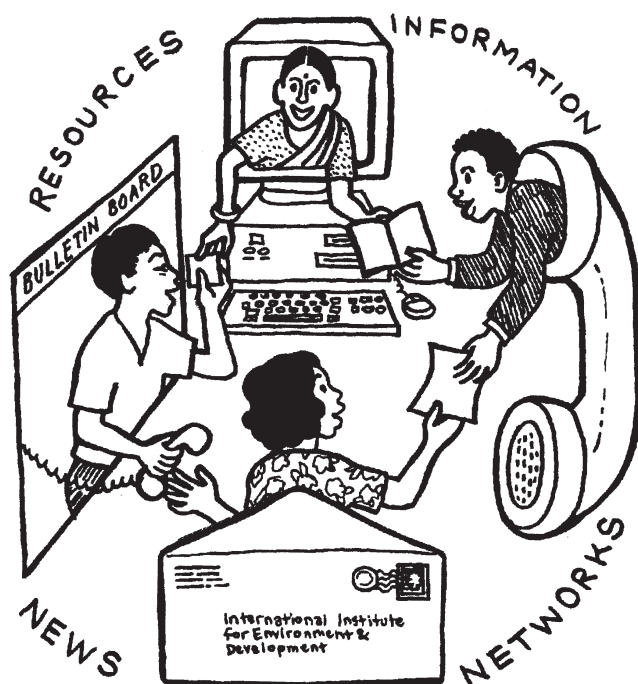


# in touch



Welcome to the In Touch section of *Participatory Learning and Action*. Through these pages we hope to create a more participatory resource for the *Participatory Learning and Action* 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:  
*Participatory Learning and Action*,  
IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London  
WC1H 0DD, UK.  
Fax: +44 20 7388 2826;  
Email: [pla.notes@iied.org](mailto:pla.notes@iied.org)

## Book reviews



### Relationships for Aid

● Edited by  
Rosalind Eyben  
Earthscan, 2006  
ISBN: 1-84407-280-0

We urgently need to move beyond

mud-slinging at development agencies for not being downwardly accountable in how they spend their money and look at ways of improving practice. Though there is an impressive Internet resource on a similar topic at [www.ngopractice.org](http://www.ngopractice.org), *Relationships for Aid* is the first book I've seen that attempts to unpick contradictions and challenges involved in building 'the quality of relationships that can make aid succeed or fail'. The product of a collaboration between four of the most powerful institutions in the aid business, this edited volume is refreshing. Rather than being yet another compendium of why a particular project succeeded or failed, or a catalogue of principles to be followed by practitioners, it tries to reveal the power relationships between, and sometimes within, two government aid agencies – the Department for International Development (DFID), UK and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), a private development institute (Institute for Development Studies – IDS) and the UK's second largest development NGO (ActionAid).

As a former consultant to ActionAid who has observed some of the agency's attempts to make aid accountable at first hand, I found David, Mancini and Guijt's chapter

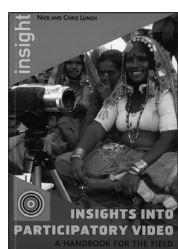
particularly fascinating. Like anyone describing a powerful, yet flawed organisation, the authors have the choice of using diplomacy or direct criticism about its shortcomings. Understandably they opt for the less confrontational approach. However, this does enable them to make important points that those within development NGOs will hopefully choose to take on board rather than becoming defensive.

Readers will notice a vivid contrast in organisational cultures between Sida and DFID. While Sida's staff allow themselves to be led into what the authors describe as a 'daring, cheeky and unique' encounter with different ideas about power and participation in an underground sports hall, the book's editor reveals that she dared not ask her DFID employers for permission to attend a workshop a few years earlier because 'power' was in the subtitle. My only disappointment was that the fascinating analysis of ActionAid, Sida and DFID did not seem to be matched by reflexivity from those of the book's contributors at IDS about how the book's themes related to their own organisation.

Overall, the book is a fascinating read and an important contribution to understanding why, to take an example the authors use, the number of rock stars and politicians strutting the stage of G8 meetings or Live 8 concerts matters far less than the ability of bureaucrats to listen to those with less power than themselves. If the four institutions studied in the book have not already invited its authors to run workshops exploring the implications, I hope they soon will.

**Tom Wakeford, Newcastle University and Visiting Fellow, IIED**

■ Available from Earthscan, 8-12 Camden High Street, London NW1 0JH, UK.  
Email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk Website: www.earthscan.co.uk



### **Insights into Participatory Video: A Handbook for the Field**

● Nick and Chris Lunch  
Insight, 2006  
ISBN: 0-9552456-0-5

Participatory Video (PV) can be a highly effective tool to engage and mobilise marginalised people and help them implement their own forms of sustainable development based on local needs. Unlike conventional filmmaking the subjects make their own film in which they can shape issues according to their own sense of what is important and decide on how to present them.

