, violence in the streets, violence of the youth gangs.*

*The most important feature of this leadership is that they should have a shared vision of the future. They should be able to dream a future city. And secondly I think it is of utmost importance that we form a new leadership capable of governing the city. That is a profound change when compared to the old leadership. Community leaders so far are demand-making leaders. They are used to claim, to protest, a culture of confrontation. So if there is no drinking water, they organise marches to demand drinking water. If there are no employ-*

## **“We all – citizens, entrepreneurs, NGOs, authorities – have to consider ourselves protagonists of change, with a shared responsibility to develop our city”**

ment opportunities, they march to demand employment generation. But times have changed. What we need now is no longer the constant confrontation between citizens and authorities. We need leaders willing to take responsibility for our city, that come up with development proposals. Of course leaders are there to demand, to ensure that the citizens' rights are respected. But the other side of the coin is that there are not only rights, but also obligations. We all – citizens, entrepreneurs, NGOs, authorities – have to consider ourselves protagonists of change, with a shared responsibility to develop our city.

To be able to be such a leader also requires a profound mental change. We are used to seeing our leaders as Superman. A mayor is supposed to be a superman, we are supposed to own the truth, to solve all problems, and that we can do whatever we like, take our own Superman decisions. Today leaders have to be different. We have to recognise our limitations, we have to be able to confer, we have to be able to guide a team of different people with different opinions. We have to understand now that differing opinions do not mean that we cannot work together, and that despite our differences we have common goals that unite us.

This common goal is expressed in our urban development plan. And our process of participatory budgeting is a tool in this process. It is very important to understand the participatory budgeting as a means, not an end in itself. With our urban development plan we - Villa El Salvador – formulated our shared vision of the future. With the participatory budgeting we not only invite the inhabitants to take part in the decision-making process, but more importantly we invite them to take up their own responsibilities, to become co-governors of our city.

It is a process of learning by doing. We of course do still face serious limitations in the process; we have to continue to improve it. One of the most important limitations we face is that with our current process we basically reach the community leaders, not all the inhabitants. Since we work with community representatives, we depend on them to involve their neighbours. A second problem is the short-sightedness of the leaders, who are not yet used to their co-governing role. For a neighbourhood leader it is very hard to look beyond the boundaries of his own neighbourhood. He struggles to

improve the situation in his neighbourhood, if he manages to get his project, for instance a kindergarten in his neighbourhood accepted, he feels he has won, and he will be re-elected and respected by his people. It is far more difficult for him to see, for instance, the paving of a major road five blocks away as contributing to the development of the city – including his neighbourhood. As a consequence of this short-sightedness the vast majority of the projects the people decided upon are very small, neighbourhood based: playgrounds, roofs for community centres, kindergartens and the like. Dispersed investments without a major impact. There are some neighbourhoods where they managed to develop a joint proposal: the preparation of a project for the construction of drinking water and sewerage connection, the paving of a principal road. But these are exceptions. That is why we put only 30% of our investment budget in the participatory budgeting. Of course we want to increase this percentage in the years to come, but we have to do so little by little, educate the leaders, transform the leadership the way I told you. For the time being investments with a sector wide or citywide impact still have to be made by the municipality.

A third problem is the structure of the process. We have two different sets of decision-making fora: the territorially based and the thematic. Our thematic round tables are: healthy cities and the environment; youth, education and culture; micro enterprises; commerce; gender. The problem is that they function as parallel structures, without any linkages. The thematic round tables are basically for the formulation of general policy guidelines, and are less implementation oriented than the territorial fora. But the formulation of policy guidelines on certain themes becomes a somewhat theoretical exercise with few practical implications if they are not linked to territorial planning.

A fourth serious limitation is an internal one: the municipal structure and bureaucracy is not yet capable of dealing with the changes. Firstly, participatory budgeting implies relinquishing power, including the everyday power of councillors and municipal workers. Personal favours, client relations are part and parcel of our municipal culture. So there is a resistance in the municipal apparatus. Yet even for those who understand and support the change it is not easy. All of a sudden urban development receives tens of project proposals to be implemented, where the municipality has to develop all the technical plans. We do not have sufficient technical capacity to attend all. There the support of NGOs is extremely important to us. The more we can work together with them, the better it is for the implementation of the projects approved under the participatory budgeting.

So, we still face many problems in the execution of this

new policy. Nevertheless I am confident of the process. It is legally laid down in a municipal law. It is internalised by many people. It will not be that easy for a new municipal government to set the clock back. In the first round there were many neighbourhood leaders who did not bother to participate. They did not believe that we would really do it. But in the second round they were almost all there, and now at least most of the leaders consider it as their right. That can not be reversed that easily.

I have a very powerful image that guides me. Some years ago I visited a very special church in New York. It was a church where everything was square. The church was square, the doors, the windows were square, the flagstones were square. It was a space designed to be as objective as possible. And the people praying there were from all different religions: Catholic, Buddhist, Hindus. This was a religious house for everybody. The square is a perfect and balanced figure. People with all different backgrounds can enter this house and encounter that in the end they strive for the same perfection, embodied in this square. That is what I want my city to be: a house for everybody. Although we are different, we can share this house. So that is the metaphor I use: Villa El Salvador is our house, where everybody is important. We might have discrepancies, but we all have a role to play in the development of our city.'

**Vision and strategic objectives**

The process started in February 1999. In a period of six months a series of 42 workshops were held, both with a thematic (10) as well as with a territorial (32) focus. Between 1800 and 2000 community leaders participated in these workshops. The municipality invited, NGOs facilitated. The results were summarised in five possible strategic objectives for the district's development. An NGO then organised an opinion poll, and 48,000 inhabitants of 16 years and older indicated their priorities. The process culminated in a conclave of the district, in which the outcome of the process was discussed with 200 representatives of the different community organisations that participated in the process. In the poll, the population decided the guiding objective of the plan, and in the conclave, their representatives approved the vision of the future (see box).

**Participatory budgeting**

A third of the year 2000 investment budget (ca. Soles/2 million which equals ca. US\$570,000) was destined for the participatory budgeting process. Through this mechanism the municipality hopes to involve other actors in the 'urban development project', and increase accountability, transparency, and the legitimacy of local government. The philosophy is that the 'participatory investment budget' should not only

**Development Vision of Villa El Salvador for the year 2010**

'Villa El Salvador is an organised district, a leading district, a district of producers, a district that generates wealth. It is a modern and healthy city, with men and women of different generations who have human values and equal opportunities for schooling and occupation, who participate in a democratic manner in governing their development'.

- A healthy, clean and green city .....63.10%
  - An educating city .....40.65%
  - A district of producers, generating wealth .....34.60%
  - A community of leadership and solidarity .....24.63%
  - A democratic community .....20.72%
- Number of votes: 48,119. Sum supersedes 100% since respondents could indicate various possibilities.

Source: Calderón J & Marulanda L Evaluación del Proceso Consultivo Ciudadano en Villa El Salvador, Lima, Peru SINPA-IHS, La Paz, 2001

come from the municipality, but that other actors (citizens, NGOs, private sector) also contribute with financial and human resources. The development plan is thought to function as the overall framework, and since it was developed in a participatory process, the other actors in Villa El Salvador are supposed to place their projects and activities within this plan. For the time being the financial resources come from the municipality, but for most of the communal projects the population contributes an estimated 20% of the project costs in the form of unskilled labour, materials and the like.

The municipality developed a formula to assign sums to the eight different territorial units (sectors) that had been identified for the formulation of the district's development plan. The most important criteria was the level of satisfaction of basic needs: the lower the provision of basic services, the higher the share of the budget. The two other criteria were the number of inhabitants and the level of tax paying. The more people paid the municipal taxes, the higher the share in the participatory budget. By doing so, the municipality wants to stimulate people to pay their taxes.

The participatory budgeting system started with an awareness-raising campaign, in which a series of theatre plays proved the most effective communication strategy. Inhabitants were motivated to participate in the neighbourhood meeting where the priorities for the different zones are set. In the neighbourhood meetings the population is supposed to decide on their own contribution to possible projects. Decentralised municipal agencies provide technical assistance in this process.

The organised community appoints a representative to present their proposals at the level of the 8 sectors, where in workshops the delegates have to select 10 projects that are considered to be of high priority, technically and financially



Projects approved under the 2000 participatory budgeting round		
Total budget per sector	Project	Budget
Sector I S/227,788	Improving kindergartens Furniture kindergartens	S/162,620 S/ 65,148
Sector II S/247,353	Roofs for 6 kindergartens Improving 2 kindergartens	S/101,691 S/145,661
Sector III S/256,194	Roofs for 5 kindergartens Improving neighbourhood parks, public toilets	S/136,392 S/119,801
Sector IV S/254,666	Pavement of major road Construction of a park	S/210,105 S/ 44,560
Sector V Agricultural area S/285,621	Roofs for kindergartens Construction of 3 playgrounds Improving roofs of kindergartens Feasibility study irrigation project Cadastral project agricultural zone	S/ 15,749 S/117,690 S/ 56,681 S/ 70,500 S/ 25,500
Sector VI S/338,437	Roofs for 6 kindergartens 2 kindergartens Improving roofs and windows kindergartens	S/161,386 S/145,988 S/ 31,062
Sector VII, IX & others S/213,648	Project proposal Water and sewerage 2 kindergartens 2 kindergartens	S/ 38,000 S/ 94,410 S/ 81,238
Other settlements S/205,766	Provisional access roads Additional projects to improve access Topographical study Project proposal water and sewerage	S/141,712 S/ 31,621 S/ 7,983 S/ 24,449
Total		S/2.029,475 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> US\$ dollar equals ca. S/. 3.45

Source: Chambi, G & Marulanda L Desarrollo Local con Gestión Participativa: Presupuesto Participativo Villa El Salvador, Peru, SINPA-IHS, La Paz, 2001

feasible, and where the population indeed can contribute 20% of the project costs in cash or labour. In a district wide assembly – constituted of the territorial delegates, representatives of the thematic round tables, the mayor and the councillors – the final decision on budget allocation is taken.

In July 2001 the Council approved a Municipal Law that institutionalised the process of participatory budgeting in Villa El Salvador and gave it a legal basis in the municipal budgeting and planning.

### Conclusion

The participatory budgeting process in Villa El Salvador is considered an instrument in the implementation of the urban development plan. This does distinguish it from other experiences, where a process of participatory planning does not precede the process of participatory budgeting. It is however important to note that speaking of an 'urban development plan' for Villa El Salvador is painting a too rosy picture. The actual plan – with strategies, programmes, projects, planning and budgeting of implementation – does not yet exist. The actors of the different thematic round tables are called upon to develop the detailed version of their part of the plan in a joint effort by the municipality, citizens, NGOs, entrepreneurs and other actors, but so far only the commercial sector has taken up that challenge. It will take at least several more years before the ideal of the mayor – a development plan as the outcome of a series of participatory processes, the implementation of which is founded on a process of participatory planning where the citizens decide on the allocation of investment budgets and all actors in the district feel themselves protagonist of the district's development and commit themselves, even financially – will come somewhat closer. Despite the fact that it is easy to point out weaknesses in the process, it certainly can be considered an innovative experience in participatory local governance.

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#### NOTES

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# 4

## Participatory inclusive mechanisms to set the civic improvement agenda in Palmerston North, New Zealand

by JANET REID

### Introduction

Community consultation is well accepted by local government in New Zealand as a requirement in decision making and the development of policy. However, it has only been in recent years that New Zealand City Councils have sought to use participatory approaches to gain the active inclusion of community members and their views into the decision making processes within Councils (as opposed to relying on listening to elected representatives and un-elected loudest voices). The participatory consultation described in the following notes was undertaken in 1999 in the city of Palmerston North, at the southern end of North Island, and is one of the early examples of the use of PRA methods in New Zealand. The Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) set out to gather Palmerston North city residents' views on what they value about the physical and natural characteristics of the city, or in official-speak 'amenity values'. The assignment was commissioned by the PNCC strategic planner and was undertaken by a group of individuals independent of the City Council (of which I was one).

### Background

The PNCC was interested in gaining an understanding of the City's 'amenity value' from the perspective of the community. In particular, they were looking for indicators they could use

to guide and monitor progress towards those aspects of the city people like and value. The official definition of the term 'amenity value' is 'those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and recreational attributes'. With the agreement of the client, the objectives that were developed to guide the assignment were:

- to capture from a broad cross section of people in Palmerston North their ideas and views on physical and natural characteristics of the city that they value and like; and
- to capture and present information in a form that is useful for the PNCC.

### The participatory assignment

Two residential suburbs of the city were the focus for the consultation: Hokowhitu and Takaro/Highbury. These two suburbs were chosen because they are situated in opposite parts of the city relative to the central business district. Hokowhitu is situated in the South East near the Manawatu River and Takaro/Highbury is situated to the North West of the city. Also, the socio-economic circumstances of the residents in the two suburbs are quite different, with Hokowhitu generally considered at the higher end of the city's socio-economic scale and Takaro/Highbury at the lower end.

Two teams of five people worked intensively over two

**Map and post-it comments produced at a community workshop in Hokowhitu suburb. A selection of likes and dislikes are reproduced.**



- Likes/Value**
- Shows of the Regent
  - Hokowhitu Lagoon
  - Walking by the Lagoon
  - Walking, cycling
  - Esplanade
  - Race gardens
  - Esplanade rose garden
  - Rugby Oval
  - Riverside activities: cycling, Picnicking & walking.
- Dislikes/ Don't Value**
- A reliable cheap bus service to keep cars out the Square
  - Lack of parking / dangerous drivers
  - Bay racers
  - Square Clock tower
  - Lack of security in Square
  - Cycling not defined enough
  - Untidy streets
  - Failure to use River

**Example H-diagram generated during community workshop. Selection of positives and negatives from H-form are reproduced.**

What do you think about the physical environment of the square?

**Positives**

Council has removed some obstacles and greenery  
Council say they will upgrade in 2000.  
Square is the hub of the city.  
Attracts youth into CBD  
Open space greenery within CBD.

**Negatives**

Dangers of youth crime and negative influences in the square.  
No clear access for use, walkways not enough lighting  
Closed in environment attracts undesirable, negative behaviour.  
Youth should have alternative venues to attract age groups.

days to gather information from the communities in each of the respective suburbs. Although community workshops were held in each suburb, we accepted that most of our energy would be directed at capturing community views from less formally organised activities over this period.

**Community workshop**

A community workshop was held in each of the two suburbs. Both workshops were promoted through newspaper and radio announcements along with public notices and flyers being posted around the community prior to the meetings. Turn out at the public workshops was poor. Seven members of the public took part in the Hokowhitu workshop and four at the Takaro/Highbury workshop. Many of the people who attended these meetings were elected representatives of the community or were well known for their public interest in particular issues.

Mapping, identifying likes & dislikes, prioritising, and then H-diagrams formed the basis for the consultation process. At the community workshops, following a very brief introduction, we asked people to draw a map of Palmerston North indicating the physical features that they thought defined the city. Using the maps as an initial reference, individuals in the groups were then asked to identify things about the physical and natural environment of Palmerston North that they liked and valued, and things they disliked and did not value. Firstly, we asked individuals to identify and write on separate pink post-it notes, three things they liked about the city, and then on separate blue post-it notes, three things they did not like. The post-it notes were then placed on the map onto the relevant areas.

Next, we asked participants to identify the most important like or dislike from all those indicated on the map. In a group situation we gave each individual three beans and they

placed one bean on each of the three things they felt to be most important. According to the number of beans allocated to likes and dislikes the most important aspects of the city were identified and noted.

A partial H-diagram (Guy S. & Inglis A.S. 1999) analysis was then completed by participants on aspects of the city identified as most important. The H-diagram enabled us to gain an in-depth understanding of people's views about an aspect of the city they thought important. Depending on the aspect a question was developed that allowed the participants to respond in terms of a score of between zero and ten, zero usually being the worst or most negative and ten the best or most positive. As we could not make any commitment to the community as to how the information we gained was going to be used by the PNCC or what they would decide to act on, we did not ask people to identify what they would like to see improved, a normal final stage in the completion of the H-diagram.

**Field work**

The order of methods within the process remained consistent throughout the consultation. The extent to which any person or group of people completed the whole process depended on the amount of time they were willing to give us. If an individual had limited time we encouraged them to contribute post-it notes to an existing map and possibly complete an H-diagram on an aspect they were particularly passionate or vocal about. If individuals were not comfortable writing comments down for themselves we would do it for them making sure that what we had recorded was in fact what they meant. Children who participated drew maps of the city highlighting places and things in the city that they thought important, and if they were able, also recorded what they liked and did not like.

A number of different activities and initiatives proved to be fruitful in terms of gaining community input. During the

**Map with attached post-it comments after input from people during fieldwork.**



two days, team members proactively sought to gain the input of a range of community members. We took the maps generated at the public meetings to a range of sites in each of the suburbs where people were known to gather; e.g. the community centre, sports clubs, shopping centres, pubs. We used the maps to first attract people's attention and then to provide a basis for people to add ideas using post-it notes, or if they had the time and were willing, to generate more maps and/or continue through into H-diagrams. Through contacts we gained from Council staff, from people we spoke to during the day and from our own personal contacts we arranged a variety of group and individual meetings throughout the two days. These included groups of young people, school pupils and staff, retired people, shopkeepers and members at the local bowling club and golf club.

### Final reporting and follow-up

Information gathered from the community was reproduced and formally documented in a report for the PNCC. A description of the demographics, ethnic background and gender of those who contributed to the process were recorded. In addition, any particular sector of the community we identified as not being part of the consultation is acknowledged in our final report. An overview of the approach and methods was described along with the objectives that guided our activities.

Following on from this consultation using participatory methods, PNCC staff from other areas in the Council have commissioned similar types of processes to provide community perspectives into aspects of the Council's decision making and activities. Based on feedback and discussions with Council staff, in the final reports we also included an executive summary. This summary outlines the key themes that have emerged from the consultation exercise. In addition we also commented where possible, on the similarities and differences between the views and ideas we obtained and those expressed in official documents of the PNCC and other relevant agencies.

As the use of these approaches has increased, the willingness and acceptance of local government staff and Councillors to be involved, and to view as worthwhile the outcomes of these processes, has positively increased. We have learnt that it is important however to package and present the material in a manner that does not compromise the input of the community, and but also enhances the possibility that officials and councillors will read and take on board the information gained from the community.

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Guy, S and Inglis A.S. (1999) Tips for Trainers: Introducing the 'H-form' - a method for monitoring and evaluation. *PLA Notes 34*. IIED, London.

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# Local government using participatory methods to facilitate stakeholder dialogue and conflict resolution

by JOANNA HUMPHRIES

## Introduction

Newcastle is a city of 270,500 people in the north east of England. In November 2000 Newcastle City Council began joint work with the two Universities in the City to research issues that surround student communities. The recent trend in Newcastle as with most British 'university cities' is for student housing to dominate some communities, particularly in areas where old, large houses are common and significant numbers of students can be accommodated in one household. This concentration of young people in communities impacts on existing residents through increased noise, parked cars and a general perception of anti-social behaviour.

In Newcastle we found that a number of communities appeared to be under significant stress due to high local levels of student occupancy, and resident complaints were increasing to a point where some action was necessary. We (my Community Services colleagues) needed to find a way of facilitating dialogue between Local Authority officials (ourselves and those of other departments), University staff, students and local residents. Our first step was to bring Local Authority and University staff together to analyse the issues and find a practical way of dealing with them. There was also some misconception from the community about student behaviour, suggesting that all students are bad and we felt

that it was essential to quickly and effectively find a way of assessing this.

## Commissioning process

As a first step we agreed that a number of staff from the Authority as well as the two Universities should meet together to commission the research. We had already decided that we would use participatory techniques in student communities and we used a number of participatory tools at this first commissioning meeting. This was of enormous benefit as it broke down some of the barriers between the agencies, and it also enabled them to see how we would carry out the research. Through this process the sense of perceived ownership of the research by all the individual participants from each agency became high. At the same meeting, having seen the effectiveness of the methods themselves, it also became clear to all sides how the research would be conducted and results used. This was vital if we were to move on to action planning - a great deal of research had already been undertaken around students but any tangible action or improvement was hard to identify.

The results of this meeting were written up and distributed widely amongst staff at a number of different levels. In the Local Authority we were able to gain support from the Director of Community and Housing who endorsed the

research and the participatory approach. We also had the support of local councillors who represented the areas where there are large numbers of students. This senior officer and political support was further credited by the fact that in common with all other Authorities, Newcastle City Council were trying out new ways of engaging with people. Funding for the project was awarded from the Authority's Community Consultation Fund that seeks to fund new methods of participation.

### Training and resource implications

The research was to take place over a four month period and we were keen to access as many residents and students as possible. There was limited knowledge of participatory approaches within the Authority so we commissioned an external trainer to run a five-day course to equip fifteen people to use these techniques. We felt that there was some value in training a range of staff from the Authority and the University. This gave us a head start in being able to identify suitable locations and venues where we could talk to students. We also trained a number of students who again helped us to access their own peer group. Training across agencies reinforced the ownership of the participatory process in that staff became enthusiastic about the approach and took this message back to their own organisations.

Over four months we spoke to over 1500 residents and students in University and community settings. Much of the data was gained on a one-to-one street work basis, however a number of formal resident meetings were held. At these formal meetings we made sure that locally elected councillors and Local Authority staff were present. It was immediately clear to us that the participatory style was difficult for some staff to adopt and they tried to dominate each session. As these meetings went on we had to bring in additional trained colleagues to act as 'anti-saboteurs' (i.e. to stop invited, untrained officials' dominating behaviour).

It was also clear that some residents were used to traditional meetings and being able to dominate because they were highly articulate; this new approach was clearly frustrating for some and they initially refused to participate. However when faced with seeing other people giving enormous amounts of information they inevitably put pen to paper. As the months progressed this consistent approach became popular with the staff who were initially reluctant to work in this way. The relief of not having to listen to the same resident repeating things at every meeting was a distinct advantage! This gradually built credibility amongst staff and a high level of interest in the approach became apparent. Over the next few months we were often asked by other staff

### Methods used at initial agency meeting:

We used timelines, seasonal impact calendars, mapping, H-diagrams and Venn diagrams at this meeting<sup>1</sup>. The ownership process was helped by using a spider diagram to identify who we should be talking to, what each agency wanted to know and how the research would be used by them.

not involved in this specific piece of work to sit in on sessions to observe. As such this was felt to be a positive interest.

### Moving from analysis to action

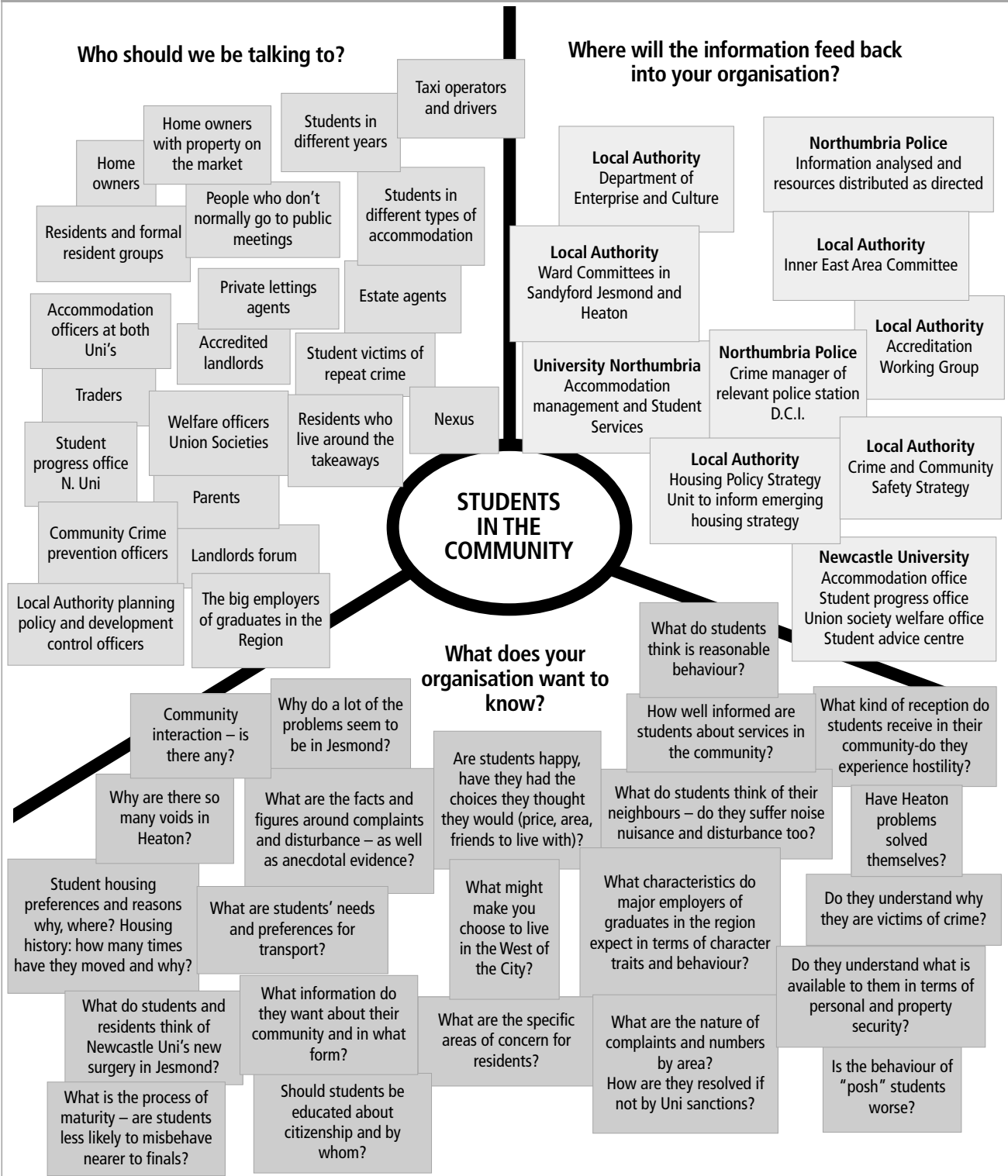
There was a desire by some staff and councillors to take the initial data and make their own analysis. There was a general feeling that unpicking the data and coming to a conclusion was the role of the Local Authority. However, they did support the continued approach and attended public verification meetings where respondents were able to analyse the information and suggest achievable solutions. These were very positive meetings where students and residents often generated the same comments and suggestions, which surprised many people involved, but helped to break down the misconception that students and residents have wildly different aspirations for their communities. The staff involved agreed that the suggested actions were nearly always achievable and realistic and often included very small-scale improvements that would be more effective than the existing programme of work.

At this point we felt that we could begin producing an action plan and there was support from both senior staff in the Authority and councillors for this to happen. A formal action-planning meeting was held and residents, students and representatives from the original team who commissioned the research were invited. This was a large meeting with over 70 people in attendance. People worked in small groups to prioritise the recommendations that had come from the work in the community and as a result a 16-page action plan was generated.

The action plan has provided an operational document that has been worked through since its production in May 2001. It has been received by the Local Authority's Housing Select Committee that feeds in to the Cabinet system and it continues to provide a framework for the Authority to work jointly with the two Universities and other agencies. Regular updates on progress are provided to communities through a newsletter and formal public meetings where a participatory style is used.

<sup>1</sup>For details see articles by Reid, Wieslawa, this issue and Guy, S and Inglis AS (1999) 'Introducing the 'H-form' - a method for monitoring and evaluation.' *PLA Notes 34*. IIED, London.

Specification from each Agency for the participation and consultation exercise



### Lasting benefits and future projects

In addition to the positive benefits that are described, there have been a number of constructive changes to the way we are able to engage with people at a local level. The community meetings or committees, which are held on a quarterly basis as a means of keeping local people up to date, are far less formal and have moved away from a conference style to round table workshops. Special issue meetings are held in the manner of walk around market stalls with information clearly displayed for people to view and plenty of opportunity for people to comment in writing.

Some officers are still reluctant to go out and about on the street to engage with people but this is largely due to the need for training and opportunities to practice. They are however much more likely to accept blank paper consultation and are less inclined to use structured questionnaires. There is now also a greater honesty amongst staff that consulting with the regular meeting attendee is often easier and quicker, and thought is being given to how they can resource a more participatory approach to overcome this reliance.

The approach has been recognised at a senior level as worthy, and support has been given to extending greater participation through funding the creation of a local network of residents who will be trained in participatory methods. The objective of this will be to hand over a

**“The approach has been recognised at a senior level as worthy, and support has been given to extending greater participation through funding the creation of a local network of residents who will be trained in participatory methods”**

number of district issues for consideration and consultation by local people with residents in their own neighbourhood. Local Authority staff will assist with the process, and training in participatory appraisal will be given and supported by a local training agency. The handing over of local issues in this way is seen as a first step to letting residents set neighbourhood priorities and agendas. There is support and trust from senior staff to let this process take place without too much direction, and the results will be received through a formal route of committees back into the Authority. Whilst this might seem unnecessarily bureaucratic, it recognises the fact that Local Authorities need to have a formal process of endorsing consultation to ensure that action then follows. This is seen as a positive way of influencing local agendas and there is already potential to replicate this network across the City.

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# 6

## Participating or taking control? An experience in rural planning from Mali

by MAMADOU DIAKITÉ

Paying for the cost of local development is one of the major challenges facing Mali's Rural Councils, and although central government does contribute it is not nearly enough. In the district of Bankass in north-eastern Mali, where I have been working for the past ten years as the coordinator of a SOS Sahel International/GB project, the only potential source of local income for the Rural Council is to tax local people or to levy charges for the use of natural resources such as forests and rangelands that are under their control.<sup>1</sup>

The law gives Rural Councils final responsibility for the management of natural resources in their jurisdictions, including the right to charge people for the right to use these resources if they have been 'improved' in some way.<sup>2</sup> And although the law does state that they have to do this in a consultative way by involving local people and their community-based organisations, the law does not say how exactly this is to be done. There is therefore a danger that Rural Councils could go ahead and develop their areas and impose a taxation system without sufficiently involving local people

or taking into account the longer-term implications of their actions on either the environment or the communities.

### **The challenges: Why does this matter and what is at stake?**

The main issue at stake is local people's livelihoods. The majority of local people are agro-pastoralists and practice a number of additional activities to make ends meet (e.g. seasonal fishing, woodcutting, craftwork), all of which depend on periodic access to farmland, rangeland, and forest products. In order to protect local people's livelihoods, Rural Councils are faced with two major challenges, both of which require them to reconcile short-term political gain with longer-term development objectives. The first challenge is to get council officials to design management plans for the sustainable use of these resources. This requires that they take a long-term view of local development, which goes beyond their three-year mandate, and invest in processes that will not bear fruit for many years. The other challenge is for them to understand and accept that these plans need to be designed in a participatory way with all the people who use and depend on these resources, including those groups who have a low social standing (e.g. women) or who do not live in the area but periodically visit (e.g. mobile pastoral groups). In theory there shouldn't be a problem, but in practice Mayors and their councillors may be tempted to opt for

<sup>1</sup>Sustainable Management of Sylvo-Pastoral Resources project. This project carries out training activities to strengthen the capacities of customary and 'modern' community-based organisations better to manage the forest and other natural resources in the area.

<sup>2</sup>In practice, the central government in Mali has yet to pass the additional laws which will authorise the transfer of these management rights to the Rural Councils.

short-term, quick-fix solutions which will make them popular with the more influential resident population who may then vote them back into office.

These are the challenges that we have been working on in the district of Bankass over the past two or three years. Getting the local government bodies to accept the principle of social inclusion is not easy, but from the outset our approach has been to help the Rural Councils and the local population better understand what it might cost them in the long run if they did exclude certain people. We followed a slow, process-led approach that sought progressively to help Rural Councils to work in a more participatory way with their constituents and other interest groups from other areas of Mali. This process is described below.

### The implication process

Figure 1 shows how the project followed an iterative, process-led approach to build the capacity of the Rural Councils in the District of Bankass better to understand the stakes at play in the management of the natural resources under their jurisdiction.

The horizontal axis is a time line showing the start of activities in October 1999 and the situation in May 2002, whereas the vertical axis demonstrates the degree to which the Mayors and their councillors were increasingly involved in the design and implementation of these activities, as well as the degree to which they increasingly involved other actors.

#### Stage 1

The first activity that the project did was to arrange a meeting with the newly elected Mayors and their councillors to explain to them the work of SOS Sahel. The main outcome of the meeting was a request for training in what the laws of the land said about who was responsible for the management of natural resources.

#### Stage 2

After the initial meeting, SOS Sahel organised a conventional training workshop for the Mayors and their councillors at which the various laws regulating natural resources were presented and discussed. A key outcome of this workshop was the realisation by the Rural Councils of the need to organise a regional conference on the topic of natural resource management, which would bring together all major stakeholders.

#### Stage 3

Soon after this training workshop, the Rural Councils in the district of Bankass were invited by a neighbouring district to participate in a regional meeting to decide how best to

**“Getting the workshop participants to understand these divergent perceptions was a very powerful tool in helping to discuss how best to resolve them in a non-conflictual manner”**

organise the seasonal transhumance of livestock between their respective areas. The project decided that its most effective contribution would be to help the Rural Councils from the district of Bankass to prepare for this important meeting by holding a preparatory workshop to analyse all the problems associated with seasonal transhumance. This it did, and, in so doing, helped the Mayors and their councillors to identify the key livestock corridors linking the two districts, but more importantly the need for them to get their counterparts in the other district to agree to more reciprocal arrangements for accessing pasturelands in their respective areas. Although the meeting between the two districts did not resolve all the problems, it did arrive at the unanimous decision that they needed to work together to rehabilitate the major livestock corridors linking their two districts.

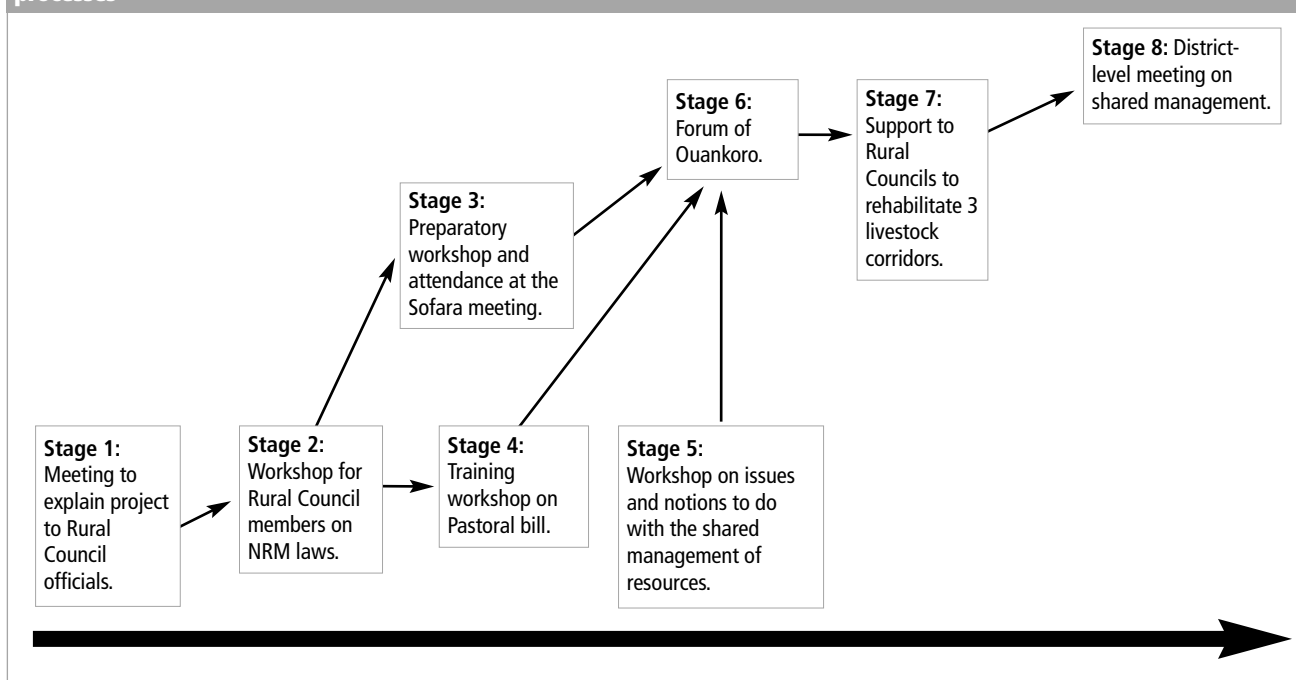
#### Stage 4

The Rural Councils in the district of Bankass were keen to get on with identifying and demarcating the three major livestock corridors that crossed the areas under their jurisdiction. The danger was that they might do this in a unilateral way without sufficiently involving resident farmers, many of whose fields were blocking these corridors, or resident or transhumant pastoralists who drive their and others' livestock along these corridors. To counter this potential risk, the project organised a workshop to explain to the Mayors and their councillors what provisions the pastoral bill was proposing for the management of livestock corridors. This meeting, in addition to explaining the contents of the bill, was an opportunity to debate the potential effects of such a law on different people's access to resources. The main concerns were that local government authorities in other areas would place high taxes on the use of pastoral land. Other concerns were on the question of formalising access to the residues of the harvest in private fields. The observations from this workshop contributed to the debates on the pastoral law at national level.

#### Stage 5

SOS Sahel followed up the training workshop on the pastoral bill with another meeting to reinforce the notions of 'social

**Figure 1: Building the capacity of the Rural Councils in the District of Bankass to implement participatory planning processes**



inclusion' and 'shared management' over such resources as forestlands and pastures, which are used by many different users at different times of the year. Although local government officials do come from the area and are thus aware of the interactions and synergies that exist between farming, livestock rearing and other land use systems, there is still a very strong perception of the need to segregate these activities into distinct spatial units, and to limit their access to local residents. After all, it is the resident population who pay taxes and who vote in the by-elections. Introducing concepts of shared management and asking the local government bodies to use participatory processes to involve local residents is one thing. Asking them to do it for non-residents who are not local taxpayers or voters, and who only periodically visit the area and are perceived as 'outsiders' who cause trouble, is a completely different issue!

#### Stage 6

A little while later the members of the Rural Councils, with the help of SOS Sahel, organised the Forum of Ouankoro. This was a regional meeting held to discuss the key principles that should guide natural resource management in the district of Bankass. It was a very public affair with delegations from the national offices of the relevant Ministries, representatives from several Embassies and donor organisations, as

well as a very large contingent of participants representing the local populations, development organisations and government bodies. The meeting was a great success in that it managed to identify a number of key principles for the management of resources in the area, including the notions of shared management and subsidiarity.

#### Stage 7

The Forum of Ouankoro provided an overall framework for a series of activities subsequently carried out by the Rural Councils in a participatory manner with the help of SOS Sahel. One of the first activities consisted of identifying and demarcating the routes followed by three livestock corridors linking the district of Bankass with the Inner Niger Delta. This was an extremely tricky exercise since it required the Mayors and their councillors to convince local residents to remove their fields from these corridors and to give up potential agricultural land for livestock resting places. The Rural Councils did all the consultation work with the local communities with the project only providing logistical support and occasional advice on issues relating to the shared management of resources. In the space of a few months over 100km of livestock corridor was re-identified and marked out.

The management rules for the corridors were designed in a participatory manner during the three consecutive work-

shops. This was how it was done. The Rural Councils and the project had noticed that although the livestock corridors had been re-defined, many farmers continued to plant their crops in them causing conflicts as herders tried to access pastoral areas. The workshops used the newly voted pastoral law as a working tool. This law defines the principles of how pastoral resources in Mali should be managed and gives a lot of space for Rural Councils and local associations to define their own rules. The workshops thus brought these actors together to discuss in small groups the sorts of rules they thought would be most appropriate, and which would be allowed under the law. The results of the group discussions were presented in plenary and a definitive set of rules agreed. These rules were subsequently written down in a document, which was then signed by all twelve Mayors of the District.

To ensure that these rules were respected, monitoring committees were established in each of the Rural Councils directly affected by the livestock corridors, as well as at district level. A key activity undertaken by these committees just before the start of the rainy season in 2002 was to visit all the villages affected by the corridor to remind farmers that they should not be planting crops in the marked corridors.

#### Stage 8

The final activity to date was the organisation of a district-level meeting to discuss the issues at stake in natural resource management within the context of decentralisation in Mali. In the meeting we used various tools to reiterate the need for the Rural Councils to adopt a long-term vision and to use participatory and inclusive methods of consultation to ensure that everyone, including non-resident groups, are able to contribute to the design of natural resource management plans.

First, we reported back on a study the project had carried out comparing how different users perceive pastoral resources and areas in the Samori forest. Through these discussions the councillors saw how the administration, the settled farmers and the agro-pastoralists all have a very different view of what constitutes 'pastoral areas'. Farmers saw this land as fallow or uncultivated land waiting to be turned into productive farmland, thus ensuring the future of farming in the area. Herders, however, perceive the same land as their dry and/or wet season grazing critical to their livelihood strategies. Getting the workshop participants to understand these divergent perceptions was a very powerful tool in helping to discuss how best to resolve them in a non-conflictual manner.

Second, a summary and depersonalised account of the

## **"One cannot force the pace without running the risk of driving the process yourself and leaving those whom you want to help far behind"**

results of the Family Portrait studies were given to the participants in small groups.<sup>3</sup> Each group then had to identify and analyse the survival strategies of these families, and the problems they faced in relation to the exclusive management of natural resources.

These two tools, based on real case scenarios in the District of Bankass, allowed the councillors to discuss the issues associated with shared management in an informed manner. As a result of this workshop, the councillors identified the necessary conditions for shared management in the respective areas, and decided to establish consultative bodies at the level of their councils and the district to debate and resolve natural resource management problems on a regular basis.

#### **Lessons learnt from the experience**

These consultative bodies are not yet operational but they do offer the opportunity for local government bodies to ensure the regular participation of their citizens in all decisions regarding natural resources in their areas. A lot of work still remains to be done in building the capacity of these bodies to ensure that they are representative and equitable, and are able to debate issues in an informed manner. There are also unresolved issues about how exactly these consultative bodies will work with both customary and modern community-based natural resource management organisations.

However, in the space of two years we have moved from a situation where there was hardly any genuine consultation or informed discussion on the issues at stake, to one in which the Rural Councils are willing to engage with their constituents and share responsibility for the management of natural resources. The key role of the project has been to support a process of action-research on key issues surrounding the shared management of resources, and to provide the opportunities for the Rural Councils and the communities to discuss these issues together in order to arrive at consensual decisions on what best to do for the common good.

Facilitating this process, however, is difficult and requires a number of conditions. First, it takes a long time because it has to go at the speed at which local people and their repre-

<sup>3</sup>The project had carried out a series of studies on a sample number of families in order better to understand local livelihood strategies.

representatives can assimilate and accept new ideas. One cannot force the pace without running the risk of driving the process yourself and leaving those whom you want to help far behind. Second, it requires that project workers change their attitudes and ways of working from the classic 'leading and teaching' approach to a process of accompanying local people to understand for themselves the issues at stake, and using their knowledge to find appropriate solutions. Third, an important aspect of this accompanying role is the careful use of research. Research results should be used in a visual

way to contribute to group discussion so that participants can analyse for themselves what are the problems. This then provides a sound basis upon which to discuss how best to find their own solutions.

Our experience is that, in the longer-term, this slow, iterative process consisting of helping all the players first to understand the issues and then to come together to discuss them, is likely to be more sustainable and equitable. Whether it will allow the Rural Councils to fund local development more effectively, however, remains to be seen.

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## 7

# Participation paysanne aux négociations foncières dans la région de Thiès, Sénégal

by SERIGNE MANSOUR TALL et ALPHONSE TINE

La région de Thiès, caractérisée par de fortes densités rurales, connaît une pénurie foncière exacerbée par l'avancée de la ville de Thiès sur les espaces ruraux. Thiès, située seulement à 70 km de Dakar, fonctionne de plus en plus comme sa lointaine banlieue. Des migrations pendulaires partent de la ville, des citadins s'y établissent de plus en plus avec la montée des valeurs foncières dans la capitale. Les terres de la Communauté rurale de Fandène qui ceinturent la commune de Thiès sont de plus en plus convoitées par le front d'urbanisation expropriant des paysans de leurs champs on intégrant dans le périmètre communal des populations rurales. L'urbanisation des terres agricoles remet en cause l'activité agricole familiale. Un conflit est engagé entre la commune de Thiès intéressée par l'extension de son périmètre et la communauté rurale soucieuse de pérenniser les champs des ruraux. Si les citadins semblent peu concernés par ce conflit considéré comme l'affaire des autorités de la commune, dans la communauté rurale une mobilisation et un engagement des populations, grâce à la tenue de plusieurs assemblées villageoises, ont permis de mieux négocier le foncier. Il est ressorti de l'atelier sur la MARP organisé en juin 1992 avec l'appui de l'USAID par l'Association des Jeunes de Fandène (AJF) que la gestion des terres de Fandène est marquée par des conflits et alliances entre agriculteurs et pasteurs autour des terres du Goll (forêt en langue locale sérère) dont la récupération est une alternative à la pénurie

foncière. Aujourd'hui, même si les conflits agriculteurs et pasteurs sont encore lancinants, la menace provient plus des lotissements de la Commune de Thiès.

## **Contexte des relations rurales urbaines : avancée de la ville et menace des terroirs ruraux**

C'est en toute souveraineté que les autorités municipales effectuent des lotissements sans aucune forme de négociation avec les ruraux sur leurs champs situés aux portes de la ville. Rôniers et vergers (manguiers, agrumes...) des abords de la ville, principale source de revenus des populations locales, laissent la place à l'habitat. Face à la poussée de la ville de Thiès sur la communauté rurale de Fandène, les organisations paysannes ont organisé à partir de 1994 plusieurs ateliers de conscientisation et de renforcement des capacités de leurs membres. Des émissions radio sont diffusées, des tournées villageoises organisées pour sensibiliser la population. Autour du noyau du précurseur l'AJF, est créée NIL JAM, une grande fédération des organisations paysannes de la région. Au début des années 1990, a été mise en place une plus grande organisation intégrant les organisations populaires des villes dite RENAPOP (Recherche, Nature et Population). En fédérant les forces de la société civile rurale et urbaine, les organisations voulaient se positionner comme une troisième force dans le processus de négociation avec les élus et l'administration.

### Processus de négociation foncière : une mixité des références et des stratégies déployées par les ruraux

Les populations de la communauté rurale convoquent divers registres :

- leur statut d'antériorité sur le site démontré par le témoignage des anciens lors d'un atelier de reconstitution de l'évolution foncière de la ville,
- la caution scientifique des universitaires de l'Ecole Polytechnique de Thiès et de Lausanne,
- la caution juridique de personnes ressources qui leur conseillent des opérations légales d'immatriculation de leurs propriétés foncières, de demandes de contrats de culture dans le domaine des forêts classées, de lotissements ruraux sur les terres menacées par le rapide front d'urbanisation de la ville de Thiès.

En accord avec le Conseil Rural, les Organisations populaires ont impulsé des activités de sécurisation foncière pour remettre en cause la légitimité des lotissements urbains et obliger les autorités de la ville à prendre en compte les aspirations des ruraux dans la gestion foncière. Les premières actions dans ce sens remontent à 1989, alors que le développement de Thiès empiétait sur des terres de la communauté rurale de Fandène.

### Reconstitution de l'histoire foncière de Thiès et légitimation d'une reconquête des droits fonciers perdus

Les populations essaient montrer la dépossession de leur patrimoine foncier. A cet effet, plusieurs activités, convoquant le point de vue des scientifiques, des anciens et des techniciens, ont été menées :

En organisant une conférence sur l'évolution urbaine de Thiès, les organisations paysannes ont recueilli des données générales sur le foncier et la démographie prouvant l'antériorité de la présence des autochtones sérères.

Plusieurs anciens, témoins de la naissance de la ville de Thiès, ont livré des témoignages et récits de leurs expériences individuelles et collectives.

La consultation des techniciens a permis de mieux comprendre les procédures et les outils de gestion foncière de la commune et de la communauté rurale. C'est dans ce dernier registre qu'il faut inscrire la conférence tenue le 05 juin 1996, animée par un juriste.

Il ressort des investigations sur la situation foncière de Thiès que depuis 1949, les premiers occupants ayant acquis des terres par le « droit de hache », ont perdu au total environ 6000 ha du fait des expropriations consécutives aux lotissements. Par exemple, à la suite de l'extension de la ville sur la route de Khombole, l'administration n'a octroyé qu'une parcelle de 15 sur 15 m à chaque propriétaire dont le champ en moyenne de plus de 2 ha est rentré dans le périmètre communal. L'attribu-

### "On assiste à une redéfinition des rapports villes/campagnes avec l'arrêt des lotissements urbains et l'acceptation des autorités municipales de négocier avec les autorités rurales"

aire est tenu de verser des frais de bornage de 25 000 F., de le mettre en valeur dans un délai maximum de 2 ans. Correspondance adressée au Président de la République, appui juridique de l'ONG RADI, (Réseau Africain pour le Développement Intégré), conseils du magistrat Oumar SARR lors de la rencontre de Koudiadiène dans la région de Thiès le 5 juin 1996 ont permis aux populations de mettre en oeuvre un certain nombre de stratégies de sécurisation foncière.

### Auto-lotissement : des stratégies de régularisation et d'anticipation foncière

L'auto-lotissement est en fait un plan d'alignement initié par les populations des villages pour contrer le front d'urbanisation ou pour s'aligner sur le modèle urbain du plan en damier.

D'abord, les quartiers se réunissent en assemblée générale pour mettre sur pied une commission chargée des démarches auprès des autorités communales en vue d'obtenir une « autorisation » de lotir. Ensuite, les populations engagent des négociations avec les Services Régionaux du Cadastre et de l'urbanisme pour effectuer un état des lieux, un plan du quartier et le bornage des parcelles. Les villageois supportent tous les frais mais restent maîtres d'ouvrages. Ainsi, 190 parcelles aménagées pour Diassap, 230 pour Pognine et 200 pour Thialy sont gérées en toute autonomie par les résidents.

Dans les villages non encore rejoints par la ville, le processus est non pas une régularisation mais une anticipation pour contrer l'avancée du front d'urbanisation. La stratégie est de procéder à des lotissements ruraux aux portes de la commune, loin du village centre de la communauté rurale pour bloquer toute velléité d'extension urbaine. A Ngoumsane et Nimzatt, 5 assemblées villageoises tenues avec l'appui des responsables de Pognine et de Thialy qui avaient des expériences en matière d'auto-lotissement ont permis de mettre sur pied une commission et un schéma d'aménagement.

### Recherche d'immatriculation des terres auprès du Conseil Rural : saisir une brèche ouverte par la décentralisation

L'immatriculation des terres agricoles est une stratégie de sécurisation foncière. Le Conseil Rural de Fandène peut affecter ou

désaffecter de la Communauté Rurale. La mise sur pied d'un comité pour faire les démarches est la 1<sup>ère</sup> étape. Les villageois formulent une demande collective avec la mention en annexe des éléments d'identité des bénéficiaires. Des demandes individuelles sont possibles. C'est la commission domaniale instituée par le Conseil Rural qui effectue sur les lieux une enquête sur la situation foncière. A la suite de cette opération, le Conseil Rural examine les demandes et délibère. L'attributaire doit s'acquitter des frais de déplacement et services rendus qui peuvent atteindre 35 000 F/hectare. C'est cette procédure qui a permis au village de Thialy de faire immatriculer 73 ha de terres, répartis entre 50 familles. Le dossier de 46 agriculteurs portant sur 46 ha de Dioung-Wango-Thiona suit la même procédure devant le Conseil rural de Fandène.

Ces actions ont été facilitées par l'infiltration du Conseil Rural par des leaders d'OP pour éviter son accaparement par des politiciens. GUEYE avait souligné « l'intégration et le contrôle du Conseil Rural » par les leaders associatifs, des jeunes « qui sont parvenus à infléchir les décisions du Conseil Rural » (Guèye, 1996 : 11). Cependant les lotissements effectués à la fois par les urbains et les ruraux ont accru la pénurie foncière. Les rares terres non exploitées sont localisées dans les forêts classées.

### Les contrats de culture : une autorisation d'exploitation partielle des forêts classées

La possibilité de signer des contrats de culture renouvelables en forêt classée est introduite par le nouveau code forestier au profit des agriculteurs sans terre. Ils doivent faire auprès des services de service des Eaux&Forêts une demande d'autorisation d'exploitation partielle des terres à des fins agricoles dans les forêts classées. L'association des agriculteurs de Dioung-Wango-Thiona a introduit une demande dans ce sens portant sur 100 ha au profit de 120 familles dans la forêt classée située au Sud-Est de Thiès. Les démarches de Pognine portent sur 50 ha. Cette brèche ouverte par l'Etat sur le régime des forêts classées est une mesure destinée à éviter les conflits fonciers et l'exclusion de paysans dans les zones de très forte densité rurale. Mais, c'est une mesure à la fois partielle et temporaire pour éviter à terme le déclassement de fait de ces forêts classées.

### L'onéreux « Cadastrage » des terres encore disponibles : une piste à explorer ?

Le « cadastrage » est un système juridique de protection de la réserve foncière encore disponible mais menacée à court terme. Il peut être mené de manière individuelle ou collective. Les organisations populaires de Thiès étudient une opération de « cadastrage » auprès des services de l'urbanisme et du cadastre. Les populations ont répertorié après des études les

### L'IMAP

L'IMAP (Instrument et Modèle d'Aménagement Participatif) est un plan d'aménagement négocié entre la Commune de Thiès et la Communauté rurale de Fandène. Il s'agit de discuter à travers des assemblées générales la projection de la ville des différents acteurs.

#### Mise en œuvre

Sa mise en œuvre est constituée de larges concertations entre les acteurs par le biais de rencontres fréquentes entre les différents acteurs. Ces concertations ont permis de dresser avec les partenaires techniques un état des lieux de la situation foncière et d'identifier des pistes de solutions. Il s'agit de :

- documenter l'avancée de la ville sur les terroirs et leurs impacts dans les conditions de vie des populations urbaines et rurales,
- d'identifier et négocier des solutions partagées par tous les acteurs du cadre de concertation,
- de restituer ces solutions auprès des populations grâce à des tournées villageoises assurées par les organisations populaires
- de faire valider les éléments de négociation par le préfet, Président du Cadre de concertation et Chef de l'exécutif départemental.

#### Leçons apprises

Cette dynamique de concertation a développé plusieurs apprentissages :

Les mécanismes de gestion officielle de la terre sont pris en compte par les ruraux qui initient des lotissements, font des diagnostics de quartier, et s'intéressent de plus en plus à l'environnement institutionnel et législatif. Il y a une interaction entre les différents acteurs de la gestion foncière qui a accru le pouvoir de négociation des organisations populaires (OP) avec les partenaires et acteurs externes dans un contexte de décentralisation. Ceci favorise une redéfinition des rapports ville-campagne.