This handbook is a practical guide to setting up and running PV projects worldwide. Drawing on their experience of using PV for almost two decades in different parts of the world, the authors share case studies and useful anecdotes, as well as responses to their work from diverse sources.

This book is organised in five parts and appendices. Parts one and two discuss the nuts and bolts of PV – what it is, the history of PV, the rationale behind using it, how to set up and run a project from the start, games and activities that can be used, and a brief guide to editing footage. Part three offers insights for the facilitator of PV into vital elements of the process and the participatory ethos. Technical tips and a list of equipment requirements are given in part four.

Part five shares the authors' experiments of applying PV with a diverse range of goals. The appendices present personal accounts of PV which illustrate how it works on the ground. For those who want to find out more about PV, the reference section provides links to books, websites and articles.

Illustrations, cartoons and photographs are used throughout the book to highlight the key messages. A selection of participatory videos and a training film are included on the accompanying CD-ROM.

### **Girija Godbole, Commonwealth Professional Fellow, IIED**

■ Available from: Insight UK Office 3 Maidcroft Road, Oxford, OX4 3EN UK  
Tel: +44 (0) 7766 178533, Email: nlunch@insightshare.org  
Insight French Office Les Illes, 11220 Montlaur France  
Tel: +33 (0) 468 249627  
Email: clunch@insightshare.org

### **ICT Update**

● CTA

ICT Update is a bimonthly printed bulletin and web magazine focusing on the use of information and communication technologies in agriculture in developing countries.

### **Digital video empowers communities in the South**

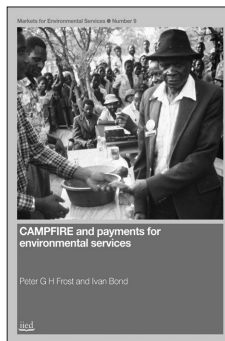


It is published in English and French, by CTA (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation) in Wageningen in the Netherlands. Each issue focuses on a specific theme.

This theme of the November issue (no 54) is **Film-making farmers** and it looks at the uses of digital video – participatory and otherwise – in agriculture and rural development. The lead article describes how farmers and fishers in the Niger Delta are using an innovative combination of participatory video, mobile-to-web messaging and online video sharing to take on the oil companies that are polluting their lands and waters. There is also an article on a project in Ghana where cocoa growers are producing videos that teach improved cocoa cultivation principles to their fellow farmers. While HIV/Aids continues to imperil the agricultural workforce across Africa, an Aids support group in Malawi is using participatory video to boost their self-esteem and to encourage others to get themselves tested. The Question & Answer section includes an interview with Jamaica-based participatory video expert Maria Protz on the role of gender in participatory video. The issue also includes an equipment inventory and example budget for any readers who want to start up their own participatory video project.

■ Available to download at <http://ictupdate.cta.int>

To receive copies in print form under a limited subscription service visit [www.cta.int/about/orderpub.htm](http://www.cta.int/about/orderpub.htm)  
Subscribe to CTA's electronic newsletters at [www.cta.int/about/newsletter.htm](http://www.cta.int/about/newsletter.htm)



IIED, 2006  
ISBN 978-1-84369-627-8 (formerly 1-84369-627-4)

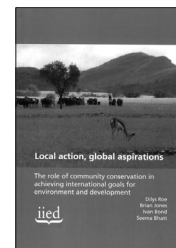
There has been increasing support in recent years for the use of payments for environmental services (PES) as a means to advance the goals of both poverty reduction and conservation. Payments for environmental services are compensation mechanisms that reward people for managing ecosystems and providing environmental services, and are based on the premise that positive incentives can lead to changes in land-use practices. The Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) is a longstanding initiative that shares many of the features of PES. CAMPFIRE began in the late 1980s in Zimbabwe and has been widely emulated in southern and eastern Africa. Under this programme, communities using land under communal tenure have been granted authority to market the wildlife in their area to safari operators. The revenue and other benefits received on behalf of the communities is paid out to them according to an agreed formula. This paper describes the evolution of the CAMPFIRE programme and explores some of the lessons learnt about implementation, performance, outcomes and possible adaptations

**CAMPFIRE and payments for environmental services.**  
**Markets for Environmental Services Series no. 9**

● Peter G.H. Frost and Ivan Bond

that may help in the development of PES programmes.