On assiste aussi à une la mise sur pied de structures locales, à l'acquisition de meilleures techniques de mobilisation sociale liées aux enjeux fonciers et à une valorisation des stratégies locales de prise de décision. Les populations sont représentées à toutes les étapes du processus de négociation et les préoccupations des organisations paysannes sont mieux prises en charge par les Conseillers ruraux.

Les processus de recherche (Polytechniciens, paysans chercheurs) sont articulés aux procédures politiques (Communes, communautés rurales) et aux actions de développement (services techniques, organisations de producteurs, ONG). Tout se passe comme si la recherche était réconciliée avec la politique. Le plan d'aménagement participatif découlant de l'IMAP est un compromis entre les attentes des populations, les avis techniques des écoles polytechniciens et les réglementations rigides de l'administration locale et déconcentrée.

■ Entretien avec les responsables de Fop Cagin, une association de la ville de Thiès, membre de la RENAPOP

réserves foncières dans les villages de Silmang, Ngoumsane, Thiapong, Peycouk et Diassap. Ces opérations de grande ampleur, 1000 ha pour le seul Silmang, requièrent des moyens financiers importants. La procédure est très coûteuse. Des caisses d'épargne et de crédit pour financer les « cadastrages » sont déjà mises sur pied à Dioung, Silmang et Ngoumsane. En priorité, l'accès à ces crédits est accordé aux propriétés les plus menacées, notamment celles qui jouxtent la ville.



## Les acquis : mise en place d'un cadre de concertation entre la commune et la communauté rurale

On assiste à une redéfinition des rapports villes/campagnes avec l'arrêt des lotissements urbains et l'acceptation des autorités municipales de négocier avec les autorités rurales (organisations paysannes, Conseil Rural). Perçus jusque là comme une opération technique sous l'apanage exclusif des techniciens de l'urbanisme et des hommes politiques, les lotissements évoluent vers une action d'aménagement concerté de l'espace. Pour une mobilisation de la société civile paysanne dans le processus de gestion foncière, plusieurs groupes et associations se sont constitués et ont initié avec la RENAPOPOP, structure fédérative des organisations paysannes de Thiès une recherche-action sur le foncier.

La recherche-action menée par la RENAPOPOP a abouti à la mise en place d'un cadre de concertation réunissant autour de la question foncière la communauté rurale de Fandène, la commune de Thiès, les écoles polytechniques de Lausanne et de Thiès et la RENAPOPOP. Le Cadre, institué par un arrêté du Préfet du département de Thiès, a mis en place un processus de recherche action participatif. Il découle de cette recherche-action un Instrument et Modèle d'Aménagement Participatif (IMAP) qui est en réalité une esquisse de plan d'aménagement concerté des espaces urbains et ruraux du département.

## Conclusion

La participation des populations rurales à la gestion foncière locale a été possible grâce à diverses stratégies : une caution scientifique des écoles polytechniques démontrant des possibilités d'extension la ville vers les zones moins propices à l'agriculture même si leur aménagement est plus difficile, une collaboration avec les techniciens de l'administration pour accéder à l'information foncière officielle et explorer toutes les possibilités juridiques et réglementaires, un engagement de la population facilité par la tenue de multiples assemblées villageoises et l'éveil « d'une conscience foncière » grâce en partie à l'utilisation des outils de la MARP (carte des ressources, transect, profil historique).

Mais le processus de concertation est menacé par plusieurs facteurs.

La bureaucratisation du processus peut réduire la capacité

d'influence des organisations paysannes, initiatrices du processus de concertation, qui n'ont pas la légitimité institutionnelle pour mettre en œuvre certaines décisions. La Présidence du Cadre est assurée par le Préfet car il n'y a pas de tutelle entre la Commune et la Communauté rurale. Le Maire ne peut pas convoquer le Président de Conseil Rural et vice versa. Pour une démocratisation de l'accès à la direction du cadre de concertation aux leaders d'OP, il faut le faire évoluer vers un groupement d'intérêt communautaire une institution prévue par la loi sur la Décentralisation de 1996. Son objectif est la participation des acteurs autres que politiques et administratifs dans le processus de décentralisation.

La RENAPOPOP doit mettre l'accent sur l'apprentissage à partir des activités et problématiques rencontrées afin de renforcer les capacités de négociation des OP. Ce type de conflit étant caractéristique de la décentralisation dans les zones de forte pression foncière, des contacts sont menés avec d'autres villes du Sénégal confrontées à la même situation afin d'impulser une application à grande échelle des processus de négociation foncière entre communes et communautés rurales.

Malgré la force de la puissance publique, les lotissements dans la région de Thiès sont gelés depuis une décennie grâce à l'activisme pacifique des organisations paysannes en partie. Cependant, les quartiers lotis de Thiès sont en voie d'être occupés totalement posant dans un futur proche la nécessité d'une extension du périmètre communal. Une forte personnalité de l'Etat (Jean Collin) avait facilité l'intégration de 8 villages dans le périmètre communal en 1986 pour des raisons plus électoralistes que d'aménagement territorial. Près de deux décennies après, 6 de ces villages sont encore séparés de la ville réelle par un no man's land où prospèrent des champs d'arachide et de mil. Aujourd'hui encore, une autre personnalité de l'Etat, Secrétaire Général adjoint du parti au pouvoir et n°2 du régime actuel, par ailleurs Maire de la commune de Thiès peut encore faire « répéter l'histoire » par un autre coup de force qui ne serait qu'un règlement de façade de la question foncière, une véritable bombe à retardement dans un contexte explosif de pénurie de terres et de paupérisation des populations rurales. La participation de la société civile rurale est plus un impératif d'équité et de justice, un garant de la transparence.

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# 8

## Farmer participation in land-use negotiations in Thiès Region, Senegal

by SERIGNE MANSOUR TALL and ALPHONSE TINE

The region of Thiès, with its densely populated rural areas, is experiencing land shortages exacerbated by the encroachment of Thiès town on agricultural land. Thiès, which is only 70km from Dakar, is increasingly functioning as a distant suburb. People move to and from the town, while city dwellers are increasingly settling on the outskirts as property values rise in the capital. In the Fandène Rural Council, land surrounding Thiès Municipality is increasingly coming under pressure from urban expansion. Farmers' fields are expropriated and rural residents are brought within the boundaries of the Municipality. Urban development on farmland jeopardises family farming. There are disputes between Thiès Municipality, which is interested in expanding its boundaries, and the Rural Council, which wants to maintain farmers' fields. While urban residents do not seem much concerned about this conflict, which is considered to be a matter for the municipal authorities, there has been popular mobilisation and commitment within the Rural Council. Several village assemblies have been held where land use and tenure issues have been negotiated. The workshop organised in June 1992, with support from USAID, by the Fandène Youth Association (AJF) revealed that land management in Fandène is characterised by conflicts and alliances between farmers and herders in respect of Goll land (meaning forest in the local Serere language), which is being used in response to land

shortages. Nowadays, even though conflict between farmers and herders can still be acute, the threat comes more from urban development in Thiès Municipality.

### **The background to rural/urban relationships: urban encroachment and the threat to village land**

The municipal authorities have full power to parcel out land adjacent to the town for building, without any negotiation whatever with the rural communities. Palm groves and orchards (mangoes and citrus) on the outskirts, the main income source for the local people, are giving way to housing. As Thiès town has increasingly encroached on Fandène Rural Council, farmer organisations have organised several awareness-raising and capacity-building workshops for their members. Since 1994, radio programmes have been broadcast and tours of villages organised to make people aware of the problem. NIL JAM, a large federation of farmer organisations in the region, was set up following in the footsteps of its precursor, the AJF. In the early 1990s, a larger organisation was established that incorporated popular organisations in the towns, known as RENAPOPOP (Research, Nature and Population). By federating representatives of rural and urban civil society, these organisations hoped to act as a third force in the process of negotiation with elected councillors and the government administration.

### **Negotiating land use: the mixture of different references used and strategies deployed by rural councils**

Inhabitants of the Rural Council can call on several references:

- their status as the first residents of the site, demonstrated by evidence given by the elders at the workshop dealing with the history of land use development in the area;
- scientific research done by academics from Thiès and Lausanne Engineering Schools;
- legal back-up from resource persons who have advised them to go to the courts to register their landholdings, as well as to apply for contracts to cultivate within gazetted forests and for plot allocation in rural areas threatened by the rapid urban expansion of Thiès.

Together with the Rural Council, popular organisations have promoted activities to achieve greater security of tenure, challenging the legitimacy of urban housing developments and forcing the authorities to take account of Rural Councils' aspirations in respect of land-use management. The first initiatives date back to 1989, when the expansion of Thiès began to encroach on the land of Fandène Rural Council.

### **Piecing together the history of tenure in Thiès and legitimising the struggle to regain lost tenure rights**

Communities are trying to show how they have been dispossessed of their heritage. Various activities have been undertaken in this regard, drawing together the viewpoints of scientists, elders and government extension workers.

At a conference on urban development in Thiès, farmer organisations collected general data about land use, tenure and demography, proving that the indigenous Serere people were the first settlers.

Several elders, who had witnessed the birth of Thiès town, gave evidence and told stories about their individual and collective experience.

Consulting government extension workers helped to gain a better understanding of the procedures and tools used by the Municipality and Rural Council in land-use management. This was the focus of a conference, led by a legal specialist, held on 5th June 1996.

Investigation into the tenure position in Thiès shows that, since 1949, the original occupants who had acquired land through clearance have lost a total of some 6000 hectares as a result of land expropriation for urban development. For example, when the town expanded along the road to Khombole, the administration only allocated one 15 x 15m plot to each owner whose field, averaging more than 2 hectares, was brought within the Municipality's boundaries. The plot holder was obliged to pay 25,000 CFA francs to have it marked out

### **"We are seeing a redrawing of the relationship between town and countryside, as urban planning schemes are halted and the municipal authorities agree to negotiate with rural authorities"**

and to bring it under production within two years. Correspondence sent to the President of the Republic, legal support from the NGO RADI (African Integrated Development Network) and advice from Judge Oumar Sarr at the meeting in Koudiadiène, Thiès region, on 5th June 1996 helped local communities to implement a number of strategies designed to achieve greater security of tenure.

### **Parcelling and marking out: strategies undertaken by communities to regularise their tenure position and forestall urban expansion**

This refers to plans initiated by village communities to combat urban expansion or imitate the urban grid layout model.

First of all, neighbourhoods hold a general assembly to set up a committee to apply to the municipal authorities to obtain 'authorisation' to parcel the land out. The communities can then begin negotiations with the regional Land Registry and Town Planning Department to carry out a survey, make a plan of the neighbourhood and mark out plots. The villagers bear all the costs, retaining ownership of the project. In this way, 190 plots in Diassap, 230 in Pognine and 200 in Thialy have come to be self-managed by the residents.

In villages that have not yet been overtaken by the town, the process does not involve formalising the existing position but planning ahead to stem urban advance. The strategy is to parcel out rural plots on the outskirts of the Municipality, far from the chief village of the Rural Council, to block any attempt at urban expansion. In Ngoumsame and Nimzatt, five village assemblies were held with the support of leaders from Pognine and Thialy who had experience of such projects. As a result, a committee and planning scheme were established.

### **Applying to register land with the Rural Council: taking advantage of a window opened by decentralisation**

Registering farmland is a strategy to obtain greater security of tenure. The Fandène Rural Council may make or withdraw allocations of land under its jurisdiction. Setting up a committee is the first stage in the procedure. The villagers prepare a collective application, with an attachment detailing the identity of the beneficiaries. Individual applications are allowed. The prop-

erty commission set up by the Rural Council will undertake an investigation of the tenure position on-site. After this, the Rural Council will examine applications and consider its response. The plot beneficiary must pay for the service and travelling expenses, amounting to as much as 35,000 CFA francs per hectare. This was the procedure used by Thiely village to register 73 hectares of land, divided amongst 50 families. An application from 46 farmers to Fandène Rural Council covering 46 hectares in Dioung-Wango-Thiona is going through the same procedure.

These activities have been facilitated by the infiltration of the Rural Council by leaders of popular organisations to prevent it being taken over by politicians. However, formal plot division carried out by both urban and rural residents has increased land shortages. The few remaining areas of uncultivated land are in the gazetted forests.

#### Cultivation contracts: authorisation for partial development of gazetted forests

The option to enter into renewable cultivation contracts within gazetted forests was introduced by the new Forest Code for the benefit of landless farmers. They have to submit an application to the Water and Forestry Service to use some parts of gazetted forests for farming. The farmers' association of Dioung-Wango-Thiona has submitted an application covering 100 hectares for 120 families in the gazetted forest to the southeast of Thiès. Pognine is applying for 50 hectares. This change made by the government in the system of gazetted forests is a measure designed to avoid tenure conflicts and the exclusion of small farmers in heavily populated rural areas. However, this is a partial, temporary measure to prevent these forests from losing their gazetted status altogether.

#### The cumbersome process of surveying and 'registering' land that is still available: a way forward?

'Land registration' is a legal system for protecting land reserves that are still available but threatened in the short term. It may be used on an individual or collective basis. Popular organisations in Thiès are considering applying for 'land registration' from the Town Planning and Land Registry Department. The communities have carried out surveys to list land reserves in the villages of Silmang, Ngoumsame, Thiapong, Peycouk and Diassap. Substantial financial resources are required for these large-scale operations, involving 1000 hectares for Silmang alone, because the procedure is very costly. Savings and credit funds to finance 'land registration' have already been set up in Dioung, Silmang and Ngoumsane. Access to funding is given, as a priority, to the most threatened holdings, especially those next to the town.

#### IMAP

An IMAP (or Participatory Development Instrument and Model) is a planning scheme negotiated between the Municipality of Thiès and Fandène Rural Council. The idea is to hold general assemblies to discuss how the various stakeholders see the future of the town.

#### Implementation

The implementation of the plan involves broad consultation and dialogue between stakeholders through regular meetings. As a result of these consultation meetings, it has been possible to take stock of the tenure position with technical partners and identify possible solutions. This means:

- documenting the town's encroachment on the villages and the impact of this on the living conditions of urban and rural communities;
- identifying and negotiating solutions shared by all stakeholders taking part in the forum;
- getting feedback on these solutions from the communities at a series of meetings in the villages held by popular organisations;
- having the outcome of these negotiations ratified by the Préfet, the chairman of the forum and the head of the departmental executive.

#### Lessons learned

This dynamic process of dialogue has enabled many lessons to be learned:

Formal land-use mechanisms are being adopted by rural communities, who initiate plot division, assess their neighbourhood's status and needs and show increasing interest in the institutional and legal environment. Interaction between the various stakeholders in land-use management has increased the negotiating power of popular organisations with external partners and stakeholders within the context of decentralisation. This encourages the redrawing of the relationship between town and countryside.

We are also seeing the establishment of local structures, the acquisition of improved techniques of social mobilisation around tenure issues and greater use of local decision-making strategies. Communities are represented at all stages of the negotiation process and the concerns of farmer organisations are given more consideration by members of the Rural Council.

Research undertaken by academics and rural researchers is linked together with the political process (at Municipality and Rural Council level) and development programmes (run by the extension services, producer organisations and NGOs). Every effort is made to reconcile research with policy. The participatory development plan deriving from the IMAP is a compromise between community expectations, technical opinions from the Engineering Schools and the rigid rules and regulations laid down by the various local government authorities.

■ From an interview with leaders of Fop Cagin, an association based in Thiès town which is a member of RENAPOP

#### Achievements so far – a forum for consultation between the Municipality and Rural Council has been established

We are seeing a redrawing of the relationship between town and countryside, as urban planning schemes are halted and the municipal authorities agree to negotiate with the rural

authorities (farmer organisations and Rural Council). Having been seen until recently as the exclusive preserve of town planning specialists and politicians, housing schemes are moving towards better planning of land-use management. In order to mobilise rural civil society to take part in the management process, various groups and associations have been set up and have undertaken action research on tenure with RENAPOPOP, the federal structure of farmer organisations in Thiès.

Applied research undertaken by RENAPOPOP has resulted in the establishment of a forum for consultation and dialogue about the tenure issue between the Fandène Rural Council, the Municipality of Thiès, the Engineering Schools of Lausanne and Thiès and RENAPOPOP. The forum, formally constituted by means of an order from the Préfet of Thiès Département, has begun a process of participatory applied research. This has resulted in a participatory development instrument and model (IMAP for short) which is, in reality, an outline joint planning scheme for the urban and rural areas of the *département*.

### Conclusions

Village communities have been able to take part in local land-use management using various strategies: scientific back-up from the Engineering Schools demonstrating that the town could expand towards areas less suitable for agriculture, even if they were more difficult to develop; co-operation with government extension workers to gain access to official tenure information and explore all legal and statutory possibilities; popular commitment facilitated by holding large numbers of village assemblies and awakening a 'tenure conscience', partly as a result of using PRA tools (resource map, transects, historical profile, etc.).

However, the process of consultation and dialogue is threatened as a result of various factors.

Bureaucratisation of the process may reduce the influence carried by farmer organisations that have begun the process but do not have the institutional legitimacy to implement certain decisions. The forum is chaired by the Préfet, as there is no hierarchical relationship between the Municipality and

the Rural Council. The mayor of the Municipality cannot call the president of the Rural Council to account or vice versa. If access to the leadership structure of the forum is to be opened up to leaders of popular/farmer organisations, its status must be changed to that of a community interest group, an institution provided for in the 1996 law on decentralisation. Its aim is to ensure the participation of stakeholders outside the world of politics and government in the decentralisation process.

RENAPOP must stress learning by doing and learning from problems encountered if it is to strengthen the negotiating capacity of popular organisations. As this kind of difficulty is characteristic of decentralisation in areas experiencing heavy pressure on land, contacts are being made with other towns in Senegal facing the same situation to foster large-scale application of the process of negotiating tenure and land use between the Municipalities and Rural Communities.

Despite the power of the local authorities, planning schemes in Thiès have been frozen for a decade, partly as a result of the peaceful activism of farmer organisations. However, the formally laid out neighbourhoods of Thiès will soon be fully occupied, meaning that expansion of the Municipality's boundaries will be necessary in the near future. A leading figure in the government managed to bring eight villages within the Municipality's boundaries, in 1986, for reasons that had more to do with electioneering than territorial development. Almost two decades later, six of these villages are still separated from the town itself by a no man's land where fields of groundnuts and millet flourish. Even today, another government figure, the assistant General Secretary of the ruling party and number two in the current regime, who is also mayor of the Municipality of Thiès, could still 'make history repeat itself', imposing another superficial solution to the tenure issue and creating a veritable time bomb in an explosive context of land shortages and pauperisation of village communities. The participation of rural civil society is imperative to ensure equity and justice, providing a guarantee of transparency.

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#### NOTES

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## 9

# Using participatory consultation to help improve local government performance and services

by **GARY TURNER**

## Introduction

Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland and has a population of about 800,000. Clean Edinburgh 2000 is a major strategy of the City of Edinburgh Council designed to make the city a cleaner and more pleasant place to live, work and play. Prior to introducing new working practices to try to achieve this, a consultation exercise was carried out by the Council's Environment and Consumer Services Department in order to establish a baseline position and identify priorities.

Having heard about the success of other City of Edinburgh Council departments in using Participatory Appraisal (PA) methods to conduct consultation, the department decided to use similar methods. This decision was taken because it was felt that the PA approach has methods that are about making people feel able and confident enough to offer their opinions; about removing barriers to participation, both physical and perceived; and about hearing what people want to say rather than what they think you want to hear. Department officials were aware from previous consultation exercises that they had failed to connect with 'Jo Public' – those citizens who just get on with their daily life, and who are, to an extent, disenfranchised from the activist-based decision-influencing processes operating throughout the Council. In particular they hoped to engage with those people who do not:

- fill in questionnaires
- attend public meetings
- write letters to newspapers
- engage with officialdom.

Prior to the consultation, 75 staff (who included street cleaners, project managers, administrators and receptionists) underwent two days of intensive training – predominantly geared to making each person aware of their own prejudices, assumptions and the barriers to positive engagement with citizens. The training also addressed good and bad practice in dealing with people face to face and in developing techniques to make people feel at ease and confident enough to offer their honest opinions. Participants discussed with the trainers the possible methodologies and they felt it was not a good idea to use the more traditional consultation methods (like questionnaires or public meetings), which tend to take up a lot of people's time to address an issue that is not usually of primary importance to citizens. It was decided to make things as easy as possible for members of the public to engage with officials by having the officials go out and about, with a simple and quick method. This method was successfully used to engage with about 150 people each day in 70 areas.

## Methodology

For the purpose of this consultation, maps were produced of

### Analysing the master maps



### Local residents complete the survey



the area in question – with as little ‘map dressing’ as possible. People were asked to indicate (using a menu of letter symbols) on an individual map where there were problems:

- Litter
- Dog fouling
- Overflowing rubbish from bins
- Weeds
- Graffiti
- Dumping of large items (old furniture, etc.)
- Uncut grass
- Any other cleanliness/visual amenity related problem.

This menu was generated from a list of the Council’s statutory responsibilities with regard to keeping the city clean, and a list which had been used in an earlier postal questionnaire survey (although it was still decided to have the ‘any other problem’ category just in case – and it was actually used by a few consultees).

Furnished with a clipboard each, eager members of staff went out onto the streets of Edinburgh to start a comprehensive programme of consultation... face to face interviews using the map and menu were carried out in places such as church halls, betting shops, pubs, libraries, supermarkets and on the street.

During the course of the consultation, babies were held, along with bags and dog leads; shopping was carried to cars, life stories and tales of long ago were heard, secrets of marital

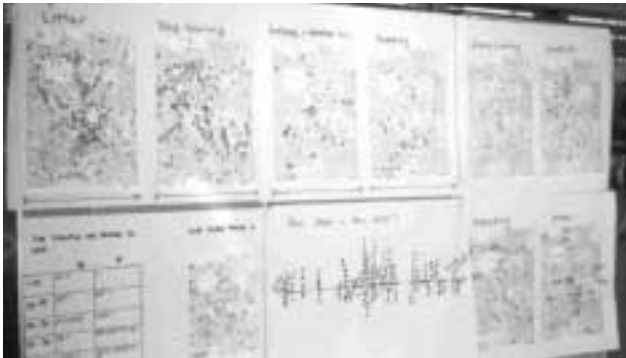
tribulations and births of grandchildren were revealed. All of this has added to the (initially unexpected) fun of carrying out the consultation but was also contrived to make the people being interviewed feel relaxed, comfortable, and confident enough to share their views, using their own language in their own environment – a very privileged position for the team of council officials.

From the individual maps all the information was transferred onto a ‘master’ (composite) map for each ‘Clean Edinburgh’ topic, which immediately and clearly illustrated where the most densely marked, and hence the most problematic, locations were. Copies of these master maps were given to council officials and workers (including street cleaners) after each area consultation, so that priority and extra attention and resources could be given to the worst problem areas just days after citizens had indicated them on a map.

### Benefits and outcomes

- Cost effective – despite the use of council officials’ work time there was no apparent detriment in the provision of core functions. We engaged with approximately 9,000 people – at a cost of less than £1 per person, including the full analysis and interpretation of the information given (as opposed to estimated per person costs of £4 - £15 for questionnaire-based surveys);
- We used an inclusive technique and we reached people

The master maps for each Clean Edinburgh topic



who wouldn't normally air their views or opinions;

- We did not raise unrealistic expectations;
- Opinions were expressed in a non-judgmental environment;
- We maintained a belief in the capacity of people of all ages to analyse their situation and come up with good, new original ideas;
- By undertaking outreach work we made it easy for people to participate and easy for us to engage with them in a positive way;
- By speaking to the people who know their area we can prioritise our resources and focus on the problems that matter to people.

The results were not earth shattering; it is quite clear that dog fouling and litter are the areas of most concern to those who live and work in each area. This confirms what we also found out from a postal questionnaire, but it is invaluable information – we know that we are now dealing with issues that are of relevance across the community and not just for those who are more able and motivated to offer their views in the conventional ways.

This particular way of doing consultation brought the Council many positive outcomes, including some that we did not envisage. The team that was trained in Participatory Appraisal was made up of groups of staff of different levels, and from different sites within the department. During the training they were able to mix, be themselves and share their individual insights and experiences in a comfortable environment. This was invaluable to the whole process. Staff were empowered and felt involved. Most of them were consulting on the issues that would have a definite, direct impact on their work.

The Council officials have found these consultation

**“Listening to local people will continue to be a mainstay of the Clean Edinburgh campaign. It provides primary information that allows us to plan the use of our resources to tackle issues of most concern to the local community”**

methods so easy to use that they have applied them to other projects. With members of a community group, some of them carried out a consultation day to find out if the public would support the introduction of a dog free zone on the beach during the summer months. They used a simple method and the results were very clear; the resounding 'yes' to a dog free zone will allow a pilot scheme to commence next summer.

### Conclusions

Listening to local people will continue to be a mainstay of the Clean Edinburgh campaign. It provides primary information that allows us to plan the use of our resources to tackle issues of most concern to the local community.

What we have at our disposal is a complete analysis of the cleanliness issues throughout the city and a baseline measurement of how clean the city is perceived to be. The whole purpose of our department's function is to make the city a cleaner place to live and work in. It is therefore essential that we now remeasure each area, after a period of one year, and after new working practices based on the initial consultation have been implemented. How are we going to do this? By resurveying the whole city again using PA methodology. This is now underway. The information from this repeat exercise, in conjunction with an ongoing Cleanliness Index Monitoring System carried out by Keep Scotland Beautiful will provide powerful evidence of change, both to the absolute cleanliness of the city and also in the perceptions of cleanliness for those who live and work in this unique capital.

Using these techniques and our new skills we are confident that we can effectively track the needs and aspirations of the citizens of Edinburgh to provide a service that mirrors their needs and expectations.

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# 10

## Participatory planning by the book: lessons from the region of Mopti, Mali

SPECIAL ISSUE

by MAMADOU BANGALY

### Introduction

In this article I will describe the process by which Rural Councils in Mali, a land-locked country in the Sahel (West Africa), establish local development plans in a participatory manner in order to qualify for a grant from a central Capital Development Fund. Gaining access to funds from this grant is critical because most Rural Councils in Mali are unable to fund their local development activities from the taxes they raise locally. Mali is a poor country, but it is also a country with very little experience of local government. It was only three years ago in 1999 that Malian citizens elected the first generation of government officials in rural areas, the Mayors of Rural Councils, and the majority of local people are still highly sceptical of the whole process and are unwilling to part with their money.

The success of the decentralisation process hinges on Rural Councils being able to deliver appropriate, cost-effective and affordable services to their constituents. Local people are less interested, in the short term, with the ideals of participating in the affairs of local government. They want to see tangible problems such as poor health and education facilities, inadequate water supplies, lack of marketing opportunities, impassable roads, etc. being addressed, and addressed quickly. The Government of Mali is well aware of this and as such they have established the l'Agence National

d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales (ANICT). This is a government body responsible for delivering grants to fund local development activities. Various bilateral and multi-lateral donors provide the money, which the ANICT disburses, and they have made their financial contributions conditional on local government bodies applying participatory approaches throughout the planning process.

### Participatory planning in the region of Mopti

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) has taken responsibility for supporting the decentralisation process in the Mopti region of Mali, and in 2000 it established the *Projet d'Appui aux Communes Rurales de Mopti* (PACRP). This project provides funds to pay for the Rural Councils members (the Mayor and his or her councillors) to receive training in how to design a local development plan in a participatory manner, and thereby be eligible to bid for money from the ANICT. The training is subcontracted out through a competitive tendering process to non-governmental organisations and/or private consulting firms. These organisations sign a contract with the project in which they agree to train the Rural Council members in how to design a detailed one-year, and more general three-year, development plan and budget in a participatory manner with local people.

The contracted organisations are expected to follow a standard process, which is outlined in a manual provided by the project. This manual is in effect based on a generic planning process designed by a consulting firm in Bamako (the capital city) at the request of the central government to ensure that the whole country broadly followed a similar planning procedure.

### The theory as explained in the manual

There are six distinct steps to the planning process:

#### 1. Awareness-raising

The councillors, after having been trained, start the planning process with an information campaign within their jurisdictions, to explain to their constituents what a local development plan is, why it is important, how it is going to be done and why it is critical that everyone in the Rural Council participates in the process. The information is disseminated by whatever means possible including local radio, Friday prayers, weekly market days and personal visits by the councillors to the villages. A rota for visiting each village in turn in order to start the planning process proper is also established at this time.

#### 2. Village-level meetings to identify local problems

A meeting is held in each and every village of the Rural Council to identify the problems facing the communities, and the sorts of resources they have in the village (e.g. a well, a communal market garden, a small dam, etc.) The manual recommends that these meetings last no more than three hours, but that they include everyone who lives in the village. Councillors are expected to ensure that everyone participates.

#### 3. Inter-village meeting

After each village has had a visit from the councillors to identify their problems, an inter-village meeting is held at the Rural Council level at which each village sends four representatives. These are usually the village chief (or his representative), one woman representing the interests of the women, one youth representing the interests of the youth and the village secretary responsible for taking notes. The inter-village meeting lasts between three and four days, during which time every village takes turns to describe its problems and how they might be resolved. All this information is written down on flip chart paper or blackboards. Once every village has had the chance to describe its situation, the meeting classifies the problems according to whether they are the responsibility of the village, the Rural

Council, the District, the Region or the State. The laws explaining the roles and responsibilities of the decentralised government bodies are referred to in order to guide the discussion.

Once this exercise has been done, the meeting focuses on those problems specific to the Rural Council. These are written down on a separate sheet of paper or blackboard, and are systematically discussed, one by one, to establish the origins of the problems and how they might be solved. Finally, the meeting prioritises these problems according to their degree of urgency.

#### 4. Planning workshop

Following the inter-village meeting, a planning workshop is held between the councillors and the government technical services (e.g. the local forestry department, the veterinary office, etc.) Together they look at each problem to see whether or not it is correctly stated, and reformulate it if necessary. The problems are then classified by sector (e.g. health, agriculture, education, etc.) mirroring the composition of the government technical departments. Each problem is then analysed to establish its cause, and a technical solution and its cost are proposed. On the basis of this analysis, the councillors decide which problems they can afford to address within the context of their overall budget. At this stage in the process there is often a lot of debate as the councillors are conscious of the need to respond to as many of the populations' problems as they can and to ensure a degree of equity between villages within the Rural Council. Political as well as economic considerations are at play.

However, once a final choice is made, the implementation of the activities are planned over a three year period and a conventional programme document is prepared: overall objectives, specific outcomes, a plan of activities, a budget, and criteria for monitoring progress are established, etc. This is the local development plan of the Rural Council.

#### 5. Endorsement of the local development plan

A two to three day workshop is subsequently held at the Rural Council to endorse the local development plan. The four representatives from each village that attended the inter-village meeting return to attend this meeting. The councillors present the plan and their arguments for retaining certain problems and rejecting others, and for deciding to start in certain villages or with certain activities but not others. These meetings are tumultuous affairs. However, once a broad consensus has been reached the plan is amended as necessary and submitted to the government

## **“Even though the Government has made the Rural Council the focal point of the decentralisation process in Mali, more time needs to be spent equipping local people to participate in the process”**

representative (the Préfet) who is responsible for ensuring that the proposed activities are in conformity with the laws of the land.

### **6. Implementation of the local development plan**

Once the Préfet has approved the plan, the councillors return to all the villages in the Rural Council to discuss in detail how the plan is going to be implemented over the coming three years, and in what way the villages in question are going to contribute. In those villages where the first year's activities are to take place a detailed work plan is established.

After these village meetings the councillors hold a meeting formally to adopt the plan.

### **Participatory planning in practice: the Rural Council of Ondougou**

The Rural Council of Ondougou is located in the heart of the Dogon Plateau, a rocky, inaccessible area with only one tarmac road and very little fertile land. The Rural Council is composed of ten villages with a total population of 4,800 people. The resident population are all Dogon farmers who cultivate rain-fed millet during the rainy season, but who rely on hand-irrigated market gardening (mainly onions) to supplement their diets and their incomes. Seasonal migration of young men and women to larger urban centres, where they earn cash as daily labourers and/or domestic workers, is an important source of revenue, and many people also invest in livestock.

In 2001, I helped the Rural Council of Ondougou to design its local development plan in a participatory manner, and the whole procedure took about two months from start to finish. I followed the guidelines as laid down in the UBCDF manual, and although the latter has been useful in certain respects it also has a number of conceptual and practical flaws.

The first difficulty I had was in training the ten councillors on how to facilitate a participatory planning process. The councillors are illiterate and do not speak any French, whereas I do not speak Dogon, and the UNCDF manual is in French. All the work had to be done through interpreters,

which not only slowed down the process, but also introduced the problem of misinterpretation. The manual has many words and concepts, which do not have their equivalent in the Dogon language and so have to be fully explained. Since I do not understand Dogon I had no way of knowing whether or not the interpreters were explaining the terms properly.

The second problem we encountered was at the level of the village. After the training period, the councillors went off in pairs to carry out the village-level meetings. As explained above, these meetings are supposed to last three hours, during which the whole community is expected to list all their problems and describe what resources they have to solve them. The manual insists on the fact that the meetings must be participatory and that everyone (women, youth, etc.) attend and speak out, and that it is the job of the councillors to ensure this happens. I accompanied the councillors at two village meetings, both of which took much longer than three hours, and although women did physically attend, little was done to help women or men to present a gender-differentiated vision of the village's problems. The main problem is that the planning process does not provide any appropriate tools to help illiterate and highly differentiated communities analyse their situation. There are, for example, no visual PRA or PLA tools such as community resource mapping or institutional mapping. The process consists of the councillors asking questions, the village chief and his elders replying and the village secretary taking notes.

A similar problem was encountered when we held the inter-village meetings at the level of the Rural Council in the village Oudougou Dah. Here the spokesperson for each village stood up and listed his village's specific problems and proposed solutions. This information was laboriously translated into French and noted on large sheets of paper, which the majority of the people couldn't read. By the time each village had had their turn many people couldn't remember what had been said earlier, which greatly hampered the process of participatory analysis that subsequently took place. In reality relatively few people actually participated in the process of identifying and analysing those problems that are the responsibility of the Rural Council.

The next stage involving the Government's technical services was also problematic. Here the problem was not so much to do with language but different perceptions and interests. For example, one of the problems listed by one of the villages was the fact that they did not have a public square in which to hold public meetings. As a cheap solution, they proposed that they be allowed to use the schoolyard for such purposes

when the school was closed in the rainy season. The school director, backed by the other technical staff, rejected this on the grounds that the schoolyard should not be used for any other purpose. Yet the real reason, as the discussions finally revealed, was the fact that the school director planted crops in the schoolyard over the rainy season when the school was closed!

The councillors and the Mayor did in the end come up with a plan that was subsequently discussed, amended and approved by the community. This plan is now being implemented thanks to the Rural Council successfully receiving a grant from ANICT.

### Conclusion

As mentioned above, elected local government bodies are a relatively new phenomena in Mali and that it will take time before local people fully understand what is expected of them, and decide to seize the initiative in ensuring that their elected representatives account for their actions. There are also enormous challenges to overcome in a country where the majority of the population are illiterate and where communications are extremely difficult and costly.

One of the major issues is that of participation versus quality participation. It is not enough just to associate local people with a process, which is largely driven from outside, and according to a pre-established set of steps, and then say they have participated. Genuine participation demands a

**“It is not enough just to associate local people with a process, which is largely driven from outside, and according to a pre-established set of steps, and then say they have participated”**

certain number of pre-conditions. For example, local people need to improve their own capacities to be able to participate. This includes a better understanding of the issues at stake, an ability to carry out their own analysis and planning prior to participating in the Rural Council level exercise, and an ability to create the time and space to ensure that all members of their community are involved, etc. This requires that more attention be paid to the preparatory phase at the village level. One three hour meeting without any visual aides is clearly inadequate for the community to prepare for the higher-level meeting at the Rural Council level. We found that many village representatives were unable to argue their case effectively, particularly at the moment when the Mayor and his councillors presented the draft planning document. Even though the Government has made the Rural Council the focal point of the decentralisation process in Mali, more time needs to be spent equipping local people to participate in the process.

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# Community toilets in Pune and other Indian cities

By **SUNDAR BURRA** and **SHEELA PATEL**

## Introduction

In Pune, a partnership between the municipal government, NGOs and community-based organisations has built more than 400 community toilet blocks. These have greatly improved sanitation for more than half a million people. They have also demonstrated the potential of municipal community partnerships to improve conditions for low-income groups. This paper reflects on the experience of one of these NGOs, working with the municipality and with community organisations.

Pune has 2.8 million inhabitants, two-fifths of whom live in over 500 'slums'. Various local government bodies such as slum boards, housing authorities, development authorities and municipal corporations are meant to provide and maintain public toilets in these settlements. But provision is far below what is needed; indeed, for much of the 1990s, the city of Pune failed to use much of the budget allocated for public toilets. In addition, in those settlements for which toilet blocks were built, there was no consultation with the inhabitants regarding the location, design and construction, and the agencies responsible for construction and maintenance had little accountability to the communities in which they were located. There was no sense of ownership by local communities. The quality of toilet construction (undertaken by contractors) was often poor and the design often inap-

propriate – for instance with limited water supplies and no access to drainage. The municipal staff, whose job was to clean the toilets, did not do so – or communities had to pay them extra to do the job for which they were already being paid. The toilet blocks often fell into disrepair and disuse and the space around them became used for open defecation and garbage dumping. In Pune, as in most other Indian cities, large sections of the population have no alternative to open defecation since they have no toilets in their home and no public toilets they can use (or afford). Widespread open defecation in turn produces a very large health burden and contributes to high infant and child death rates. Although ensuring provision for toilets in each house might seem preferable, this would be far more expensive; it is also particularly difficult in many settlements because they are so densely populated with so many people living in each small shelter and with only small and winding alleyways between houses where pipes could be installed. There are also the uncertainties regarding who owns each unit: public toilets have the advantage of serving both tenants and owners.

## Community participation towards better sanitation

Charitable trusts and other Indian NGOs have built better quality, better maintained public toilets, and while these work well in public places such as railway stations and bus stops,

the prices charged (typically one rupee per use) make them too expensive for slum communities. In 1999, the Municipal Commissioner in Pune, Ratnakar Gaikwad, sought to greatly increase the scale of public toilet construction and to ensure that more appropriate toilets got built by inviting NGOs to make bids for toilet construction. Between 1992 and 1999, only 22 toilet blocks had been constructed; the new programme planned to build 220 blocks during 1999–2000 and another 220 during 2000–2001. The contracts were not only for building toilets but also for maintenance. In awarding contracts, priority was given to settlements with more than 500 inhabitants and no toilet facilities and, after these, to areas where facilities were so dilapidated that they needed replacement. Bids from eight NGOs were accepted, after a review of their track record.

One of the NGOs that received contracts, SPARC, had long had a partnership with two people's organisations, the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan (a network of slum and pavement women's savings and credit groups). The three institutions had been working in Pune for five years prior to this, supporting a vibrant savings and credit movement among women slum dwellers, which had included experiments with community toilets. This Alliance became one of the principal contractors and constructed 114 toilet blocks (with a total of more than 2000 toilet seats and 500 children's toilet seats). The Alliance designed and costed the project, the city provided the capital costs and the communities developed the capacity for management and maintenance.

One factor that did constrain community participation was the municipal commissioner's desire to complete the programme while he was still in office. Despite this limitation, in many places, the inhabitants were involved in the design and construction of these toilets. Some women community leaders took on contracts themselves and managed the whole construction process, supported by engineers and architects from SPARC. It took a while for the (usually) illiterate women in each community to develop the confidence that they could manage this process. As one leader, Savita Sonawane noted:

*In the beginning, we did not know what a drawing or a plinth was. We did not understand what a foundation was or how to do the plastering. But as we went along, we learnt more and more and now we can build toilets with our eyes closed.*

Over time, these women's groups gained confidence and as they learnt how to deal with the local government bureau-

## **"The city government recognised the capacity of community organisations to develop their own solutions, supported by local NGOs"**

cracy, they became active in dealing with other government officials. They also kept a close watch on costs. But there were many prejudices against community management that had to be overcome. For instance, when a group of women began to negotiate with shopkeepers for materials to build the toilets, seeking the lowest price, they found that they were not taken seriously and had to take their husbands along. Some government staff did not want to work with organised women's groups because they felt unable to ask women's groups for the bribes they usually received from contractors. Government staff often demanded extra payments for tasks that they were meant to do. In the first phase of the programme, about half the toilet blocks were built by slum communities; in the second phase this rose to three quarters.

The design of the toilet blocks introduced several innovations. Unlike the previous models, they were bright and well ventilated, with better quality construction (which also made cleaning and maintenance easier). They had large storage tanks to ensure there was enough water for users to wash after defecation and to keep the toilets clean. Each toilet block had separate entrances and facilities for men and women. A block of children's toilets was included, in part because children always lose out to adults when there are queues for a toilet, in part because many young children are frightened to use conventional latrines. The children's toilets were specially designed for children's use – including smaller squat plates, handles (to prevent overbalancing when squatting) and no large pit openings. In many toilet blocks, there were also toilets designed for easier use by the elderly and the disabled. Toilet blocks also included a room where the caretaker and their family could live – which meant lower wages could be paid for maintenance, thus reducing the running costs. In some toilet blocks, where there was sufficient space, a community hall was built; small fees charged for its use could also help cover maintenance costs, and having a community hall right on top of the toilets also brings pressure on the caretaker to keep the complex clean. Despite these innovations, the actual cost of the toilet blocks was 5% less than the municipal corporation's costing. The whole toilet block programme was also celebrated in a toilet festival at

which the contribution of all those who had helped in the programme could be acknowledged – including people from government agencies and from communities.

There has been considerable debate about how best to fund the maintenance of these toilets. The Alliance of SPARC, the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan promoted a system whereby each family pays for a pass costing 20 rupees a month. This is much cheaper than the one rupee per use charge used by other public toilets (which for a family of five would cost 150 rupees a month even if each household member only used the toilet once a day). However, some elected municipal council members have been demanding that there be no payments and this has depressed collection rates in some toilet blocks. Many municipal councillors actively opposed the community toilets, in part because these provided councillors with no 'cut', in part as they represented a contractors' lobby objecting to the loss of contracts. Community management went against the long and dishonourable tradition of contractors, engineers and councillors getting a cut from each project, often through inflating the cost estimates. However, some councillors were supporters from the outset while many others became supporters, when they saw the results and the popularity of the community toilets.

The community toilets in Pune encouraged visits from

officials and community representatives from other cities, and similar kinds of community-managed toilets are now being developed in Mumbai and Bangalore. This includes a programme to build 320 toilet blocks in Mumbai that SPARC is undertaking with the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan.

### Conclusion

This programme brought about a reconfiguration of the relationship between the city government, NGOs and communities. The city government recognised the capacity of community organisations to develop their own solutions, supported by local NGOs. The city authorities changed their role from being a toilet provider to setting standards, funding the capital cost of construction and providing water and electricity. This programme was also unusual for India in its transparency and accountability. There was constant communication between senior government officials and community leaders. Weekly meetings brought all stakeholders together to review progress and identify problems that needed to be addressed. All aspects of costing and of financing were publicly available. And the access that community organisers had to senior officials, also kept in check the petty corruption that characterises so many communities' relationships with local government agencies.

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#### NOTES

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This article draws from Burra, S. (2001), Slum Sanitation in Pune, SPARC, Patel, S. and Burra, S. (NBA), A Note on Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, SPARC, and from the SPARC video on Pune Toilets.

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## Influencing and enhancing externally driven initiatives: the use of participatory approaches in local government, Poland

By **WIESA SERWATKO**

Poland is one of the former Warsaw-pact central European countries that have applied for membership of the European Union (EU). It is anticipated that they will be invited to join within three years. The central government is based in Warsaw and has regional and local government bodies, the latter being called 'communes'. The commune in Poland is a community of inhabitants living within specified boundaries. A commune council and its mayor have the responsibility of overseeing the commune's good running, satisfying inhabitants' needs and properly maintaining the commune's resources. The commune authorities are given financial assistance to do this – usually from central government but increasingly from external sources, especially the EU. In 1998, Zbojna Commune, situated in the North Eastern part of Poland, took part in the EU ECOS Overture Integratev Programme as a partner and test area.

From the beginning, it was determined by the EU Programme (as is still standard EU practice: guest editor's note) that plans were to be developed for the Zbojna Commune in three directions:

- Developing agri-tourism
- Increasing milk production
- Improving the natural environment

Instead of just waiting for the Programme's partners and experts to say what the actual plans were going to be, the

Commune authorities wanted to influence the scope and scale of any proposed changes. And instead of the elected representatives doing this themselves, they thought it would be better to consult with as many inhabitants of the Zbojna Commune as possible, so that the new strategies being developed would reflect the wider public's expectations and priorities and enhance the chances of the commune's citizens taking responsibility for them. They were also hoping that results produced this way would be more difficult to ignore by the EU's officials and consultants.

In 2001, the EU programme (via the Scottish partner, the Cairngorms Partnership) provided expertise to assist the Zbojna Commune council to engage with the citizens of the Commune. After preliminary discussions it was agreed that in order to show citizens and the EU that this was not a Commune-only or Commune controlled event, while some of the consultation facilitators should be Commune officials, the majority should be citizens of the Commune. To start the process, a search and interviews began for candidates to be the facilitators, who would undertake the consultation among the local population. When recruiting commune officials and local people to be facilitators, we were looking for people who:

- could take part in two days of training and work for a following three days;



**Consulting residents at the Zbojna Commune**



- were confident, open, knew the commune's area and liked working with people; and
- were self-aware and could keep their own opinions to themselves.

We found 17 people (six men, 11 women) who met the criteria and who agreed to be facilitators: four Commune officials, 10 citizens (three 'professionals', three farmers, two unemployed, two students) and three NGO workers (guest editor's note: the facilitators were not picked to be representative of the wider community – but to be individuals who, it was hoped, would be effective and relatively neutral, so that the final results would be seen to be representative of the wider commune). Facilitator training was held six weeks later. The training gave the facilitators insights and ideas for using different methods to engage with, and get information from, inhabitants on selected subjects. Also it was stressed that while it was essential to get opinions from as many people as possible, it was more important that those people represented different social, age, and gender groups, i.e. that the range of consultation should be the widest possible.

During training it was agreed to use the H-diagram method during consultations. This method allowed people to express on a single sheet of A4 paper what they think about the three proposed directions for the Commune's development. Each person consulted could write negative aspects, positive aspects and propose their own ideas for each direction. They could also indicate on a scale from 0 (terrible) to 10 (excellent) how good an idea they felt each of the EU proposed directions was for the future of Zbojna Commune.

**“They thought it better to consult with as many inhabitants of the Zbojna Commune as possible, so that the new strategies would reflect the wider public's expectations and priorities and enhance the chances of the commune's citizens taking responsibility for them”**

During the training, the facilitators were told to always try to pass the pen, and if for any reason they had to write for anybody, that it was very important to openly write exactly what the consulted person said, so that they could read their own words at the end of the event.

After training, facilitators were divided into three teams. Each team had its own base (two youth club rooms in small outlying settlements, and the meeting room in the main Commune office). In this way, consultation was being carried out in all parts of the Commune. To ensure uniformity and assist with any problems, the trainer, the Commune secretary and the translator kept in touch with each of the teams. During the two days, the facilitators reached and talked to 410 commune inhabitants in different age categories, both women and men. What does 410 mean? It means that 10% of Commune inhabitants, from every village in the Commune, expressed their own opinions on the proposed direction for development. Most importantly, those opinions were almost certainly sincere, because they were completely anonymous. About 3,350 opinions and ideas were collected during consultations, which gave the local authorities leverage with the EU programme in their bid to develop the Commune the way its inhabitants wished.

Developing a commune-wide strategy with social consultations usually costs a lot of money and it is also very difficult to gather people at meetings to get their opinions. The methodology we used was very easy and efficient. During five days 17 people were trained and then conducted wide consultations in different parts of the Commune. Our aims were reached by using little money: the budget (not counting the trainer's inputs) was less than 200 Euros/US dollars. Commune authorities paid only for the paper and pens that were used by the facilitators, and their travel expenses. This information, gathered by the facilitators and recorded in the report, will significantly inform Commune planning and development for a long time to come.

**A farmer completing a H-Diagram and (bottom) analysing residents' responses**



### Summary of results

#### Summary of results.

In the H-diagram, 377 inhabitants commented on the following:

#### Agri-tourism

This proposed direction for development within the commune was given the highest score of 10 points by 119 people. Between 5–10 points were recorded by 290 citizens. With 76% of inhabitants expressing a positive opinion about agri-tourism, it indicates that local government should develop this idea.

#### Milk production

Of the 377 comments received, 91 Commune inhabitants gave this proposed direction for development 10 points; 290 inhabitants gave a score of between 5–10 points. This shows that milk production is also considered an important direction for development.

#### The natural environment

On the subject of developing the Commune's natural environment through careful management, 43 inhabitants gave a high score of 10, and 196 inhabitants gave a score of between 5-10. This showed that 53% care about their natural environment, whilst expressing concern about pollution and degradation.

All the opinions, suggestions and ideas given by the Zbojna Commune inhabitants about the proposed directions of Commune development are recorded verbatim in a report, and are available in the Zbojna Commune office. Everyone can read that report; the people who gave opinions can find them, and most importantly, their words are not changed. Most inhabitants willingly answered all the questions. Assurances of anonymity meant that people openly shared their considerations. This method has also made people think about the current situation in the Commune: about what is wrong, what is right, and what can be done to make everyone's lives better. Commune authorities have discovered that inhabitants are interested in what is going on in the Commune and in their neighbourhoods. The Commune society has become activated, and has asked to be involved in planning how the Commune develops. Some of the opinions obtained showed that inhabitants did not trust the Commune authorities who maintain the Commune's resources, so it was beneficial that most of the facilitators were not connected to local government, and that those answers given were an indication of how sincere and frank people were prepared to be, given the opportunity.

The results of the participatory consultation are already being used for actualising the Commune development strategy and to formulate plans with some confidence that they will be socially accepted. The Commune development strategy until 2010 was elaborated according to this thinking –

**Analysing  
the results  
of the H-  
Diagrams**

the end result we envisage will be equitable development, whilst maintaining or improving the natural environment. One important result is that new developments (and hopefully external experts' advice as well) will take into account local opinions. Having the strategy developed in this way gives the Commune the chance to take part in other programmes, and allows for greater opportunity to receive financial resources from outside (e.g. European Union) to implement strategic development activities within the Zbojna Commune.

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Wiesia Serwatko is a Commune citizen, and acted as the translator during the consultation training and facilitation.

# 13

## Participatory facilitation inputs into land management by the City of Ottawa

by ANNA V HERCZ

In 1996, the City of Ottawa Council was working on two land management projects: the Greenway System Management Plan and the Open Spaces Project. Integral to the projects was the facilitation of a series of community workshops to gain insight into the various stakeholders' concerns for the city's open spaces.

The City of Ottawa has an existing landscape mosaic of loosely linked natural and undeveloped areas that can serve as the basis for an ecologically functional, multi-use green network. When fully realised, the Greenway System will link natural areas, ecological corridors, hydro corridors, parks and communities. The Open Spaces Project needed the input of the community to prioritise which areas the city will protect in the future.

Of the lands in the City of Ottawa's conceptual system, 74% are owned or managed by public agencies, making a protected, connected and enhanced Greenway System in the City of Ottawa a workable long-term goal. However, there are significant barriers to overcome in achieving this ambitious goal.

First of all, the multitude of stakeholders – including landowners, planning agencies and users – have different roles, and are guided by different interests. Public ownership of the large part of the system does not ensure the survival of the system. The different mandates and interests are not always consistent with the objectives of the Greenway System. While

all stakeholders support the greenway concept, defining, protecting and managing the system, according to a common vision, is a complex undertaking that involves stakeholders in debates over boundary, zoning and management issues. The sacrament and management of the Greenway System also crosses paths with many other planning interests such as urban development, recreational development, flood plain management, integrated watershed management, and capital recreational pathways planning. Innovative solutions are needed to protect and manage the system and address changing needs, environmental concerns, and competing interests.

Secondly, because of financial constraints on public expenditures, greenway preservation, through the municipal acquisition of large amounts of land, is not a realistic approach. Enhancement and protection of the system by land use policies, an agreed upon management plan, stewardship programs, and public-private partnerships are integral elements of the action plan necessary for the full realisation of the system.

### Community workshops

Agreement on the objectives and the management principles by all stakeholders had been essential. A key part of the solution was community participation and empowerment. The main mechanism to achieve this goal was the Community

## **“Upon evaluation of the methodology and the results, we were convinced that the City should use participatory methods more often in the future”**

Workshops, held in different parts of the city. The goal of the Community Workshops was to better understand which green and open spaces people value, why they value them, and what their visions were for the future of these spaces. In most parts of the city, the councillors representing those areas also attended the workshops. They were there to listen and reassure people of their support.

The workshops incorporated community mapping as a method of participatory appraisal. By engaging the public in this way, we were able to collect accurate data in a very cost effective manner that likely would not have been available through other means. Staff from the city's Environmental Branch, who served as facilitators, underwent five days of training on participatory mapping and facilitation techniques.

What we found remarkable about this process is the fact that the information created at the workshop came from the community. There were no draft plans, documents, or maps given to the participants for comments. There was no professional presentation, nor a question and answer period. The strength of this approach for public consultation was that it had a self-organising component. With the help of facilitators, participants mapped the green and open spaces of their neighbourhoods, indicating uses and values as well as shared information, knowledge, and problems, as opposed to only collecting information. Participants were encouraged to discuss conflicting issues and the results led to the development of a collective opinion and a series of implementable recommendations.

### **What did the community tell us?**

Participants placed great emphasis on community/citizen action. They felt that the community should be better organised to have a voice in planning, management and operations. They offered to take responsibility for many stewardship related activities and asked that the City provide direction on

desirable community stewardship initiatives. This would have never happened during a traditional consultation meeting.

From the perspective of citizen involvement in municipal decision-making, perhaps the most important outcome of this work has been its impact on the work of the Natural and Open Spaces Study. Data collected on all areas of the city through the workshops was used to determine the social criteria and social value of Ottawa's existing natural and open spaces.

### **What happened with the results?**

The information generated during the workshops we used in different ways. The final version of the individual workshop reports and the overall executive summary were distributed to Greenway and Open Spaces project staff, property owners, community organisations and a variety of planning agencies, for integration into diverse plans, projects, and programs. A presentation to City Council further assured that the results of the workshops reached decision makers.

The workshops and the results helped the City to make important decisions on how to continue the Greenway and Open Spaces protection and management initiative for many years to come.

### **What did we learn from the process? What would we change?**

The consultation involved only local residents. While the workshops were intended for all stakeholders, primarily the participants at the community workshops were the local residents. We felt that a series of workshops addressing specific stakeholder groups, such as youth, business, public landowners, and different planning agencies, would have been beneficial.

We also felt it would have been useful not to depend on the events and to get out and about to reach other people.

We felt it was very useful and important to have a process where young peoples' opportunity to participate and their knowledge and opinions were equal to that of the adults.

Upon evaluation of the methodology and the results, we were convinced that the City should use participatory methods more often in the future. They could be applied to many different projects or initiatives such as strategic planning, the creation of urban design guidelines and budget preparation.

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## 14

# PRA and its role in reorienting IGFR's research agenda

By **NAGARATNA BIRADAR** and **CR RAMESH**

## Introduction

The importance of livestock in Indian agriculture is well recognised. However, the low productivity of livestock is a matter of great concern, which is mainly due to the poor quality and insufficient quantities of fodder and feed resources. The fodder production in the country is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the livestock population, and also the forages so produced are poor in quality. The Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute (IGFRI), Jhansi has been involved in addressing this fodder deficit since its inception, through research on fodder and forage production. IGFRI and its three regional research stations at Dharwar in Karnataka, Avikanagar in Rajasthan, and Palampur in Himachal Pradesh have been investing enormous amounts of scientific manpower and economic resources for more than 25 years, on fodder and forage production research. In spite of large investments of human and financial resources, there was a general failure to serve the majority of the farmers, especially smallholder farmers in rain fed areas. This posed a serious challenge for IGFRI - to reorient its research to address the practical needs of its 'clients', the farmers. Hence, rethinking the research and development process became crucial for IGFRI.

This paper documents the outcome of IGFRI's experience in reorienting its technology development process, as seen by the

authors. In three sections, the paper deals with IGFRI's research before the experience with Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), why PRA was introduced and the period of building PRA skills in IGFRI, and lastly, IGFRI's research after PRA.

## IGFRI's research before PRA

Like any other Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institute, IGFRI's research initially concentrated on developing discipline-based specialised technologies. The various divisions, organised according to discipline, e.g. plant breeding, agronomy, soil science, economics, extension, plant pathology etc. were conducting research only on issues relevant to their field. There was no mechanism for coordinating research between these divisions; hence, there was no sharing of information. This resulted in long lists of technologies, with each addressing one side of the problem only. As a result it was proving difficult to address the problems, which were often complicated. The watertight discipline-oriented research approach of IGFRI and technologies developed thereafter did not garner popularity among the farming community. A few technologies meant for irrigated areas gained currency, as farmers with irrigation can usually bear the risk associated with any technology. The most important shortcomings identified during a client orientation workshop at IGFRI in 1997 were:

- inadequate identification of clients' needs and inadequate participation in order to identify the needs;
- the predominance of researchers' criteria in identifying research priorities and limited awareness that farmers' criteria may be entirely different;
- inadequate linkages with development agencies whose activities include a livestock component;
- the need for patience in soliciting farmers' needs, given their limited ability to articulate them;
- weak linkages among the different disciplines at IGFRl; and
- limited search for feedback from farmers by scientists.

The awareness that there had been a poor adoption of technologies paved the way for IGFRl to look back on its technology development processes, and to analyse and identify ways to improve them. Simultaneously, there was growing feeling among the scientific community that the situation at farmer field level differs from that at the research level, and this was a decisive factor for technologies not being used by or benefiting the clients. There was a need for stronger 'bottom up' planning processes, for stronger links with development agencies capable of identifying their clients' needs and implementing technologies on a large scale, and to seek fuller feedback on technologies that were being tried out.

One of the main objectives of the Indo-UK collaborative project on Forage Production, operational since April 1994, is to benefit the farmers in rain fed areas through IGFRl's technologies. It was clear that to achieve this objective, the participation of farmers from the initial stages of technology development was essential. This would ensure adequate specification of the socio-economic and biophysical conditions of the intended clients at the research design stage. However the concept of involving farmers in the research process was new for the IGFRl scientists who were used to conventional methods of research. It required changing the mindset and attitudes of scientists and encouraging new perspectives on the problem identification and technology development process. IGFRl started looking into alternative methods for technology development that could increase the relevance of research. Analysis of the research and development needs of farmers calls for methods that are quick, powerful, cheap, insightful and multidisciplinary in nature. The strengths of PRA were perceived by IGFRl and it was felt to be a suitable answer to the shortcomings of the technology development process. The decision was then taken to train IGFRl scientists in PRA under the Indo-UK collaborative project, and IGFRl became the first ICAR institute to take the unusual initiative of involving farmers in the research process.

## **"The awareness that there had been a poor adoption of technologies paved the way for IGFRl to look back on its technology development processes and to analyse and identify ways to improve them"**

### **Building PRA skills**

#### **Why PRA for fodder technologies?**

The majority of IGFRl technologies are identified as 'off the shelf', with potential for uptake mainly in rain fed areas. These fall into two groups: those intended for small farmers and those intended for rangeland. These two groups of technologies demand PRA for effective dissemination and uptake, because of certain unique factors associated with the fodder.

A major problem for the small farmers is the lack of irrigation facilities, making it difficult to grow fodder in the lean periods. A more generic difficulty is that farmers operating under these difficult conditions invariably give primary attention to food crops on available arable land. In most cases they face acute fodder shortages in summer. The quality of fodder they feed to their livestock is also extremely poor.

Almost without exception, the technologies recommended for rangeland require collective action from the community to be successful. Hence the common property management regime is an essential component of a healthy fodder situation. Typically, this occurs in watershed and wasteland rehabilitation efforts that run on participatory concepts. So, to mobilise the community to introduce and sustain fodder technologies on common land, PRA becomes very useful.

In total, 45 scientists at IGFRl have been trained intensively on aspects of PRA in small groups of five or six. The training was organised by two pioneering organisations in PRA – KRIBHCO (Krishik Bharati Cooperation), Dahood and AKRSP (Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, Ahmedabad, India). A few scientists have also been trained in focused PRA and Participatory Plant Breeding (PPB) methods.

I (Nagaratna Biradar) had participated in one of the PRA training sessions. Some observations about how it had been perceived by my fellow scientists participants are mentioned here:

- initially some scientists could not see the usefulness of PRA and were critical of it. Used to conventional research

methods, they were looking for large amounts of quantifiable data;

- once the practical exercise of PRA in villages began, the amount and quality of the information from farmers helped them appreciate the merits of PRA;
- the flexibility of PRA tools and the scope for creativity and triangulation impressed scientists during the training.

Some participants' experiences described in their training reports are given below. They illustrate the perceptions held by various scientists at IGfRI, of the usefulness of PRA in research.

#### **Agricultural Extension Scientist:**

*Earlier demonstrations were conducted without considering the farmers' preferences. Technology was imposed on farmers and our aim was to prove the superiority of a variety or technology over the existing one and popularise it. But, from PRA training I learnt that farmers are the best decision-makers to evaluate and select the technologies. So, farmers' voices will be given priority in my work from now onwards.*

*PRA training helped me to realise that women and men view the technology differently and their choice of technology is related to their daily farm and household activities. Ensuring women's participation is essential for the sustainability of the technology.*

#### **Animal nutrition scientist**

*Farmers' knowledge about locally grown grasses and fodder in terms of their contribution to milk yield, energy, seasonal availability, bulkiness etc. is very thought provoking and useful. It helps me to plan my research work according to characteristics that farmers expect in grass and fodder crops.*

#### **Soil scientist**

*Farmers could very well reveal their hidden knowledge about soils, their types, reclamation of soils etc. Also their knowledge about depth of ground water flow and the direction it flows. This rich knowledge helps me to plan my work with the farmers in order to conserve soil and water.*

PRA training created a snowball effect on the perceived importance of PRA techniques, further leading to changes in the technology development process of IGfRI.

#### **IGfRI's research after PRA**

Some prominent changes observed in the institute's work were:

#### **Mechanisms to integrate PRA in IGfRI's research**

Substantial experience gained in PRA among IGfRI staff was consolidated, and then included in various activities at the institute, especially project preparation and during the stages of obtaining feedback on clients' responses to the technologies offered.

A PRA cell comprising of more experienced scientists with substantial PRA experience has been established with a mandate for providing support and guidance to other scientists using PRA. It will provide comments on any research proposal containing an element of participation prior to formal submission, and liaise with groups of scientists undertaking new client oriented initiatives such as participatory varietal selection.

#### **Multidisciplinary research**

There is currently much enthusiasm at IGfRI for multidisciplinary teamwork. Various multidisciplinary teams are now effectively operating in the institute on various aspects. The defined discipline research boundaries have been broken, and active interaction between scientists of different divisions has become routine. Shared responsibilities and information have also resulted from this positive development.

#### **Links with development organisations**

Direct contact between scientists and the end users of technology (i.e. farmers) has been well established, by using PRA to identify their needs and develop or adapt the technology. Such interaction is conducted on an ongoing basis. Also, to scale up the adoption of technologies, IGfRI started working with NGO's like BAIF Development Research Foundation in Dharwar. Effective links with watershed or wasteland rehabilitation agencies are also well established.

#### **Task driven research**

Some tasks have been identified through PRA, and task driven research, conducted 'on farm' and functioning in a participatory mode, has been underway since 1997. Two important large-scale projects in farmers' fields have been initiated under Indo-UK collaborative projects. These are 'Appropriate systems for producing fodder on bunds in rain fed areas in Jhansi and Dharwar' and 'Forage seed production in smallholder farming systems'. The results of these two projects are highly encouraging. The number of farmers participating in the seed project exceeded 300.

Other outcomes seen in IGfRI research work due to PRA are:

- bottom-up needs assessment and research planning for the end-user;



- stronger multidisciplinary input into the preparation of projects and programmes, including microeconomic planning;
- the use of PRA techniques for group discussions with development agencies;
- stronger interaction between research staff and farmers

during training courses, fairs, field days and exhibitions; and

- the search for better feedback on IGFRIS technologies at all levels.

PRA has brought tremendous positive changes in IGFRIS research approach.

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Agriculture (ICRA), Wageningen, the Netherlands. CR Ramesh is the principal scientist and Head, IGFRIS-RRS, Dharwar and coordinates the ACIAR-Australian project on Stylosanthes in India, and is presently working on three projects based on participatory approaches.

# 15

## In search of a meaningful participatory training methodology

By RS SAXENA and SK PRADHAN

### The project

India has about 0.73% of the world's sodic lands, and Uttar Pradesh State has 1.2 million hectares of sodic wastelands. This area accounts for 10% of the total cultivable area of the State and about 17% of the salt-affected lands in India.

Funded by the World Bank, the Uttar Pradesh Sodic Lands Reclamation Project (UPSLRP) covers 10 districts in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP) and aims to reclaim this land. In its pilot phase completed in March 2001, about 68,400ha of sodic-affected lands covering 156,000 families were reclaimed. In the second phase 150,000ha covering 350,000 families have been selected for reclamation.

The project attempted to involve communities/farmers at every stage – in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – through the formation of farmer organisations at village level. Projects such as the installation of shallow wells for irrigation, the building of drainage networks, chemical amendments made to land with gypsum, and crop/horticulture production, have all been initiated by such local farmer organisations.

### The challenges

The project implementation was based on participatory approaches and methodologies. The principal implementing agency, Uttar Pradesh Bhumi Sudhar Nigam (UPBSN), a

government company, with the help of local NGOs, was expected to play a facilitative role. The major challenge was how to encourage UPBSN officials to change their role to that of catalyst/facilitator. Like many government officials, they were used to working in a top down, authoritarian way and believed that they were more knowledgeable than local people. Participation, eliciting ideas from others, had never been part of their working style.

These attitudes were reinforced by the strong caste, class and feudalistic cultures that prevail in the northern states of India, especially amongst the officials of government agencies. Local culture teaches them to discriminate on the basis of caste/class i.e. higher or lower caste/class. Similarly, Hinduism (the dominant religion) plays a major role by creating the belief that the present state of affairs (suffering, poverty, etc.) is due to the ill deeds of one's last incarnation. The high level of job security enjoyed by people in government jobs further insulates them from any pressure to become more accountable to local people and practice new attitudes and behaviour.

NGO staff are not immune to these attitudes either. The high demand for NGO involvement in large-scale development projects by donor agencies forces NGOs to deploy people/staff without ensuring that they share their philosophy of 'serving the people'.

Here in UPSLRP, complete role reversal was required. Staff were expected to develop attitudes and behaviour that respected local people's knowledge and experience, and to encourage the powerless and resource-poor to talk freely and thereby share their experiences. It meant that they had to develop an ability to accept their own mistakes.

### Finding a solution: training

UPBSN took up the challenge of upgrading knowledge and skills, and of bringing about change in the behaviour of their staff. Intensive training programmes for all actors, including participating farmers, local leaders and different levels of project officials, were initiated but the results of this exercise were not very satisfactory. The problems faced were:

- field-level project workers were more concerned with physical works like on-farm development, boring, drainage networks and the distribution of inputs;
- both government and NGO officials had their own agendas and were working towards their own objectives rather than project objectives;
- participatory methodologies and techniques were being followed mechanically as blueprints, and creativity and innovation were missing;
- project workers were creating and reinforcing a sense of dependency in the communities, with disempowering effects;
- field officials were performing training and extension activities to fulfill targets; and
- even after repeated training, there was no change in the attitudes of project workers at different levels.

The above problems were due to several factors:

- monitoring focused more on physical targets than process;
- field workers were not mentally prepared to transfer power to communities;
- field workers believed that communities could not manage their own affairs;
- field workers still saw themselves in the role of 'giver' rather than as facilitators;
- means were becoming ends; and
- personal goals and development objectives did not converge.

The training became an externally determined exercise that resulted in a static transfer of knowledge rather than being a needs-driven, internally determined exercise.

### A new approach

Since the earlier training had not worked well, UPBSN decided to try an alternative approach. A series of training workshops were organised for different categories of participants, from district level to ground level workers. Participants focused on their personal attitudes, strengths, skills and development, and

## "Participants focused on their personal attitudes, strengths, skills and development, and linked these to project objectives"

linked these to project objectives. The aim was to:

- create win-win situations, so that individual participants, the communities and the project would all benefit;
- show how personal goals can be achieved through achieving project objectives;
- make training sessions enjoyable and interesting for the participants and the trainers/facilitators;
- help participants in the analysis and decision-making processes;
- inspire participants, so that they are motivated to use creativity in developing participatory approaches and techniques instead of following blueprints;
- build each individual participant's leadership qualities and facilitation skills, and develop positive personal as well as professional attitudes towards human resource development.

### Strategies and process

Our professional performance consists of knowledge, skills and attitudes, but in practice training tends to focus on knowledge and skill development rather than personal attitudes. In most cases, attitudes are dealt with in the context of adopting participatory methodologies or ways of involving communities in the process - but the individual's attitudes to personal success are hardly dealt with.

Attitudes are not permanent but they are very stable. They are the result of both a lifelong learning process, and the norms and culture of the society in which we live. The process through which we learn new attitudes is fundamentally different from learning knowledge and skills. Since attitudes are very personal, only the individual can change them. Developing positive attitudes for achieving personal goals is the most important part of training. The training workshops therefore offer learning opportunities to build positive attitudes and then integrate knowledge and skills through hands-on practice. They begin by building positive attitudes, own-strengths and weaknesses, developing interpersonal skills, success and a sense of purpose in life.

The development of behaviour and attitude has a major bearing on the effectiveness of participatory approaches. The new process tries to enable participants to bring about a positive change in self-image, values, behaviour and attitude

**Box 1**

Objective: to develop an understanding of how important attitudes are for attaining success

1. In a general session, participants are asked to identify qualities and traits one should possess to be successful in different areas of life.
2. The facilitator writes on the board all the qualities/traits suggested by participants. This continues until all comments or suggestions are expressed (care is taken not to repeat any qualities/traits while writing on the board).
3. Participants are then asked to classify the qualities/traits into three categories: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Some qualities/traits may fall into one or two or all three categories.
4. Now the facilitator counts the number of qualities/traits under each category and calculates percentages. In our experience, knowledge and skills together account for 15–30% and attitudes for 70%–85%.
8. The facilitator concludes that attitudes are more important for being successful in life, but hardly any effort is made to educate our attitudes, while throughout our life we keep on improving knowledge and skills.
9. The facilitator then ask participants to think about what they see as their purpose in life and their own definition of success:
  - Why am I here?
  - Where am I going?
  - What needs to be changed to accomplish the life I desire?
 After completing this exercise the participants are asked to share their feelings in a group, depending upon individual willingness.

through various exercises. The goal-setting process, as part of the new approach, also enables participants to identify personal benefits if their personal goals as well as organisation objectives are achieved. During the process participants realise that most of the personal benefits are the same in both cases, and that many personal goals are automatically achieved in pursuance of development objectives.

This process takes 1.5–3 days depending upon the participants. The focus then shifts towards facilitation skills, participatory approaches and methodologies, and achieving development objectives, using the following steps:

**Step 1** Building positive mental attitudes, discovering own self-image/esteem, using various individual and group exercises, stories, quotations and proverbs.

**Step 2** Knowing yourself: identifying own weaknesses and strengths, mind and habits and developing philosophy and purpose of life through exercises.

**Step 3** Learning about participatory approaches and techniques, identifying their weaknesses and strengths, and practicing with the community.

**Step 4** Identifying community activities in the context of the project, learning about project objectives and matching with personal goals.

All the above steps are done using various tools and techniques through classroom exercises, and in the field with the community. At least 50% of the time is spent with

**Box 2**

Know yourself

1. What are the five things you do best?
2. What five characteristics describe you best?
3. Identify five things that would contribute to your happiness.
4. What are the five things you would want to improve?
5. What are three important things you have done for someone else?
6. What three things do you dislike about yourself?
7. Identify five important people who have helped you most.
8. What is the best thing that has ever happened to you?
9. What three things do you like about yourself?

the community. All the exercises are documented and presented before the large group. The day finishes with at least an hour of reflection, with a focus on the individual's personal benefits.

In the case of participatory tools and techniques, examples or demonstrations are avoided. Instead, problems are assigned to small groups; the group will then decide how best to conduct the task they have been assigned to do with the community. Local games and approaches are encouraged in analysis and in decision-making processes.

The entire process involves many individual/group exercises. However, some of the exercises used for personal development towards positive attitudes are shown in Boxes 1, 2 and 3.

After training, some of the reflections of participants included:

'Today I understood the meaning of MK Gandhi's quote "You must be the change you wish to see in the world"'

'We can make a difference.'

'After training I have realised that I have more strengths than weaknesses.'

'Training has changed our perception of life.'

'Now we are in a better position to follow participatory approaches.'

'I can change my destiny through changing my attitude.'

'Personal goals are self-achievable if we pursue organisation goals.'

'Our forgotten human values have been restored.'

'We had been busy in preparing community development plans but had never thought of preparing our own plan for life.'

**Lessons**

- Building positive attitudes and focusing on personal development is paramount in creating a conducive learning environment and for learning self-discipline.
- Exercises on building personal attitudes and setting goals for one's own success in life helps transform participants, something that is not possible with several sessions on participatory methods and approaches.

Box 3. Construct your own self image profile		
I am		I need to be
Brash		Modest
Selfish		Giving
Timid		Assertive
Vague		Concise
Inhibited		Free/spontaneous
Indecisive		Decisive
Talk too much		Listen more
Cold		Warm
Self effacing		Confident
Lacking in energy		Energetic
Self-conscious		Unaffected by others
Suspicious		Believing
Artificial		Genuine
Tense		Relaxed
Aggressive		Assertive
Bad tempered		Happy
Rude		Cheerful
Dishonest		Honest
Fearful		Brave
Trouble maker		Co-operative
	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>
Posture: slumping		
Facial expression: too animated		
Gestures: excessive		
Speech: monotonous		
Walk: awkward		
Manners: irritating		
I consider myself to be...		
I desire my image to be...		

- Inspiration through personal development planning helps participants to build creative capacity as well as innovation. In one training workshop at least ten local games were used with the community for planning, dissemination of tech-

nology, and monitoring and evaluation.

- A self-development approach helps to develop leadership abilities, facilitation skills, and decision-making abilities, helps to increase self-confidence and self-respect, and reduces dependency on others.
- The mechanism itself is dynamic: whilst participants themselves work towards solutions, they are also continually helping the facilitators (trainers) to evolve the training design.
- Reviewing, and reflecting upon, personal attitudes and behaviour using success stories, quotations and exercises is important in making the workshop enjoyable and interesting, and in shifting from feelings of reserve and frustration to a sense of rapport and fun.
- Training becomes more meaningful to participants.

### Challenges for facilitators

- Before conducting such courses facilitators need to have done sufficient homework and practice. Behavioural changes and changes in personal attitudes are also essential since facilitators become role models for the participants.
- Concentrating on human values and universal truths of human life, inspiring personal attitude-building, and bringing personal and development objectives into line is a great challenge for any facilitator.
- Developing suitable success stories, quotations and exercises for personal analysis, and adapting them for different types of participants, is important for creating an appropriate self-learning environment.
- When conducting training sessions, facilitators need to continuously evaluate and modify their approach and choose tools and techniques according to the situation.

### What next?

This methodology has now been used when working with farmer organisations, and in organisational development for NGOs, and the results are very encouraging. However, the real challenge is how to make policy makers and training managers feel the importance of changing attitudes and behaviour in such large-scale development projects.

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# 16

## The gains and strength in participation: a case study of the Mbiabet Ikpe rice farm project in Nigeria

By **CHRIS N. EKONG** and **NDIYO N. AYARA**

### Background

Mbiabet Ikpe, a community in the Ini local government area, is located in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. It lies along the western edge of an extensive Mbiabet/Idim-Ibom swamp. This community has in it seven contiguous villages: Ikot Efa, Ikot Udo, Ikot Otok, Otung, Eyeheadia, Ikot Esieyere and Ikot Udouba. The community is part of a larger clan, Ikpe, which has 30 villages.

The villages that make up Mbiabet Ikpe community are known to be of the same parental stock, worshipping a common deity, Esiet Ikpe. The parental and religious oneness is a great factor in the unity of these villages. Interestingly, the community comes together to attack external aggression or solve key external problems, but disunites and fragments when it comes to domestic problems. This fact is traced to their highly suspicious nature, even among themselves (NAISRDS, 1995). This particular feature or characteristic can act as a deterrent to any development facilitator or others seeking collaboration with the community.

The major occupation of this settlement is farming. The major crops cultivated are rice and cassava, but rice is more dominant than cassava. A field survey conducted (NAISRDS, 1995) suggests that over 88% of Mbiabet farmers cultivate rice. As a result of this concentration, they are known as a rice community.

### The evolution of rice cultivation in Mbiabet Ikpe

Rice cultivation started in the community as a small experiment in 1950 by a colonial agricultural officer. Quite a few farmers then decided to go into rice cultivation. During this time, farmers were either seen as lazy, college dropouts, or uneducated illiterates from the villages. This could explain why many parents in the community struggled to send their wards to school and encouraged them to become teachers. However, a prominent rice farmer told the author that nowadays, even the educated cultivate rice.

With the potential to increase rice production in the Mbiabet swamp, the government decided to acquire the swamp for improved and mechanised rice cultivation by annexing the land, although without payment to the community. In 1972, the South Eastern State government (now Akwa Ibom State) annexed the Mbiabet rice paddy, and decided to expand the cultivable swamp size, by removing all non-rice resources (e.g. raffia palm, oil palm trees and fish biomass). Presently, of the acquired 100 hectares of cleared swampland, only 70 hectares is put to use. The remainder suffers from flooding, which makes rice cultivation unprofitable.

After acquiring the rice farm, the government handed over the operations and management (OM) of the farm to the Ministry of Agriculture. With the creation of Akwa Ibom

State, the OM of the farm was transferred from the main Ministry of Agriculture to one of its various parastatals, the Akwa Ibom Agricultural Development Programme (AKADEP).

### The rice farm prior to current reforms

Of a total paddy size of 100ha, the cultivable portion of the Mbiabet rice farm (70ha) is divided into 700 (0.1ha) plots. The plots are separated by bunds specially built to give way to flowing water for draining the rice plots. Prior to 1995, part of the rice field (40 plots) was reserved by AKADEP for seed multiplication, research, and workers' cultivation. The remaining portion of the rice farm was rented out to interested farmers within and outside the community, who would hold such title in trust for a year. Before 1989, N5 was paid per plot as rent. By 1990 N30 was paid. This price was maintained until the take-over by the community of the farm's OM.

### The problem

The long years of government OM of the rice farm generated both positive and negative results. The positive results included:

- the expansion of the cultivable rice paddy;
- the building of a dam and waterways for proper drainage;
- the provision of equipment e.g. silos, and a generator;
- the building of farm houses and provision of a mill to process rice;
- the provision of technical expertise to help local farmers with their rice cultivation; and,
- the opening up of roads and construction of two important concrete bridges to link some villages in the community network.

The negative impacts included:

- massive fraud in allocating rice plots to farmers: outsiders and a few powerful insiders were given large plot holdings whilst others received none;
- farm provisions like dams, waterways and bunds were not adequately maintained;
- the silos had never been put to use and had been seriously vandalised and looted;
- conflict, fights and killings were recorded each time the government agent (AKADEP) rented out plots to farmers, as there was no equity and transparency in their approach; and,
- farmers refused to maintain their plots effectively as they thought they would not be given the same plot in the next planting season.

The community felt that the negative impacts of the government's OM of the rice farm far outweighed the positive impacts. To change this was somewhat difficult as they

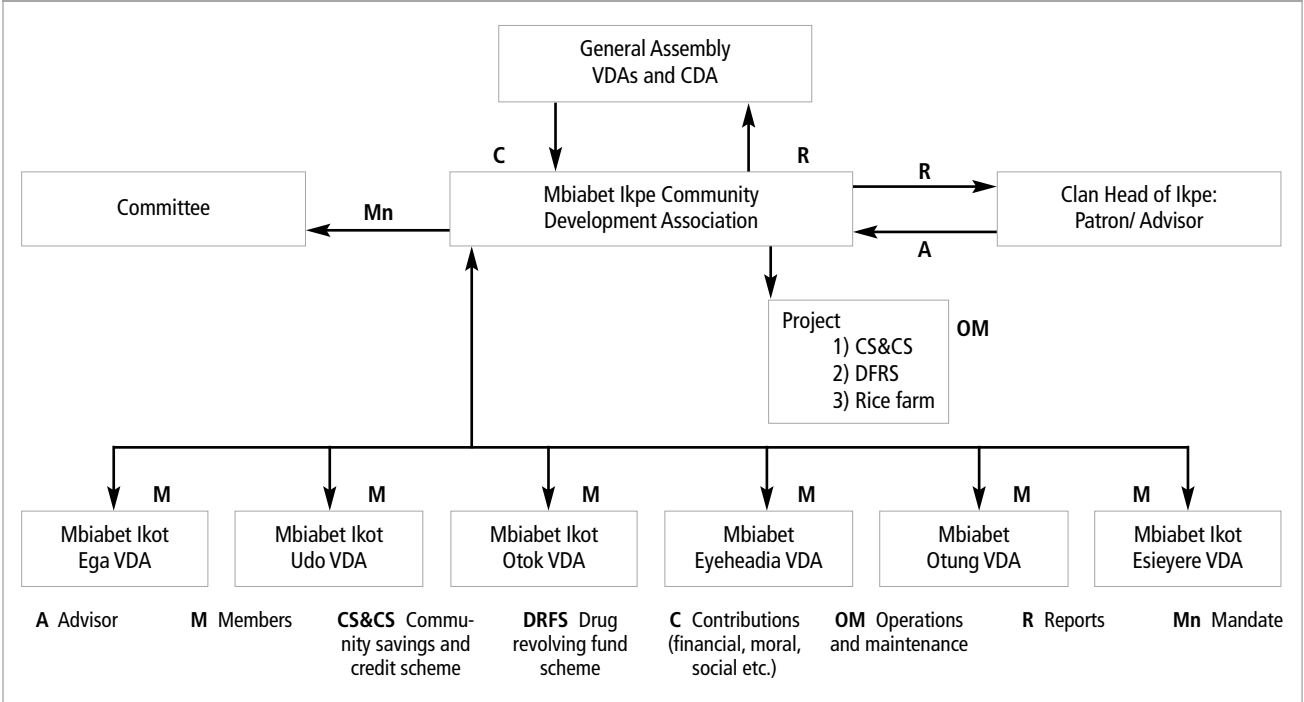
## **“With constant meetings, village workshops and action research, the villagers starting developing some level of confidence in themselves and their abilities. They began to ask questions and argue together about their future”**

had no immediate technical expertise with the necessary capacity to effect change. They accepted the status quo as unchangeable. Although there were pockets of discontent, the big farmers (those allocated many rice plots) and outsider farmers were consolidating their financial returns, while the small village farmers who had no access to such plot holdings were reeling in poverty. Income disparity in the community widened. This affected the socio-cultural foundations of the community, and threatened the democratic nature of the people.

### Transition

In February 1994 the communities along the Enyong creek and Ikpe river swamp benefited when an Africa Development Bank (ADB) funded a swamp rice development survey. The terms of reference were to explore the possibilities of cultivating swamp rice all through the stretch of Enyong creek and Ikpe river swamp. It was decided that customary owners and users of these natural resources should be consulted. Moreover, they should participate in every stage of evaluating, planning, designing and eventually implementing the development and usage of the swamps, in order to produce realistic, viable plans for sustainable development in the swamps. The consultants used Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods to source information and hard facts. Three important communities, in the judgement of the consultants, located in the three strands of the Enyong creek and Ikpe river basins were selected for the PRA. Mbiabet Ikpe was among the three sites. At first, it was difficult to convince the people of Mbiabet Ikpe to believe in their abilities and strength to carry out their own development. They were more passive and depended on outsiders (researchers and town dwellers) to tell them what to do. With constant meetings, village workshops and action research, the villagers starting developing some level of confidence in themselves and their abilities. They began to ask questions and argue together about their future. Realising their individual inability to achieve the desired goal, they slowly and gradually decided to collaborate and work together in a participatory

Figure 1: Administrative Chart of Mbiabet Ikpe Community Development Association



way to undertake their development.

The author, who was in the team of consultants from the swamp resources development survey, was assigned the special task of encouraging participation among the villages of Mbiabet Community for the action research component of the survey.

The villages of Mbiabet were encouraged to set up Village Development Associations (VDAs). By March 1995, of the seven villages, six had established and launched VDAs. By June 1995, the VDAs had increased their membership, had their own constitution, were meeting regularly, had organised small savings and loans schemes and were collectively discussing their problems.

As the VDAs became stronger, they thought it wise for all of them to collaborate to build a strong viable Mbiabet Ikpe Community Development Association (MICDA), to take care of the interests of the larger Mbiabet Community. The VDAs met and elected members from every VDA to form the executive committee of the CDA. The CDA executive was made accountable and responsible to the general assembly of the VDAs. The chief advisers and patrons of the individual VDAs are the village traditional chiefs, while the clan head is the overall patron and adviser of all the groups (see Figure 1).

The CDA has committees that consist of members of the

various VDAs. It also has projects, prominent among them being the Community Savings and Credit Schemes (CS&CS) and the Drug Revolving Fund Scheme (DRFS).

With constant interactions, meetings, workshops and assessment of needs and wants, the VDAs and CDA decided to start addressing their local problems. The first of these was their dissatisfaction with the management of the government rice farm. The MICDA identified the following issues:

- farm plots were allocated to outsiders, rather than to natives who had nothing to do and no farmlands;
- the unserviceable nature of farm facilities, including rice plot bunds, water channels and reservoir sluice gates; and,
- the uncompetitive rent charged for rice plots, which encouraged some members of their society to rent rice plots at low rates from the farm managing agency, and re-rent at exorbitant rates to outsiders. The outsiders eventually took over the land, leaving the real owners as on-farm labour.

The MICDA assembly (CDA executives, all VDAs executives, and the villages' traditional heads) then wrote to the government to request the handing over of the operations and management (OM) of the government rice farm to the CDA. In their proposal, they stated such benefits to be derived from their OM of the farm as:

- increased revenue to government – with desired increase



**Table 1. Summary of rice farm plot holdings by farmers in Mbiabet before and after OM of rice farm by MICDA**

Year	Total no. of plots	Available plots after demonstration plots	No. of rice farmers renting rice farms	No. of 'big farmers' renting rice farms	No. of 'small farmers' renting rice farms	Average plot holdings by 'big farmers'	Average plot holdings by 'small farmers'
1984	700	660	24	14	10	280	380
1985	700	660	33	14	19	280	380
1986	700	660	39	14	25	280	380
1987	700	660	46	15	31	300	360
1988	700	660	53	15	38	300	360
1989	700	660	67	15	52	300	360
1990	700	660	102	15	87	300	360
1991	700	660	102	18	84	280	390
1992	700	660	103	19	84	285	375
1993	700	660	104	19	85	285	375
1994	700	660	98	20	78	300	360
1995	700	660	115	20	95	200	460
1996	700	660	150	6	144	42	618
1997	700	660	203	4	199	32	628
1998	700	660	215	3	212	24	636

in farm plots rent. CDA would pay the full value of the previous rent to government while retaining the other half for minor repairs to farm fittings and facilities;

- improved maintenance of farm facilities;
- eradication of fraud in plot allocation and farm management;
- reduction in farm maintenance costs to government;
- retention of government ownership of the rice farm;
- increased professional capacity of the AKADEP staff managing the farm: once they were made technical advisers, the task of administration and management would be taken off their shoulders; and,
- increased productivity due to greater commitment by farmers and intensive cultivation.

Although government accepted and approved the request of the MICDA, it had some doubts, for example:

- whether the CDA would ensure peace in the community,

through equitable plot distribution, and whether it would be able to maintain good relations with government; and,

- whether community members who were opposed to the views of the CDA would foment disturbances and violence.

As a result of these doubts, the government accepted Mbiabet's request with a probation period of two years to assess progress.

### The breakthrough

In 1995, less than 40% of farmers in the community owned a rice plot (NAISRDS, 1995). This problem constituted the biggest obstacle to the CDA's hopes of making plot allocation more equitable. The rich and big farmers threatened to stop any attempt to reduce their rice plot holdings by the CDA.

With its improved capacity in management and conflict resolution, the CDA organised a series of workshops, meetings, village-by-village meetings, and house-by-house interactions to educate community members about their mission and encourage participation and awareness. Meetings were also held with the rich farmers.

The result of the intensive mobilisation and facilitation by the CDA was massive support for its activities and programmes by the community. New members were registering in large numbers with the VDAs. The CDA was acquiring more strength and popularity with each achievement. As the big farmers became aware of this, they decided to submit to the dictates of the CDA over the OM of the farm. In a CDA meeting many 'big farmers' (albeit under considerable social pressure to do so) voluntarily relinquished part of their plot holdings to be shared among other farmers in the community.

The CDA finally took over the OM of their farm in 1996. The first rice plot allocations that were handled by the CDA were very successful. The rich and influential farmers who had hitherto sworn not to negotiate with the CDA reneged on their earlier positions and decided to work with the CDA to bring about stability in their community.

Table 1 shows how the allocation of farm plots changed between 1984 and 1998. Of a total number of 660 plots available for cultivation, rich or big farmers reduced their 1994 plot holdings from 300 plots to 200 plots in 1995. More small farmers were then accommodated in this arrangement – with 100 plots left to be rented among them. Between 1995 and 1998, the number of 'big farmers' reduced significantly from 20 in 1995 to 3 in 1998. Total plot holdings by 'big farmers' reduced from 200 plots to 24 plots between 1995 and 1998. The number of farmers owning rice plots increased steadily from 98 in 1994 to 215 in 1998, ensuring more farmers had access to plots.

**Table 2. Revenue accruing to rice farm from plot rent**

Year	No. of plots rented	Revenues earned No. of plots x rent	Farm revenue remitted to Government (Ministry of Agriculture)	Funds for Community Development
1984	660	660 X 5 = 3,300	–	–
1985	660	660 X 5 = 3,300	–	–
1986	660	660 X 20 = 13,200	–	–
1987	660	660 X 20 = 13,200	–	–
1988	660	660 X 20 = 13,200	–	–
1989	660	660 X 20 = 13,200	–	–
1990	660	660 X 20 = 13,200	–	–
1991	660	660 X 30 = 19,800	–	–
1992	660	660 X 30 = 19,800	–	–
1993	660	660 X 30 = 19,800	–	–
1994	660	660 X 30 = 19,800	–	–
1995	660	660 X 60 = 39,600	19,800	19,800
1996	660	660 X 60 = 39,600	19,800	19,800
1997	660	660 X 80 = 52,800	19,800	33,000
1998	660	660 X 100 = 66,000	19,800	46,200

Source: Computed from Farm Allocation Register of AKADEP Farm Manager and CDA records

Table 2 shows revenue accruing to the rice farm in the different operations and management years. Between 1984 and 1994 when AKADEP managed the farm, revenue earned was fully reinvested back into farm maintenance. As well as this, the farm management was to collect money from the government for the maintenance of the farm (although in some years the government did not release or delayed the funds). Nothing accrued to the community. However, with the takeover by the CDA in 1995, a new revenue arrangement was put in place. With an increased rent, the CDA

made more revenue, of which they paid part to the government, and retained part to use in maintaining farm facilities. Part of the revenue retained by the CDA is used for community development activities. Although the proceeds may seem small, there is a remarkable change in attitude and a building of a spirit of accountability and transparency in the business of public utilities management.

### Conclusion

The CDA takeover of the OM of the government rice farm has been very successful. They have:

- provided revenue to the government through rented farm plots;
- improved maintenance of facilities (including bunds, waterways, dams) by CDA and individual plot owners, who dedicate more time to maintaining the rice plots because they now have a stake, as opposed to when government controlled the farm without the participation of the indigenous communal people;
- eradicated fraud in farm allocation and management. The CDA allows every stakeholder to participate in its activities in order to discourage any corrupt tendencies and practices;
- greatly reduced government's maintenance costs. The CDA did not wait for government subvention to strengthen farm bunds or clear waterways, for instance. They made use of retained rental income for this; and,
- taken the decision to make AKADEP staff technical advisers; they now concentrate more on technical matters and have discovered several technical methods for improving the rice yield and storage of harvested rice.

The intensive nature of the facilitation where community members played active roles, coupled with the long periods of engagement, which accorded people time to adjust to new challenges, contributed to the success of the programme. The CDA found that with the realisation of their targets, it confirmed to them that there is strength in participation. If other communities and even government could learn from this and act similarly, it could improve the process of rural development.

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# Does PRA make sense in democratic societies?

By **BENEDIKT KORF**

## Introduction

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) approaches and methods have a long history in development planning in less developed countries (Chambers 1992). In recent years, PLA approaches have also been promoted for participatory development planning in rural areas of industrialised countries with functioning democratic institutions, mainly Switzerland, UK and Germany. This paper draws on experiences of applying Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) in a one-week planning workshop in a village in Northern Germany and asks whether or not PRA is an appropriate instrument for participatory community development in societies with functioning local democratic institutions.

## PLA in Europe?

Not only rural regions in less developed countries, but also those in industrialised societies of the North, currently face severe processes of structural social and economic change. People have to cope with the diversification of their once traditional village society and with a loss of identity. In this particularly unstable situation, participatory planning of community development aims at improving communication processes between different groups of people. The hypothesis is that by involving people in the process of their own development, participatory approaches contribute to

strengthening community feeling and mutual trust. Participatory planning methods using participatory rural appraisal (PRA) are currently being tested in selected villages in Germany as an instrument to enhance stakeholder participation in communal planning.

Practitioners and academics in Germany advocating PLA approaches for community development often stress that people, especially in rural areas, feel alienated from and are tired of politics. They state that PLA approaches could generate a positive momentum among local people to address their needs, while the formal institutions of local governance often would not be able to do so any more. However, such assumptions need to be carefully verified in the field, before PLA becomes promoted on a larger scale for community development in the industrialised societies with functioning democratic institutions.

This article assesses the experiences of a one-week participatory assessment and planning workshop 'Planning for the Future' in Mühlen, a village in Northern Germany. What are the advantages of using methodologies and approaches based on PLA compared to other established instruments of stakeholder participation? The guiding question that this paper discusses is whether or not it makes sense to advocate PLA approaches, in particular PRA, as an innovative instrument of stakeholder participation in the industrialised afflu-

ent societies of the North, in which functioning democratic institutions of local governance are in place.

### **PRA workshop in Mühlen, a village in northern Germany**

In 1998, the Federal Government of Germany initiated three pilot action research projects to develop perspectives for rural regions in Germany that suffer from environmental degradation. One of the regions selected was Vechta and Cloppenburg in the state of Lower Saxony. The area is characterised by large-scale industrialised farming. The intensity of farming seriously affected the regional land and water resources. This situation impedes or slows down any further extension of livestock farming.

A research institute from the University of Goettingen in Germany scientifically supported the dialogue process of the pilot project and initiated a stakeholder dialogue to discuss the environmental problems and social constraints of industrialised farming in Vechta-Cloppenburg. As a complementary step, the stakeholders involved in the dialogue thought it useful to include a bottom-up process in discussing the future of farming activities and rural development in the research area. As a first step, the university, in collaboration with an independent German consulting company specialising in rural development, agreed to carry out a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) workshop. This workshop was to meet two objectives: to initiate a participatory planning process in one model community of the research area, and to provide local perceptions on rural development and the role of farming for the environment and community development for the dialogue process. They randomly selected the village of Mühlen with approximately 3,000 inhabitants in the Landkreis Vechta for such a model workshop.

The consulting company received the commission to carry out the workshop and hired a team of eleven facilitators. About half of them had a background in participatory development approaches in less developed countries, and had substantial experience in applying PRA and RRA tools. The other facilitators were students or graduates of geography, agriculture and social sciences and received a brief theoretical training in PRA prior to the workshop. Eight facilitators were female, three male.

The team leader organised the PRA workshop and contacted various key persons in Mühlen and in the local administration. Mühlen is not an independent administrative entity, but belongs to the small town of Steinfeld. There is mistrust between administrators and politicians in Steinfeld and the local population in Mühlen, which has its roots in the history of administrative reforms in the 1970s, when formerly

independent small villages became submerged into larger administrative units. Whilst it was extremely important to include key local people as resource persons the consent of local administrators in Steinfeld was also necessary. Key local people included the local deputy mayor from Mühlen and various people from societies of the Roman-Catholic parish (which still exerts a considerable influence in the village).

The preparatory phase revealed that the different stakeholders had different perceptions about the purpose and procedure of the PRA workshop. The commissioning party (the state-sponsored research project) expected to gain new insights into the feelings and aspirations of the local population about environmental problems related to intensive agriculture. The local administration also took this view. These two institutional key stakeholders understood the workshop to be research or an opinion poll – a rapid rural appraisal (RRA) – rather than the starting point for a participatory planning process. The consulting company, however, understood the commission to be the beginning of a participatory planning process in one model village. The population was confused about the real commission of the facilitator team, and since key actors, such as the local administration, only half-heartedly supported the project, the workshop became more a rapid rural appraisal (RRA) than a participatory rural appraisal (PRA).

### **Methods and procedure**

In the course of a PRA exercise, the intensive schedule of activities, interviews and workshops creates a momentum and dynamic, which is hard to reach with other planning methods. The team of facilitators encourage people to talk about their affairs, something many have given up doing, due to frustration about village politics. The facilitators can also stimulate discussion processes between groups, which normally might not talk much to each other. People and social groups, which are often left apart, might get a chance to bring up their ideas. It is assumed that this assures that the identified projects mirror largely the real interests of the citizens. The fundamental question is then how to use the momentum for follow-up and how to really get things done after all the discussion.

The PRA workshop in Mühlen started on a Sunday with the arrival of the team of facilitators. The deputy mayor guided the team in a brief informal walk through the village. This helped to gain a first idea of the social and economic environment, to raise awareness of the work and to gain first contacts with the population. In the next five days, the team utilised various rapid appraisal techniques to collect information and to provide discussion forums for different social

groups. The rapid appraisal and moderation techniques were adapted to suit the circumstances of an affluent society. The three main tools utilised were:

#### **Kitchen table walks (Küchentischgespräche)**

These were aimed at collecting a variety of opinions and perceptions, which possibly would not be voiced in a public forum. Sub-teams of two facilitators randomly selected and interviewed households in the various sections of the village. The facilitators asked about what people liked or disliked in their village, how they perceived the past developments and what were their future aspirations and fears with regard to their community life. The interviews were informal and held in a relaxed atmosphere. The facilitator team had not announced the household interviews prior to their arrival, so at each doorstep, the two facilitators had to convince the interviewees about the purpose of the PRA workshop and the actual interview.

#### **SWOT workshops (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats)**

With different social groups from the village, the facilitators discussed the social cohesion in the village, the position of different social groups, their own perceptions of village life and the expectations and wishes for the future development of Mühlen. The team of facilitators and key resource persons agreed upon four such workshops to be conducted with young people, farmers, young mothers and Germans from the former Soviet Union ('Aussiedler') respectively. These four groups were those with particular social constraints in community life.

#### **Interviews and discussions**

In interviews and discussions with key informants, the team clarified open questions, collected essential data about history, environmental and social problems, and tried to generate a sense of responsibility for social action.

The approach was unstructured and depended largely on making unexpected discoveries by chance (serendipity principle). A lot of information was gathered in a short time, and it was essential to properly document and analyse this pile of data. The team of facilitators elaborated an evaluation matrix, with each team documenting the key issues of the day for selected subject areas, i.e. social life, infrastructure, environment and health, agriculture and economy etc. The team met daily to discuss the main insights and hot issues of the day to derive an investigative strategy for the following day.

As the final event of the PRA week, the facilitators presented the results to the villagers, thus 'showing the

mirror' to the local population. The team used innovative tools such as theatre and role-play in combination with short thematic presentations covering selected key issues. The main purpose was to show the different views, perceptions and attitudes in the village. It became apparent that not all villagers share the same opinion about key topics, as was often assumed by villagers. Some things were rarely openly discussed, or only talked about at the local pub ('Stammtisch') among close friends. The final workshop was therefore an important forum for exchanging different views and deriving first steps for further action. The results of the workshop were documented in a brief report.

#### **Lessons learnt from Mühlen and other places**

The participation and commitment of the people in the PRA workshop in Mühlen was not very promising, especially in the final evening session. One main reason might be that the initiation and preparation phase was very short (two months) and that the PRA was externally driven: the local administration and civil society groups did not feel an urgent need for PRA - it was offered to the village free of charge by an outside funding agency. One observation is that PRA seems to be less successful in cases where people do not feel the need for change (as in Mühlen) or where the community is very heterogeneous and some social groups are excluded from the process by other more powerful groups, which try to defend their own privileges. Hürlimann & Jufer (1995) observed in Switzerland that PRA was efficient in cases where income was relatively evenly distributed, while in cases with substantial differences, the group of people in the upper ranks of income feared for their privileges and tried to prevent any sort of changes in the community.

Experience from Germany and Switzerland shows that it is an inherent danger of PRA and also of other approaches of PLA that they might raise high expectations which are hard to meet in the given administrative and political frame conditions (Delius & Currie 1999; Hürlimann & Kofer 1995). The intensive workshop atmosphere can create excitement and expectations that changes will occur. Nevertheless, there is a certain tendency that as soon as the outsiders leave the place, everybody goes back to 'business as usual': planning procedures require a long time, are still not transparent, and funds might be difficult to acquire. The traditional political actors might regain terrain in the further advance of projects. PRAs often end up in a phase of disillusionment or frustration. The follow-up phase is a period of cooling down to realistic dimensions (Hürlimann & Jufer 1995).

Without a clarification of roles, perceptions and interests of different stakeholders and key actors, it is difficult to root

ownership in the local population and in civil society and to find people and institutions to sustain a follow-up process. The question is who actually takes the first step for initiating a PRA workshop, who carries the responsibilities and who provides the funds. Since PRA is still a 'new' method for application in European countries, the idea of starting a PRA process often comes from outside. In many cases, due to its 'model' nature, PRA is initiated and financed by external agencies and research programmes. This raises the question of how we can root local ownership not only among the population, but even more within the local administration. In the case of Mühlen, the local administration did not contribute to the funding of the workshop and neither strongly opposed nor strongly supported the workshop. It would be an important step forward in achieving ownership if local administrative and political bodies took over the funding and overall responsibility for the PRA workshop and its follow-up.

What is mostly lacking is a backstopping support for the long-term process of planning and implementation. Delius & Currell (1999) rightly point out that PRA has to be understood as a mid-term process with a time frame of one to two years. Many structural social, economic or environmental problems, which heavily affect the lives of people in rural areas of Europe, are difficult to solve during a one-week workshop. In Mühlen, for example, one particularly sensitive issue was the integration of Germans coming from the former Soviet Union into the social life of the village. Changes in attitude are hardly achievable within a week, and require continuous efforts through the social work of civil society, charity organisations and the local administration. Another conflict arose about the environmental effects of industrialised livestock farming and land use issues (agricultural versus domestic use). Many such issues are taboo or subject to power plays, and the facilitators found it difficult to raise them within the workshop week without causing trouble. A more long-term oriented mediation process might be more appropriate in such a case (see Siebert & Müller 1999 for an example from Eastern Germany). In this context, it is also essential to note which social groups are really able to participate and to defend their interest in a PRA process and which are not. It is often the poor, or specific groups, such as foreigners and young mothers, who cannot afford the time to participate in workshops, because the opportunity costs of time are too high for them (Korf 2000).

### **Conclusion: Does PRA make sense in societies where democratic institutions are in place?**

Most experiences in PLA approaches have been gained in less

**“The intensive workshop atmosphere can create excitement and expectations that changes will occur. Nevertheless, there is a certain tendency that as soon as the outsiders leave the place, everybody goes back to ‘business as usual’”**

developed countries (LDC) and it is important to draw lessons from these experiences before testing and applying PLA approaches in rural community planning in Europe. It is in particular the PRA methodology that is now widely applied in community development of LDCs. In PRA, the main involvement in the planning process should come from the local population supported by external or internal facilitators. The aim of the PRA process is to enable communities to analyse their problems, needs and aspirations, to identify possible solutions and to initiate planning and implementation of the chosen solutions. However, from the practice of governmental development co-operation in Africa and Asia, we know that the logic of a planning bureaucracy often clashes with the pragmatism and flexibility required for a truly participatory planning process. Many experiments and models therefore raised high expectations, which could not be fulfilled (Rauch 1996; Alff, Ay & Bauer 1998). In the case of delays, early enthusiasm can swiftly deteriorate into frustration. In Sri Lanka, for example, many villagers feel over-assessed by organisations, but have not seen much progress in their village development (Korf 1999). Participation alone does not yet guarantee successful and efficient solutions for community problems in less developed countries. It is, however, one fundamental precondition.

PLA in affluent societies works under significantly different frame conditions than in less developed countries. Germany has a well-developed system of political instruments that involve local citizens in decision-making and the planning process. Above all, German villagers elect village councils, and in some states, they also elect their mayor directly. In many states, they have the possibility to initiate a local referendum on important issues. Furthermore, public planning processes, e.g. for new roads, new building projects etc. incorporate a stakeholder consultation process. The question that this paper poses is whether or not it is more prudent to utilise these established institutions more intensively, than to advocate PRA and other approaches of PLA that would have yet to be established successfully in affluent societies with democratic governance structures and a strong civil society.

Some practitioners and scientists regard PLA as an instrument to overcome the 'Politikverdrossenheit' (people's disappointment with politics and the subsequent reluctance to get politically involved), since it asks people more directly to voice their opinions and to get involved in a process of change. However, in post-modern affluent societies, many individuals might feel that they do not care much about community development, because it does not really concern their individual life. For them, participating in workshops might then become a burden rather than a worthwhile investment in community development. Most people might deliberately prefer to delegate such decision-making power to elected bodies, since for most of the problems encountered, there are no easy solutions and many people are not ready to invest too much of their time and effort in discussions and meetings. Nevertheless, we can also observe that people get involved in local initiatives and action, if things matter for

them, e.g. in case of environmental pollution. However, such initiatives are often short-term, biased towards the interests of certain groups, and, in many cases, shaped by a few charismatic individuals, who talk much and eloquently dominate the whole process.

The fundamental question is how legitimised PRA processes are in a functional setting of democratically legitimised local governance institutions. If PRA is to be considered as an instrument for people's participation in community development at all, it is essential that it be understood as a complementary instrument to the existing political and administrative institutional arrangements. While civil society actors can take over complementary responsibilities and initiatives, the local administrators and democratically elected bodies need to play a key role in order for PRA processes in community development to become successful in affluent societies.

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# 18

## Participation, land acquisition, power analysis

By **JANE THOMAS**

If land acquisition is a necessary evil in some development, a project in Bangladesh has found ways to reduce the losses usually associated with large infrastructure construction. Through a participatory process, the project has been able to address many of the usual tough problems.

The Dampara Water Management Project (DWMP) was implemented in 1998 in northern Bangladesh for the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) by SNC Lavalin International, Canada's largest engineering company. The task was to provide flood control to a 15,000ha area which experiences flash flooding several times annually, repeatedly destroying crops, houses, and other infrastructure of the 174,000 residents. The main activity was the construction of a 30km embankment along the Kangsha River.

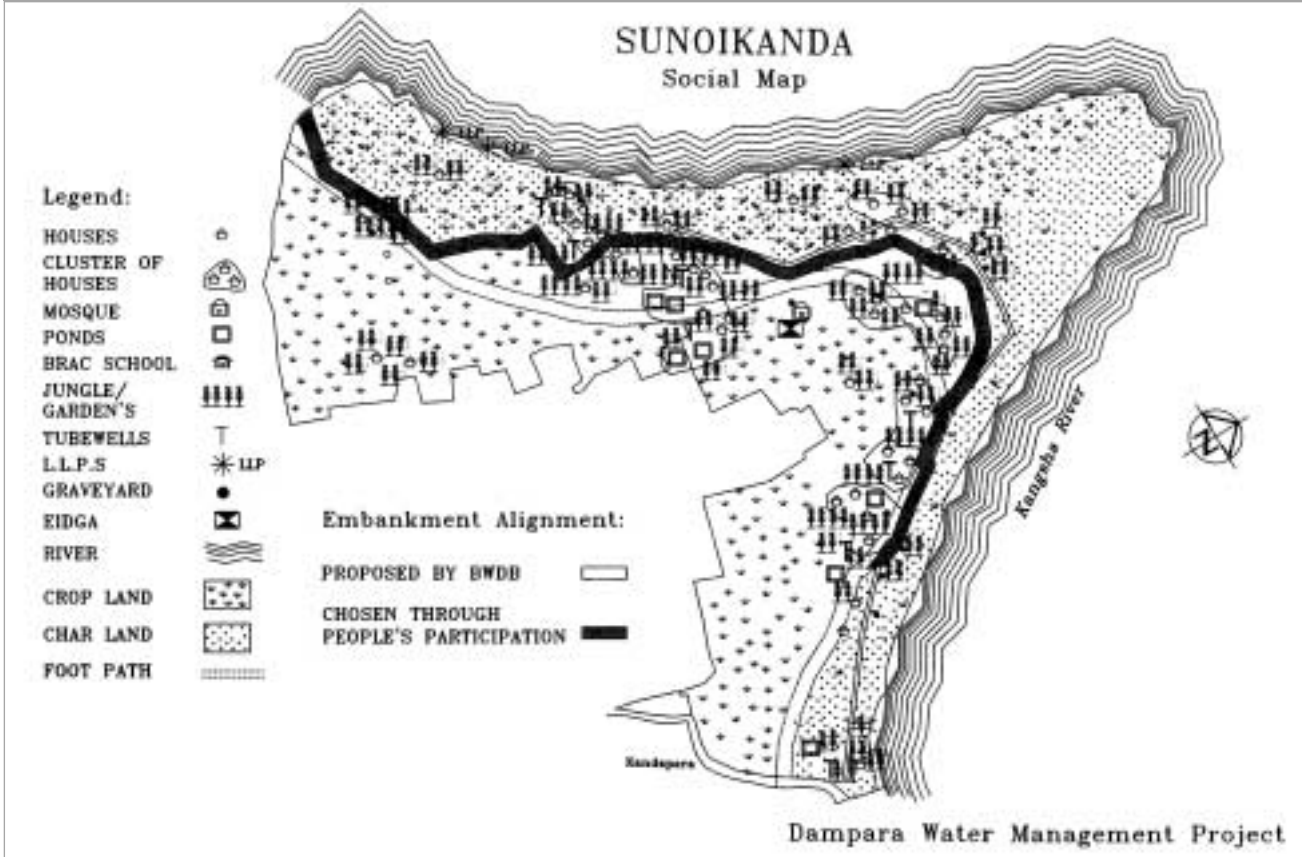
Normally an engineer would be hired to lead such a project, but this had been conceived as not just another construction project. CIDA and the BWDB wanted to experiment: if the local people were involved from the beginning, would it make a difference to a big problem in Bangladesh, i.e. the long term sustainability of the embankment? To emphasise this social approach, a social anthropologist specialising in participation was hired as team leader and a social team of eight people went to work in communities along the river.

The project had originated when area representatives appealed to the Government of Bangladesh for the flood protection and the representatives had been consulted at the feasibility stage of the project, as is common in these kinds of projects. However, the actual landowners near the proposed embankment had not been consulted at all. Neither had they been involved in choosing the already decided alignment and they were violently opposed to it. Threats were made which jeopardised the project.

The introduction of a participatory approach and PRA tools changed the atmosphere completely. Public meetings were called in several locations along the river to discuss the project and to do a detailed, participatory problem census about why the people opposed the alignment and why they did not want to sell their land. In the same meetings, a plan was made on how to address each of the problems. While almost nobody was opposed to having an embankment, the biggest problem was where the embankment would be built: its exact alignment. To solve this problem, something never tried in Bangladesh before was introduced, asking the people themselves to choose the new alignment. As the problem census had revealed, the original alignment was opposed because it went through prime cropland. Alternative, general routes were also publicly considered. The social team then facilitated negotiations held in public in the fields,



Figure 1



**Box 1: The Sunoikanda Social Map**

This map of one of the communities indicates why people opposed the originally proposed embankment alignment: it went through the middle of prime cropland. Plot-by-plot they chose a new alignment, shifting it to less productive land.

How this map was made: social maps are

usually shown hand drawn but because it was essential in this project to deal with precise legal units of land (exact plot boundaries), community members were given a large, to-scale, computer-generated paper map showing all the plots and the originally proposed alignment. On each plot of land owners drew in the crop land, houses, mosques, temples,

tree areas, irrigation pumps, wells, graveyards, etc. Their drawing was added to the computer map where the plots had been removed, to show only these social features. The computerised or digitised maps could then be overlaid, emailed and used in presentations to explain why the people wanted to move the alignment.

going plot-by-plot with landowners for them to decide which land would be expropriated. The strategy used was that the people were negotiating with each other, not with the project, to choose the alignment. The project was only facilitating for the people to choose it. In this way the local people found solutions, ones perhaps not available to an outside facilitator.

In only four months, the process was completed, with a new alignment which met the project's only selection criteria: the new alignment had to be a safe distance away from the river as judged by DWMP engineers, and the decisions

had to be made by consensus. In many cases, it meant landowners having to choose between saving their land and saving their houses and most chose to save their land and move their houses elsewhere, usually on the same plot of land. The Sunoikanda Social Map indicates how the people chose to move the alignment to less productive land (see Figure 1 and Box 1).

The participatory alignment selection presented many challenges. It was carried out on a 9.5km stretch of the embankment, affecting 325 plots of land having a total of about 1,200 co-owners. With land sub-divided through

inheritance, each plot is usually co-owned by siblings or cousins, and the size of the plot is very small, under one acre. As such, discussion to give up even a few square metres of such precious land magnified any problems or rivalries between people and created new alliances and presented many opportunities for the better-off land owners to take advantage of those with less land. To facilitate, so that the land owners themselves would choose the alignment, but avoid problems, the project took several measures to analyse and be well informed on the individual landowners and the roles they were playing (see Power Analysis below). While many conflicts between owners did arise, these were resolved to a workable extent and some surprising acts of generosity also occurred. In some locations slightly better-off farmers voluntarily allowed the alignment to go further on to their land for the purpose of saving more of their poor neighbour's land. In one case, a man who owned several plots donated a plot to another man who would lose most of his tiny plot. As the process progressed in each community, a few of the affected landowners themselves took over major facilitation roles, chiding others to also give up pieces of their land for the benefit of the community.

With the new alignment agreed, the DWMP then worked with the landowners to solve many of the other problems they had listed. The project provided an advisor on their land rights, helped in reducing the paper work involved, and helped them get their government compensation in one lump sum in record short time, only eight months. In fact, it usually takes many more months or years and can be spread out in small amounts. This unusual speed of payment, and the fact that the payment was made in one instalment, was popular with the landowners as it gave them cash which most chose to invest in other income generating activities.

Out of this social process, community groups were formed and this led to agreeing with the BWDB to share responsibility for the operation and maintenance (OM) of the embankment. In return for a commitment to keep up basic repair work, the community groups have been allowed to plant certain crops on the embankment which, if managed as agreed and trained to do, will generate significant income over the short, medium and long term. This money is to pay the group costs for OM and to go towards community development. In these ways, the landowners who lost land can regain some income. The project was completed in February 2002 with follow-up to be done by an NGO until 2003.

### Results of the participatory approach

DWMP is an example of how, in a large infrastructure

project, community participation can have many positive results. Participation may add up-front costs but savings offset these later. While DWMP did not carry out an official cost benefit analysis of participation, indications are clear that it can decrease loss and increase benefits, for example:

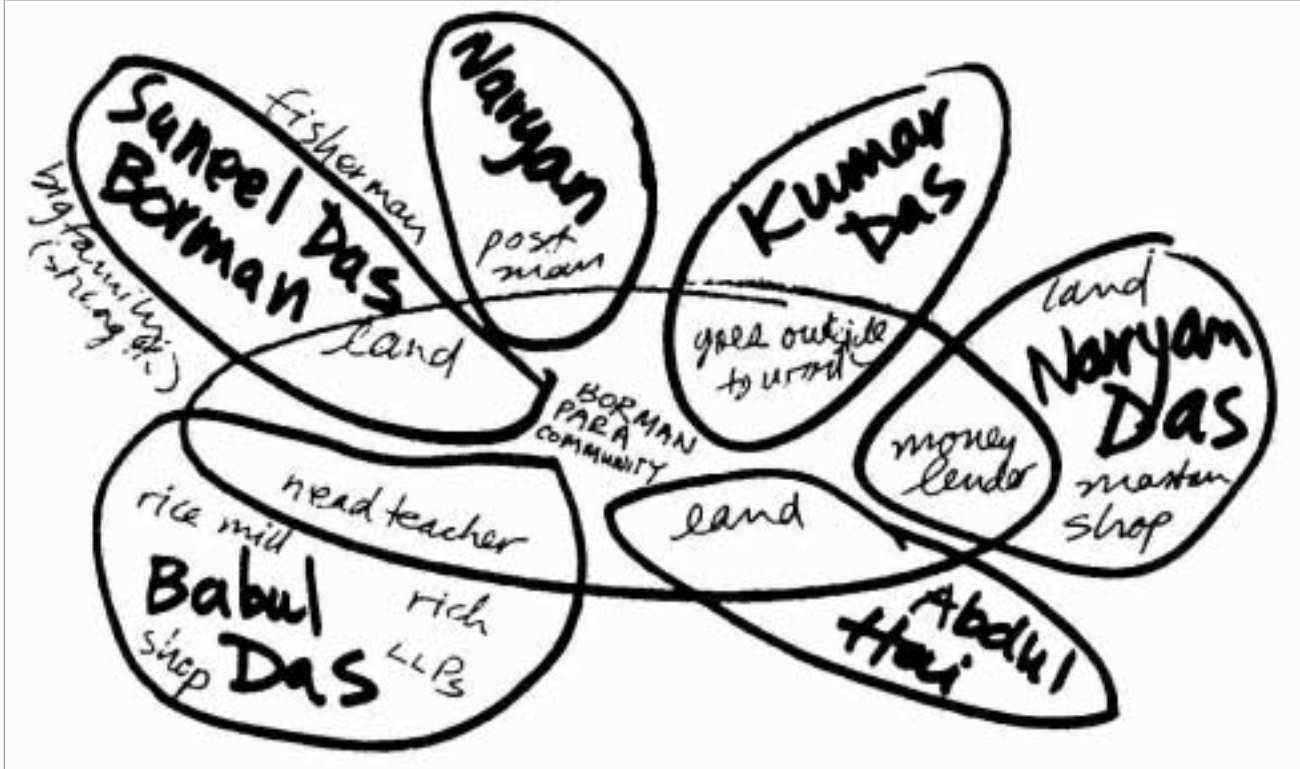
- a technically sound, socially acceptable, financially feasible alignment was chosen;
- the maximum number of landowners got to save their crop land, food supply and livelihoods;
- no resettlement was needed;
- the embankment was built without obstruction;
- construction costs were saved by the embankment's reduced overall length which was decided by the people;
- trust and good relations were established: usual police protection was not needed, and no court actions were taken against construction;
- people who participated formed groups for community development, were trained and set-up with means for income generation for OM and community development; and,
- these groups made a formal agreement with the BWDB to share responsibility for OM, increasing the sustainability of the embankment.

### Power analysis

One of the most important and useful tools developed in the project was a power analysis of each community. Early in the project for each of the 12 communities involved, a community profile was established first through participatory wealth ranking, then with key informants this ranking was rounded out by an analysis of power. Who has it? What power do they have? From what do they get their power? How do they use or misuse it? Who are the least powerful (most vulnerable)? In the field during the participatory alignment selection, project staff concentrated on listening and observing to try to get an understanding of the power relations through local eyes. Then at weekly staff meetings the social team and technical teams (engineers, surveyors, technicians, fisheries and agriculture experts) discussed, updated, shared news and made plans about dealing with specific powerful people, and on how to protect and support the most vulnerable. Drawing attention to power in this way amongst staff and making it an on-going agenda item for all project personnel to observe and discuss, not only helped ensure protection for the vulnerable, but was also an excellent management tool.

In large, multisector infrastructure projects, if social or participatory processes are included at all, they commonly are considered separate from the technical components. In

Figure 2: Who has the Power? The powerful in the Borman Para community

**Box 2: Power Venn diagram**

Used as an analysis and communication tool between social and technical teams on the project, the Venn diagram identified the most powerful people and what gives them their power. Later, as more was learned about each community and situations evolved, notes were added to the Venn diagram about each person's power, arbitrarily rated as positive or negative. These diagrams were used only by project staff, to develop a common understanding about the community social structure and influences.

DWMP, however, all the technical components were integrated into the participatory process. This meant in a project with many activities happening simultaneously or in sequence, many people were involved: dozens of personnel of different disciplines (civil engineers, surveyors, inspectors, contractors, land acquisition legal advisors, agriculturalists, fisheries biologists, sanitation workers, etc.), and thousands of community people all spread out over large distances. Dialogue on the local power helped the project's multi-sector team build a common understanding and consistent direction with the many community people and between each other.

Power analysis in the DWMP looked at both negative and positive power. The participatory alignment selection process involved 12 communities. Although side-by-side and in remote locations, each was very different from each other. Each had a small number of most influential people. Some got their power from material strength (land, money,

political links, education, job, family size, etc.). Some got it from mental, spiritual or historical strength or respect (leadership skills, religious piety, respected family history, local social work, etc). Knowing such details helped immeasurably in facilitating the participatory process. It helped identify who might try to take advantage of others as well as who could be called on to provide protection to those who needed it.

**Venn diagramming**

From on-going observation in the field and key informant information, project personnel drew Venn diagrams to identify each community's powerful people, with notes on what gives them power. These diagrams were used only in staff meetings as reminders and illustrations of who's who in each community. Each community's Venn diagram was done to name the people and list their power sources (see Figure 2 and Box 2). In the following discussions using the diagrams,

staff started adding positive or negative signs to indicate the kind of influence each powerful person had. In the highly pressured time at the beginning of the project, each powerful person was thought of simply as a negative or positive force.

As situations in each community evolved, roles being played by the powerful people changed and project staff had gained more knowledge, the analysis of the powerful people's influences became more complex. A simple positive or negative assessment was no longer accurate or useful. Continuing only for the project team's internal use at weekly meetings in the field, each person's negative or positive power was then assigned an arbitrary percentage grading which changed according to other changes, and the Venn diagrams changed as needed. These 'quick reference' guides to the communities used the actual people's names but, where used in any published material, the names were changed, as below.

For example, in Borman Para community, six men are the most powerful. The two extremes in these six are Babul Das (75%+, 25%-) and Narayan Borman (70%-, 30%+). Babul Das is seen in the community as the richest man who gets his income from legitimate sources: he is educated, the head

teacher at the local school, is from a big family (seen locally as positive strength coming from brothers, nephews), owns a rice mill, irrigation pumps, a shop, etc. He is known for being gentle, cooperative and helpful to people, altogether explaining why he was assigned a rating of 75% positive (+). He, however, was in a big fight several months ago and the victim was badly injured. Now Babul is involved in a court case and this situation has affected his standing in the community, explaining why he was given some negative rating (25%-). Narayan Borman is also rich but most people fear him, as he is well known for getting what he wants by force, intimidation and coercion. He tries to impose his own leadership but is divisive. This explains why he is seen as mostly negative (70%-). On the other hand he was seen to help a few of the poorest landowners during the alignment selection process so was given a little credit for this (at 30%+).

While the project's participatory process continued in the communities to the end of project, assigning and adjusting ratings like this confidentially amongst staff, while arbitrary, helped project social and multi-sector technical personnel develop a common understanding and coordinated approach with community members.

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#### NOTE

Jane Thomas was team leader of the Dampara Water Management Project. She is a social anthropologist and Canadian, with 17 years experience working in development projects in Asia.

# Tips for trainers

by ROBERT CHAMBERS

## ENDING

### The certificate snare

There is often a demand for certificates after a workshop, training or course. With some training workshops organisers spring on you, near the end, a beautifully printed set of certificates, which includes your name and a place for you to sign. Oh dear. With PRA-related workshops I have decided I will not sign them.

Three main things can be wrong with signing certificates:

1. The certificate culture in which appearances are valued more than reality. People take part less to learn and change and more to get the piece of paper.

2. Deception. Some get the spirit of PRA and participation quickly and its behaviour and attitudes. Others think they have it, but have not. Others sense they have not got it and it is not for them. There is no way of separating out who is who. In any case, giving certificates to some and not others would be a horrendous way to end. But if all receive them, they are debased and some will give a false impression. Quite simply, certificates mislead.

3. Abuse. There is no control on how certificates are used. All are free to photocopy them, add them to their CVs, frame them on their office walls and use them in job applications. Opinions differ about solutions. A refuses to sign certificates at all. B will sign them only after feedback on follow-up. C will sign a 'certificate of attendance', which simply says that the person was there. But there are two neat solutions. Both need careful anticipation.

### The pledge certificate

A South African innovation. The original certificate is self-explanatory. It reads:



### Community Consultation and Facility Management Workshop, Sebokeng 16–24 November 1999

This is to certify that

I, .....,  
attended the above workshop. In so doing, I have pledged to:

.....  
.....  
.....

SIGNED.....[participant]

SIGNED.....[Barbara Masakela, Deputy Chairperson SA Sports Commission]

SIGNED.....[Peter Bryant, Manager UK/SA Sports Initiative]

Supported by: DfID, UK South Africa Sports Initiative, South African Sports Congress

### Group photograph and farewell certificates

I like these.

*Group photograph certificate.*

There is a group photograph for everyone. These are best mounted on paper with a margin for writing on. The photos are passed round.

Everyone signs each photo. If there is time and space personal messages can be included.

Source: Regional Participation Workshop, Amman, October 1997.

*Farewell certificate.* A robust piece of paper is fixed to the back of

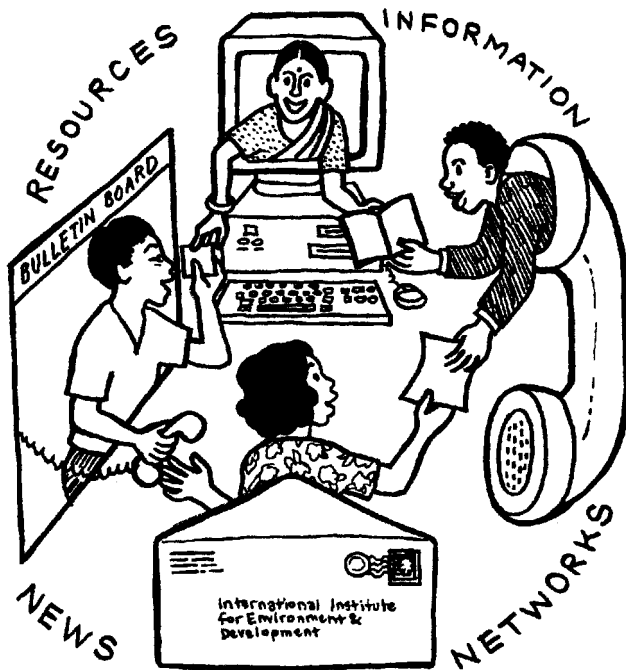
each person. All move around and write messages of appreciation and farewell on the backs of others. This gives everyone a very personal memento and reminder to take home.

Source: James Mascarenhas

Source: Chambers, R. (2002)

**Participatory Workshops:  
A sourcebook of 21 sets of ideas and activities, Earthscan Publications Ltd., London, pp.48 – 49 (see In-Touch section for more details on this publication).**





Welcome to the In Touch section of *PLA Notes*. Through these pages we hope to create a more participatory resource for the *PLA Notes* audience, to put you, as a reader, in touch with other readers. We want this section to be a key source of up-to-date information on training, publications, and networks. Your help is vital in keeping us all in touch about:

- **Networks.** Do you have links with recognised local, national or international networks for practitioners of participatory learning? If so, what does this network provide – training? newsletters? resource material/library? a forum for sharing experiences? Please tell us about the network and provide contact details for other readers.
- **Training.** Do you know of any forthcoming training events or courses in participatory methodologies? Are you a trainer yourself? Are you aware of any key training materials that you would

like to share with other trainers?

- **Publications.** Do you know of any key publications on participatory methodologies and their use? Have you (or has your organisation) produced any books, reports, or videos that you would like other readers to know about?
- **Electronic information.** Do you know of any electronic conferences or pages on the Internet which exchange or provide information on participatory methodologies?
- **Other information.** Perhaps you have ideas about other types of information that would be useful for this section. If so, please let us know.

Please send your responses to:  
*PLA Notes*, Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, UK. Fax: + 44 (0)20 7388 2826; Email: [PLA.Notes@iied.org](mailto:PLA.Notes@iied.org)  
*PLA Notes* is published in February, June, and October. Please submit material two months before the publication date.

## Book reviews



**Participatory situation analysis with livestock keepers: a guide**  
● C. Conroy, Natural Resources Institute and BAIF Development

Research Foundation, 2001

The information collected using the participatory methods described in this guide (semi-structured interviews combined with various visual techniques) will provide a sound basis for planning livestock development interventions, or for planning research to develop new technologies to address the priority constraints here identified. The guide is intended to assist people who are involved in aspects of livestock research and development, such as NGO staff, animal husbandry extensionists and livestock scientists involved in field-based research.



**Participatory technology development with livestock keepers: a guide**  
● C. Conroy, Natural Resources Institute and BAIF

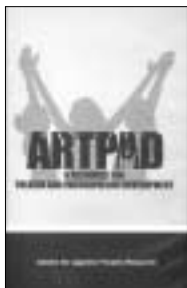
Development Research Foundation, 2002

This guide provides advice on how to plan, implement and monitor trials. It draws on several trials conducted by the project team with goat-keepers over a four-year period (1998-2001). The problems addressed include low conception rates of female goats, low milk yield and high mortality rates in young goats. The guide is aimed at government researchers who have only limited experience of

participatory research in villages; and NGO staff working in the field who have little, if any, experience of participatory technology development. It does not pay much attention therefore to theoretical issues, and only covers very basic aspects of statistical analysis of experimental data.

These guides draw heavily on the field experiences of a collaborative project involving BAIF Development Research Foundation and the Natural Resources Institute (NRI). The project has been seeking to identify and address fee-related constraints affecting goat production in semi-arid India. The guides will also be available in Hindi.

■ Available from: Czech Conroy, Principal Scientist (Socioeconomics), Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, Central Avenue, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TB, UK. Email: m.a.conroy@gre.ac.uk OR Dr. AL Joshi, Vice-President, BAIF Development Research Foundation, Dr. Manibhai Desai Nagar, N. H. No.4, Warje, Pune 411 029, India. Email: mdmtc@pn2.vsnl.net.in



**ARTPAD Project manual and video. A resource for theatre and participatory development**

● J. McCarthy and K. Galvão, University of Manchester, 2002

This manual is the result of the ARTPAD project (A Resource for Theatre and Participatory Development) conducted by the Centre for Applied Theatre Research, based at the University of Manchester. The manual is directed at development workers with an interest in integrating theatre techniques into

their working practices, not only in issue-based workshops, but also in areas such as project planning, evaluation, decision making and research. The exercises are divided into four sections: Beginnings, Conflict Resolution, Issue-based Work and Evaluation. The ARTPAD video, a result of a training course in Brazil, shows development professionals talking about the role of theatre in their work and demonstrates the techniques used. Both the English and Portuguese versions will be published in November 2002.

■ Available from: Julie McCarthy, Project Director, ARTPAD, Centre for Applied Theatre Research, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, UK. Tel: +44 (0)161 275 3784 Email: Julie.mccarthy@man.ac.uk Website: www.art.man.ac.uk/DRAMA/departament/research/catr.htm



**Participatory Workshops: A sourcebook of 21 sets of ideas and activities**

● R. Chambers, Earthscan Publications, London, 2002

ISBN 1 85383 863 2  
This book provides ideas and options for facilitators, trainers, teachers and presenters, and anyone who organises and manages workshops, courses, classes and other events for sharing and learning. Presenting 21 sets of ideas, activities and tips, this sourcebook covers topics such as getting started, seating arrangements, forming groups, managing large numbers, helping each other learn, analysis and feedback, dealing with dominators, evaluation and ending, coping with horrors, and common mistakes. This

collection of activities attempts to move from 'teaching' to participatory learning and seeks to make learning quicker, deeper, more enduring and more fun.

■ Available from: Littlehampton Book Services Ltd, PO Box 53, Littlehampton BN17 7BU UK.

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Website: www.earthscan.co.uk



**Partners in Planning: Information, participation and empowerment**

● S. B. Rifkin and P. Pridmore, MacMillan Education Ltd., 2001

This book provides practical

guidelines for using participatory approaches for planning social development programmes, particularly in the areas of health and education. The book focuses on partnerships and its goal is to help professionals find ways to experience the value and potential of generating information and sharing decisions for programmes with lay people. It explores the process by which information is generated and the subsequent empowerment of the people who are intended to benefit from the programme. Topics covered include why information is important for planning and empowerment, choosing appropriate methods and techniques, doing a participatory needs assessment, and investigating particular samples of participatory planning.

■ Available from: MacMillan Education Ltd., 25 Eccleston Place, London SW1W 9NF, UK. Website: www.macmillan-africa.com



### The Positive Path: Using Appreciative Inquiry in rural Indian communities

● G. Ashford and S. Patkar, International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2001  
This document was produced during a two-and-half-year partnership project between Canada's International Institute for Sustainable Development, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, and MYRADA, an Indian development agency. The purpose of the project was to field-test Appreciative Inquiry, an innovative approach to organisational and social development. Appreciative Inquiry moves beyond participatory problem/needs analysis by identifying peak moments within a community and then discovering and reinforcing

the conditions that made them possible. This document will be of particular interest to individuals seeking alternatives to deficit-based approaches to project planning and implementation.

■ Available from: International Institute for Sustainable Development, 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 0Y4.  
Tel: +1 (204) 958 7700; Fax: +1 (204) 958 7710; Email: info@iisd.ca; Website: www.iisd.org/ai/myrada.htm

### Cutting Edge Gender Knowledge Pack on Gender and Participation

● BRIDGE, Institute of Development Studies, 2001  
This resource pack presents an Overview report that looks at the



convergences between approaches to gender and to participation and how they have been or could be constructively

integrated into projects, programmes, policies and institutions. The pack also includes a report summary, a copy of the BRIDGE bulletin in brief on the same theme and a collection of supporting resources.

■ Available from: BRIDGE, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1273 877747; Fax: +44 (0)1273 621202; Email: bridge@ids.ac.uk; Website: www.ids.ac.uk/bridge

## Workshops and Events

### The First International Mary Parker Follett Conversation on Creative Democracy

17th – 20th October 2002

Boise State University, Boise, Idaho

This conference will focus on one of the most critical questions of our time: how can we fulfill the promise of democracy as a creative experience, one that releases both personal and social potential, from the local to the global level? The event will bring together people from all disciplines whose approach to human relations, community building, public affairs and management are based on integrated diversity and continuous creativity among stakeholders. The team-based conversation approach, which is a desirable alternative to the conventional conference format, will provide an enriching participatory

experience that will produce new knowledge, new goals, initiatives and impetus.

● For further information, please contact: Matthew A. Shapiro, Foundation President and Conversation Coordinator, The Mary Parker Follett Foundation Inc., PO Box 573, Boise, Idaho 83701, USA. Tel: +1 (208) 343-3042; Email: mshapiro@follettfoundation.org; Website: www.FollettFoundation.org

### Group Facilitation Methods – UK ToP Facilitation Training course

1st – 3rd October 2002, Maseru, Lesotho

2nd – 3rd October 2002, Manchester

15th – 18th October 2002, Bristol

22nd – 24th October 2002, Durban, South Africa

26th – 27th November 2002, Exeter

This course offers a structured introduction to the basic methods of the Technology of Participation. The course presents the foundations of the ToP methodology in a practical and participatory way, demonstrating, discussing and practising each method.

### Applied Group Facilitation Methods – UK ToP Facilitation Training course 22 – 23 October, London

The course introduces a powerful, complex application of the basic Discussion and Workshop methods in the ToP Action Planning method, and enables participants to more effectively apply ToP methods in their own situations. The method is excellent for planning short-term projects or completing projects that have stalled. Group Facilitation Methods is a pre-requisite for this course, and prior experience of applying ToP methods is recommended.

### Participatory Strategic Planning – UK ToP Facilitation Training course 20 – 21 November, Manchester

Presents a structured long-range planning process which incorporates the Workshop method for building consensus, the Discussion method for effective group communication and an implementation process for

turning ideas into productive action and concrete accomplishments. Group Facilitation Methods is a pre-requisite for this course.

● For further information about the UK courses, please contact: Martin Gilbraith, ICA:UK, PO Box 171, Manchester M15 5BE, UK. Tel: +44 (0)161 953 4064; Email: martin@ica-uk.org.uk; Website: www.ica-uk.org.uk

● For further information about the Southern African courses, please contact: ICA (South Africa). Tel: (011) 440 0247; Email: ica@sn.apc.org

**Farmer-led Extension  
7th – 25th October 2002  
Cavite, Philippines**

This three-week course is designed to advance rural development through improved agricultural extension practices with emphasis on participatory approaches. Field extension managers and supervisors, extension trainers and development practitioners from government and non-government organisations will find this course valuable.

**Community-based Integrated  
Watershed Management  
25th November – 13th December  
2002  
Cavite, Philippines**

This course offers a new approach for integrating technologies and participatory strategies within the natural landscape 'watershed' for sustainable resource use, production and conservation. This course is intended for planners, field staff, technicians and others working in

rural development, with government and non-government organisations who work in the areas of food security, sustainable agriculture, water resources management and natural resources management.

**Facilitation for Gender Equality  
20th October – 1st November 2002  
(in French)  
Egmond aan Zee, the Netherlands**

This course is designed as an elaboration and deepening of the former Training of Trainers (TOT) and is meant for gender trainers, educators, gender focal points with a training assignment, and activists. The course enables them to support a process of gender-aware organisational change as a facilitator and to design and implement gender training courses at programme and organisational level.

● For further information, please contact: Gender and Development Training Centre, Wilhelminastraat 18, 2011 VM Haarlem, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 23 5342149; Fax: +31 23 5513260; Email: gen.dtc@inter.nl.net; Website: www.gender-training.nl

**Reflect with Refugees: An Intensive  
Training Workshop  
28th October – 1st November 2002  
London, UK**

Drawing on participants' experiences of being part of a refugee group/supporting the work of refugee groups, this workshop will propose various practical exercises to enable people to reflect on, and analyse the issues related to working with refugees. Through this work

participants will gain an understanding of the Reflect approach, knowledge of the key elements which need consideration when planning a Reflect project and awareness of various participatory methodologies which can be adapted to use in practice in different contexts. This workshop will be tailored to refugee groups in the UK. It will be primarily aimed at facilitators/resource people from within refugee communities. A secondary audience will be support organisations seeking to strengthen the work of refugee community groups/associations.

● For further information, please contact: Egigayehu Summers, ActionAid, Hamlyn House, London N19 5PG, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7561 7645; Email: esummers@actionaid.org.uk; Website: www.reflect-action.org

**An Introduction to Participatory  
Learning and Action  
7th – 8th October 2002  
London, UK**

The aim of this course is to introduce the principles, philosophy and practical tools of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA). The course is addressed to the staff of development NGOs working both in the UK and overseas, who are involved either with policy and planning, monitoring and evaluation, and/or community development work.

● For further information, please contact: Laurentine Goulei, BOND, Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL. Tel: +44 (0)20 7837 8344; Fax: +44 (0)20 7837 4220.



# e-participation

## **Participation Toolkit: Citizen participation in local governance**

[www.toolkitparticipation.com](http://www.toolkitparticipation.com)

This website aims to contribute to the debate around citizen participation in local governance in the policy and development arenas. It does that through the Participation Toolkit, a collection of information on tools that promote citizen participation in local governance. The extensive online database offers a wide range of case studies, based on experiences and contacts from all over the world. Other features include regional news bulletin boards and relevant, up to date, links. A regularly updated glossary of key terms used in this toolkit is also included.

## **Local Government Reform Project in Croatia**

[www.urban-institute.hr/en/activities/public.htm](http://www.urban-institute.hr/en/activities/public.htm)

The Local Government Reform Project in Croatia (LGRP), implemented by the Urban Institute, aims at promoting public participation, i.e. raising the level of active citizen participation in the decision-making processes of the local government. The LGRP's goal is to institutionalise public participation as a mode of operation for all City activities, and to use the output of its work with the City of Rijeka as a model for other local governments in Croatia. The website gives full details of this initiative.

## **Indigenous Media Network: Making indigenous voices heard**

[www.indigenousmedia.org/](http://www.indigenousmedia.org/)

This interesting network was established to bring together indigenous journalists from all parts of the world to make their voices heard and to unite them in their common struggles. Members are committed to reporting accurate news from an indigenous perspective and to using journalism as a tool to campaign for the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide. The website brings together articles on indigenous issues, useful contacts and links.

## **CIVICUS: strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world.**

[www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org)

As a global alliance of citizens and their organisations, CIVICUS helps advance regional, national and international initiatives to strengthen the capacity of civil society, especially in areas where participatory democracy, freedom of association of citizens and their funds for public benefit are threatened. The Services page on the website focuses on information dissemination and access to a range of 'tools' to enhance the implementation efforts of various civil society activities. It also provides users with a list of all civil society-related events and numerous online documents.

## **IAP2: International Association for Public Participation**

[www.iap2.org/index.html](http://www.iap2.org/index.html)

IAP2 is an association of members who seek to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, and other entities that effect the public interest in nations throughout the world. The website offers updates on events and training opportunities related to public participation. Members have access to the online version of the IAP2 Newsletter and can obtain discounts on publications. IAP2 has developed the Public Participation Toolbox which is a listing of a wide variety of public participation tools and techniques with tips and ideas of how and when to use them. This is available to members.

## **MandE News: Monitoring and Evaluation**

[www.mande.co.uk](http://www.mande.co.uk)

An online news service focusing on developments in monitoring and evaluation methods relevant to development projects and programmes with social development objectives. This is a very interactive website that allows users to share with others their experiences, comments, news and documents on their current monitoring and evaluation projects. The website also provides lists of relevant events and related websites.

# RCPLA Network

In this section, we aim to update readers on activities of the **Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action Network (RCPLA) Network** ([www.rcpla.org](http://www.rcpla.org)) and its members. For more information please contact the RCPLA Network Steering Group:

**RCPLA Coordinator:** Tom Thomas, Director, Praxis, S-385, Greater Kailash II, New Delhi – 110 049, India. Tel: +91 11 641 8885/ 6/ 7, 623 3525 Fax: +91 11 641 8885/ 6/ 7, 623 3525 Extn: 21. Email: [tomt@praxisindia.org](mailto:tomt@praxisindia.org)

**Asian Region:** Jayatissa Samaranayake, Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development (IPID), 591 Havelock Road, Colombo 06, Sri Lanka. Tel: +94 1 555521; Tel/Fax: +94 1 587361. Email: [ipidc@panlanka.net](mailto:ipidc@panlanka.net)

**West Africa Region:** Awa Faly Ba (Interim Network Chair), c/o IIED Programme Sahel, Point E, Rue 6 X A, BP 5579, Dakar, Sénégal. Tel: +221 824 4417; Fax: +221 824 4413. Email: [awafba@sentoo.sn](mailto:awafba@sentoo.sn)

**European Region:** Jane Stevens, Participation Group, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex,

Brighton, BN1 9RE, UK. Tel: + 44 (0)1273 678690; Fax: + 44 (0)1273 21202. Email: [participation@ids.ac.uk](mailto:participation@ids.ac.uk)  
Participation group website: [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip)

**Latin American Region:** Fernando Dick, Dirección de Programas de Investigación y Desarrollo (DPID), Universidad Nur, Casilla 3273, Ave Cristo Redentor No 100, Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Tel: +591 3 363 939; Fax: +591 3 331 850; Email: [participa@tabarsi.nur.edu](mailto:participa@tabarsi.nur.edu); Website: <http://dpid.nur.edu>

**North Africa & Middle East Region:** Ali Mokhtar, Center for Development Services (CDS) 4 Ahmed Pasha Street, Citibank Building, Garden City, Cairo, Egypt, Tel: +20 2 795 7558; Fax: +20 2 794 7278.

Email: [cds.lrc@neareast.org](mailto:cds.lrc@neareast.org)  
Website: [www.neareast.org/explore/cds/index.htm](http://www.neareast.org/explore/cds/index.htm)

**Southern and Eastern Africa Region:** John Kennedy, Participatory Methodologies Forum of Kenya (PAMFORK), Jabavu Road, PCEA Jitegemea Flats, Flat No. D3, PO Box 2645, KNH Post Office, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel/Fax: +254 27 16609. Email: [pamfork@nbnet.co.ke](mailto:pamfork@nbnet.co.ke)

## Communication from the RCPLA Network Steering Group

After a long selection process, the RCPLA Network Steering Group is pleased to announce that Tom Thomas from PRAXIS has been selected as the RCPLA Network Coordinator.

Director of PRAXIS, Tom Thomas holds a rich experience of more than 15 years in the area of development. Tom has led PRAXIS on several important assignments commissioned by Governments, international NGOs and bilateral agencies. Prior to joining PRAXIS, he held many key portfolios in Action Aid, India, Bangladesh and the UK.

Tom assumed responsibility as RCPLA Network Coordinator in June 2002. Since then, he has participated in the Arab Regional Workshop in Amman and has met some key institutions in London such as DFID, IDS and IIED.

With the support of all the RCPLA members, the Steering Group is confident that Tom will bring some very constructive ideas to the network

development. He has a very proactive vision of the RCPLA and is working on proposals for both the medium and longer term.

● The next Steering Group meeting will be held in Sri Lanka from 21st – 23rd October 2002. It will give participants an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss the network and its future direction.

## News from PRAXIS

PRAXIS held the 5th edition of the International Thematic PRA Training Workshop at Thrissur, Kerala from 16-27 September 2001. A hundred and six national and international participants attended the workshop. The 6th edition of the International Thematic PRA Training Workshop will be held in Hyderabad from 22 September to 3 October 2002.

Other training activities conducted by PRAXIS include the PRA Training for FICCI-CARE Earthquake Relief Project at Bhuj in April 2002; the 7th edition of Sandhan, training for village/cluster level development workers, was held at Rajgir, Bihar in May 2002; and training in

Community Management for UNICEF Water and Sanitation Program staff was held in the last two weeks of August 2002.

PRAXIS provided Strategic Planning Support to OXFAM Eritrea for the Participatory Micro Level Planning process that OXFAM GB is undertaking in 60 villages from the two zones of Gash Barka and Debub.

PRAXIS participated at the Conference for Global Action and Change organised by the Participatory Development Forum, Canada, July 29 – August 2, 2002. PRAXIS presented a paper on new challenges to increase participation of the poorest.

Three new programme officers for PRAXIS Delhi office were appointed in April 2002. PRAXIS staff held a retreat and team-building meeting at Chail, 3-6 June 2002. The objective of the retreat was for the entire team to come together and take stock of what the organisation had accomplished so far and also to discuss the future strategy for PRAXIS. In July 2002 PRAXIS took on the coordinatorship of the RCPLA

network. The RCPLA Steering group is currently deciding the term of office for the coordinating institution.

Sudipto Sen and PRAXIS produced a short documentary film 'In the land of Gatsingh', about a particular community of snake charmers based in Morena, MP. PRAXIS intends to market this film commercially in the near future.

● For more information contact: PRAXIS – Institute for Participatory Practices, S-385, Greater Kailash II, New Delhi 110 049, India. Tel: +91 11 641 8885/ 6/ 7, 623 3525; Fax: +91 11 641 8885/ 6/ 7, 623 3525 Extn: 21; Email: info@praxisindia.org Website: www.praxisindia.org

### News from IIRR

The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), in partnership with the Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC), Lambaga Alan Tropika Indonesia (LATIN), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), will host a Philippine national writeshop from 18-29 November 2002, with the theme: 'Linking People to Policy', to provide a platform for analysis to contribute to ongoing processes of furthering the cause of community forestry in the Philippines. IIRR's participatory writeshop process will be used to provide an opportunity to harness different perspectives in a constructive way. The writeshop process will be used to analyse the current and past policy environments and institutional set-up in the Philippines, and to illuminate their impact on the communities, forests, and their interfaces from different viewpoints. The participatory workshop process pioneered by IIRR and tested for over nine years now in over 30 workshops has led to the production of over 40 titles. Intensive, multi-stakeholder

interactions are catalysed, and differing experiences-based perspectives are illuminated and reviewed by peers. The process respects diversity of perspectives and handles them in sensitive and constructive ways.

IIRR invites the submission of papers to input into this writeshop process and the subsequent publication. Initial submissions for consideration should be in English or Tagalog, and should be no longer than 4-6 pages. Hard copies and/or electronic copies are welcome. The only structural requirement is that each paper is presented in such a way that it includes both critical reflections and constructive recommendations.

● For more information contact: Peter O'Hara, Community Forestry Specialist, International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Regional Center for Asia, Silang, Cavite 4118, Philippines. Tel: (6346) 4141 2417; Fax (6346) 4141 2420; Email: Peter.O'Hara@iirr.org

### News from IDS

This has been a busy time for us! Eight visiting fellows from the South spent five weeks at IDS working on 'Citizen Participation in Human Rights Advocacy' and looking at the challenges and successes of citizen-centred advocacy in different contexts and settings. We organised the 'Bolivian-East African Sharing and Learning Exchange Visit', whereby Bolivian civil society and government representatives visited Uganda and Kenya so that together they could learn from one another's PRSP experiences. Partners from Logolink, who have been researching legal frameworks for citizen participation in local governance, have just met to share their findings (more information on Logolink can be found at [www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/](http://www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/)). We have set

up a global dialogue via our website on the learning and teaching of participation in higher education which is open to all and presents an opportunity for sharing experience and learning among institutions and individuals world wide. More information can be found at: [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/networks/learnparticip/](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/networks/learnparticip/). In August we attended 'Participation for Global Action and Change' in Canada, an international event where we facilitated workshops and disseminated information and publications.

April saw the publication of 'Participatory Workshops: a sourcebook of 21 sets of ideas and activities' by Robert Chambers, and 'Knowing Poverty: critical reflections on participatory research and policy' edited by Karen Brock and Rosemary McGee. IDS publications included 'Concepts of Citizenship: A review' and 'Making Rights Real: Exploring citizenship, participation and accountability'. Details of all our publications are on our website and copies are available from the IDS Bookshop (email publications @ids.ac.uk). The Pathways to Participation bulletin 'Defying Definition – a diversity of meanings and practices' was published and is available from the Participation Group. Limited numbers of publications are available for Southern organisations and resource centres for free – please contact us for details.

● For more information contact: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9RE, UK. Tel: + 44 (0)1273 678690; Fax: + 44 (0)1273 21202; Email: participation@ids.ac.uk

### News from CDS

CDS held a Regional Workshop on Participatory Development Communication and Documentation

in Jordan, 16-19 June 2002. The goal of the workshop was to engage a wide regional representation of non-governmental organisations and research/academic institutions from across the Arab world to train them on participatory development communication tools and means of documenting their experiences. In a participatory training environment, 25 participants from 12 Arab countries shared their experiences, challenges and potentials, and exhibited all these verbally and visually. Last but not least, among the participants were stakeholders representing Mina University and Alexandria University, with whom CDS is currently working on integrating PDC tools in projects they are undergoing. The attendance of members from the RCPLA Network added the aspect of moving from regional exposure and learning to an international dimension, where participants could exchange valuable information beyond the region through this existing network.

Among other things and in line with our interest to network between organisations and disseminate information, participants at this workshop agreed on the importance of developing a website to promote participatory development in the Arab region, and to act as a link between them and other organisations on the network, as well as providing knowledge about their work. This was agreed to take place through presenting case studies, and revealing participatory development interventions in the

region. This intends to bring together interested entities in the region and to pool related experiences, both ongoing and documented. The website is currently in its development stages, however, it is accessible through [www.neareast.org/cds/ppd](http://www.neareast.org/cds/ppd)

In the past six months, CDS has also been involved in the development of a directory of organisations applying participatory development techniques in the Arab world. Currently, this directory involves around 160 organisations representing 20 countries. This directory is a searchable database provided online, to be accessed through the above-mentioned site. In July this year, Marwa El Daly from CDS also presented a paper 'Arab Transnational Civil Society', about CDS's experience in promoting participatory development, at the International Society for Third Sector Researcher (ISTR) at Cape Town University, South Africa. You can see abstracts from this presentation at [www.istr.org/conferences/capetown/abstracts/el-daly.html](http://www.istr.org/conferences/capetown/abstracts/el-daly.html)

● For more information contact: Ali Mokhtar, Program Manager, Center for Development Services, 4 Ahmed Pasha Street, Citibank Building, Garden City, Cairo, Egypt. Tel: +20 2 795 7558; Fax: +20 2 794 7278; Email: [cds.prog@neareast.org](mailto:cds.prog@neareast.org); Website: [www.neareast.org/explore/cds/index.htm](http://www.neareast.org/explore/cds/index.htm)

#### News from NEPAN

The first new EC meeting was recently held on 18 August 2002 at NEPAN. The EC formed various

sectoral committees (Programme Committee, Publication/Communication Committee, and Administration/Finance Committee) and interest groups aiming to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate NEPAN's regular programmes effectively and efficiently. It was agreed that each committee would meet as soon as possible to review and develop plans of action, and discuss next steps. Based on past experiences and the emerging priorities, NEPAN envisioned three key areas of interest to work further in partnership with other organisations and external development partners. The key areas are a) ageing; b) participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) and c) peace and development.

Among other things, the EC has decided to organise a National Workshop by December 2002 and then an International Workshop on contemporary issues of development.

The EC will organise a bi-monthly participatory social gathering of NEPAN members, interest groups and other well-wishers of NEPAN. The purpose of this informal event will be to share and update on progress, any emerging issues and, more importantly, to enhance social harmony and unity among members.

● For more information contact: Nepal Participatory Action Network (NEPAN), New Baneshwor Chowk (South), Kathmandu, Nepal, PO Box 13791, Telephone: +977 1 482955, Fax: +977 1 419718 (attn: NEPAN), Email: [nepan@mos.com.np](mailto:nepan@mos.com.np) Website: [www.nepan.org.np/](http://www.nepan.org.np/)



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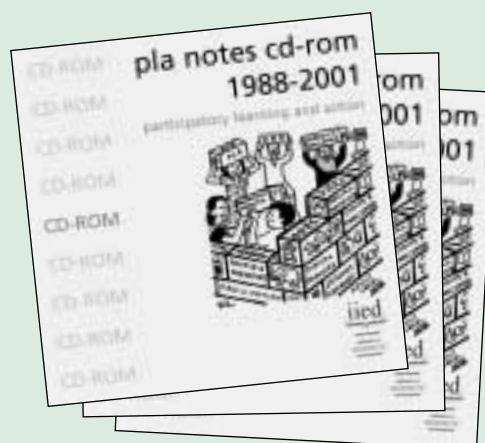
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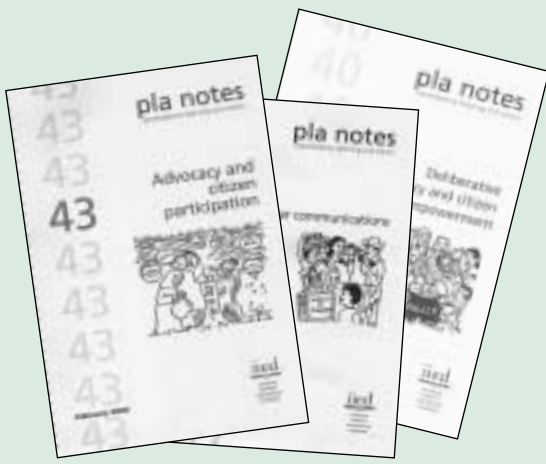
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Jules N Pretty, Irene Guijt, John Thompson, Ian Scoones

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● IIED Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme, 1995 Also available in Spanish. ISBN: 1899825002.

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### Civil Society in Action: Transforming Opportunities for the Urban Poor

Environment and Urbanization Journal, Volume 13 Number 2

David Satterthwaite (Editor)

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strategies and approaches that have been found to be of particular importance. It discusses the use of savings and credit as a means of building strong local organisations, and includes perspectives from a range of development professionals and agencies on the significance of SDI and a description of new relations with local authorities and state agencies that grassroots organisations have been able to negotiate.

● IIED Human Settlements Programme in collaboration with the Slum/Shack Dwellers Association, 2001. ISSN: 1 84369 097 7. Order no: 9048IIED. Price: OECD: USD 18 Students & non-OECD: USD 9. Environment and Urbanization is published twice annually. To subscribe, please contact Environment and Urbanization, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, UK. Tel: +44 20 7388 2117 Fax: +44 20 7388 2826. Email: humans@iied.org or visit www.iied.org/human

### Where there is no data: Participatory approaches to veterinary epidemiology in pastoral areas of the Horn of Africa.

Issue paper no. 110

Andy Catley and Jeffrey Mariner

This paper provides an overview of recent experiences with the use of participatory approaches and methods to understand livestock diseases in pastoral areas, including the emergence of participatory epidemiology as a distinct branch of veterinary epidemiology studies on the validity and reliability of participatory methods. It discusses how participatory assessment can complement conventional systems of veterinary inquiry and outlines plans to integrate conventional systems of veterinary participatory epidemiology into national veterinary epidemiology units.

● IIED Drylands Programme, May 2002 ISSN: 1357 9312. Order no: 9179IIED Price: OECD: USD 5/free to non-OECD



### Participatory diagnosis of soil nutrient depletion in semi-arid areas of Kenya.

Managing Africa's Soils No. 26. L.N. Gachimbi, A. de Jager, H. van

Keulen, E.G. Thurania and S.M. Nandwa

This paper describes the participatory diagnostic process undertaken to develop improved land and water management techniques in semi-arid areas of Kenya, to enable farmers and researchers to better understand the possibilities for maintaining soil fertility and increasing sustainable output in the harsh ecological and economic conditions prevalent in the area.

● IIED Drylands Programme, March 2002 ISSN: 1560 3520. Order no: 9137IIED Price: OECD: USD 7/ free to non-OECD.

### Transforming Bureaucracies: Institutionalising Participatory Approaches and Processes for Natural Resource Management: An Annotated Bibliography.

Bainbridge V, Foerster S, Pasteur K, Pimbert M, Pratt G, Iliana Yaschine Arroyo

This bibliography is part of a project to examine the dynamics of institutionalising people-centred processes and scaling up participatory approaches in large, public bureaucracies for natural resource management. Transforming Bureaucracies aims to highlight conceptual issues, gender, environmental knowledge, policy change, learning, changing attitudes and behaviour, impact and institutional analysis.

● IIED Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme, IDS 2000. ISBN: 1899825614. Order no: 6342IIED. Price: OECD: USD 45.00 or non-OECD: USD 30.00.

# pla notes

participatory learning and action

## Guidelines for contributors

For a full set of guidelines, visit our website or contact us at the address below.

## Types of material accepted

- *Articles*: max. 2500 words plus illustrations – see below for guidelines.
- *Feedback*: letters to the editor, or longer pieces (max. 1500 words) which respond in more detail to articles.
- *Tips for trainers*: training exercises, tips on running workshops, reflections on behaviour and attitudes in training, etc., max. 1000 words.
- *In Touch*: short pieces on forthcoming workshops and events, publications, and on-line resources.

We welcome accounts of recent experiences in the field (or in workshops) and current thinking around participation, and particularly encourage contributions from practitioners in the South. Articles should be co-authored by all those engaged in the research, project, or programme.

In an era in which participatory approaches have often been viewed as a panacea to development problems or where acquiring funds for projects has depended on the use of such methodologies, it is vital to pay attention to the quality of the methods and process of participation. Whilst we will continue to publish experiences of innovation in the field, we would like to emphasise the need to analyse the limitations as well as the successes of participation. *PLA Notes* is still a series whose focus is methodological, but it is important to give more importance to issues of power in the process and to the impact of participation, asking ourselves who sets the agenda for participatory practice. It is only with critical analysis that we can further develop our thinking around participatory learning and action.

We particularly favour articles which contain one or more of the following elements:

- an *innovative* angle to the concepts of participatory approaches or their application
- *critical reflections* on the lessons learned from the author's experiences
- an attempt to develop *new methods*, or innovative adaptations of existing ones
- consideration of *the processes* involved in participatory approaches
- an assessment of the impacts of a participatory process

- potentials and limitations of *scaling up and institutionalising participatory approaches*
- potentials and limitations of *participatory policy-making processes*

## Language and style

Please try to keep contributions clear and accessible. Sentences should be short and simple. Avoid jargon, theoretical terminology, and overly academic language. Explain any specialist terms that you do use and spell out acronyms in full.

## References

If references are mentioned, please include details. *PLA Notes* is intended to be informal, rather than academic, so references should be kept to a minimum.

## Photographs and drawings

These should have captions and the name(s) of the author(s)/photographer clearly written on the back. If you are sending electronic files, please make sure that the photos/drawings are scanned at a high enough resolution for print (300 dpi).

## Format

We accept handwritten articles but please write legibly. Typed articles should be double-spaced. Please keep formatting as simple as possible. Avoid embedded codes (e.g. footnotes/endnotes, page justification, page numbering).

## Submitting your contribution

Contributions can be sent on paper, by email, or on disk. We use Word 6 for Windows, but can read most other word processing packages. If you are sending a disk, please include a hard copy of the article as well. Contributions should be sent to: **The Editor, PLA Notes, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 0DD, UK.**  
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## Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action (RCPLA) Network

Since June 2002, the IIED Resource Centre for Participatory Learning and Action is no longer able to provide a document delivery service. However, practical information and support on participation in development is still available from the various members of the RCPLA Network.

This initiative is a global network of resource centres for participatory learning and action, which brings together 15 organisations from Africa, Asia, South America and Europe. The RCPLA Network is committed to information sharing and networking on participatory approaches.

Each member is itself at the centre of a regional or national network. Members share information about activities in their respective countries, such as training programmes, workshops and key events, as well as providing PLA information focused on the particular fields in which they operate.

As part of devolution process, Tom Thomas, of PRAXIS, India has been appointed as network coordinator by the RCPLA steering committee. More information, including regular updates on RCPLA activities, can be found in the In Touch section of *PLA Notes*, by visiting [www.rcpla.org](http://www.rcpla.org), or by contacting:

Tom Thomas, Director, PRAXIS, S-385, Greater Kailash II, New Delhi, 110 049, India. Tel: +91 11 641 8885/ 6/ 7, 623 3525 Fax: +91 11 641 8885/ 6/ 7, 623 3525 Extn:21. Email: [tomt@praxisindia.org](mailto:tomt@praxisindia.org)

## Participation at IDS

Participatory approaches and methodologies are also a focus for the Participation Group at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK. This group of researchers and practitioners are involved in sharing knowledge, in strengthening capacity to support quality participatory approaches, and in deepening understanding of participatory methods, principles, and ethics. It focuses on South-South sharing, exchange visits, information exchange, action research projects, writing, and training. Services include a Participation Resource Centre (open weekdays) with a database detailing materials held which is accessible via the web at [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip). The Group also produces a newsletter and operates an email distribution list.

For further information please contact: Jane Stevens, IDS, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, UK.  
Tel: +44 (0) 1273 678690;  
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Are you new to participatory learning and action (PLA) approaches and seeking practical tips and guidance? Or an experienced practitioner or trainer, looking for new ideas and ways of sharing your experience with others?

PLA Notes is the world's leading informal journal on participatory approaches and methods, and draws on the expertise of guest editors to provide up-to-the minute accounts of the development and use of participatory methods in specific fields. Since its first issue in 1987, PLA Notes has provided a forum for those engaged in participatory work – community workers, activists and researchers – to share their experiences, conceptual reflections and methodological innovations with others, providing a genuine 'voice from the field'. It is a vital resource for those working to enhance the participation of ordinary people in local, regional, national and international decision making, in both South and North.

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