■ Available from Earthprint Ltd, PO Box 119, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 4TP, UK Tel: +44 1438 748111, Fax: +44 1438 748844  
Email: [customerservices@earthprint.com](mailto:customerservices@earthprint.com)  
Website: [www.earthprint.com](http://www.earthprint.com)  
Order No. 15503IIED. Price USD 18.00 or downloadable from [www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/15503IIED.pdf](http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/15503IIED.pdf)



**Local action, global aspirations: the role of community conservation in achieving international goals for environment and development**

● Dilys Roe, Brian Jones, Ivan Bond and Seema Bhatt  
IIED, 2006

ISBN 978-1-84369-634-6 (formerly 1-84369-634-7)

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment emphasises the inter-relationship between ecosystem health and human well-being. Most ecosystems are severely degraded and the services that they provide to society are diminishing. As a result, important targets for biodiversity and development are unlikely to be met. Community conservation processes are often isolated and marginalised from mainstream conservation efforts. This review documents how community conservation can contribute to human well-being and the preservation of natural resources in southern Africa. Additional examples and experience are drawn from India, South East Asia and Central America. The report concludes with eight recommendations to further advance community conservation processes.

■ Available from Earthprint Ltd, PO Box 119,

Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 4TP, UK Tel: +44 1438 748111, Fax: +44 1438 748844  
 Email: customerservices@earthprint.com  
 Website: www.earthprint.com  
 Order No. 13534IIED. Price USD 18.00 or  
 downloadable from [www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/13534IIED.pdf](http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/13534IIED.pdf)



**People & Participation: how to put citizens at the heart of decision making**

● Involve, 2005

Although participation has become an essential ingredient in public policy decision making and delivery, the potential and pitfalls of participation in practice are not widely understood. This book is a thoughtful exploration of the issues facing participatory practice in the UK today, outlining in particular the challenges and opportunities of introducing participatory approaches into institutions and organisations. It aims to:

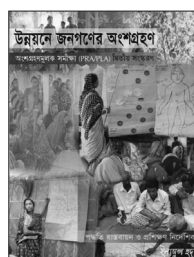
- increase the effectiveness of practice through greater understanding of the processes and methods involved;
- contribute to institutional change by helping practitioners build their capacity; and
- increase understanding of the links between 'neutral' participatory processes and the shifts of power and resources which lead to significant political change.

The book provides much needed practical detail, drawing on the experiences of practitioners working to involve the public in issues ranging from local planning to nanotechnology. It shows that greater public involvement can greatly help in

addressing some of our most pressing problems, and countering the risks of distrust and alienation. But it also warns that too much participation today is superficial, an exercise in ticking boxes as opposed to good democratic governance, or using public consultation to justify decisions that have already been made. The priority now is to build on experience and to build confidence that public involvement can lead to better, and more legitimate, decisions.

Local authorities, government departments and other agencies commissioning participatory processes, as well as those in the voluntary sector, and potential participants wanting to know just what is involved in participatory processes, will find this book of interest.

■ Available from Involve, 212 High Holborn, London WC1V 7BF, UK. Email [publications@involving.org](mailto:publications@involving.org). Price £20 + p&p. Free download from [www.involving.org](http://www.involving.org).



**People's participation in development (Bengali PRA manual) – Second edition**

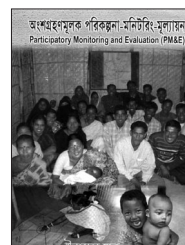
● Enamul Huda  
2005

This book was first published in 1999 with the funding support of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), UK. The objective was to support grassroots level organisations and development organisations working to promote the participation of people who had no access to books written in English or other languages due to the language barrier. Written in the Bengali language, this book describes

the concept of development and participation, the role of stakeholders in development, the means and ways to ensure and promote people's participation, the application of PRA tools in PM&E and includes references to resources centres in Bangladesh and outside.

All case studies presented in the book are based on the practical experience of the author while working with different organisations.

■ Available from PRA Promoters' Society – Bangladesh House # 8/A/8, Road – 14 (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh. Price US\$10. Email: [pps-bd@agni.com](mailto:pps-bd@agni.com). Website: [www.pps-bd.com](http://www.pps-bd.com)



**Participatory monitoring and evaluation (Bengali), first edition**

● Enamul Huda  
2006

Many organisations in Bangladesh are using participatory approaches, having received basic PRA training, but are facing difficulties in applying the tools and techniques in planning, monitoring and evaluation. This book, written in the Bengali language is the outcome of the request of NGOs.

The application of PRA tools and the facilitation process in developing PM&E systems are explained in very simple language with examples. Anyone with minimum knowledge on development will be able to use this book.

Available from PRA Promoters' Society – Bangladesh House # 8/A/8, Road – 14 (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh. Price US\$ 5.  
 E-mail: [pps-bd@agni.com](mailto:pps-bd@agni.com).  
 Website: [www.pps-bd.com](http://www.pps-bd.com)

## Events and training

### Courses from PEANuT (Participatory Evaluation and Appraisal in Newcastle upon Tyne)

PEANuT project aims are:

- to support those using participatory appraisal and develop a sustainable PA network in the north-east of England;
- to raise the profile of PA in NE England;
- to provide a range of training courses in PA; and
- to become a regional focus-point for participatory research and consultation initiatives.

■ Full details available via the PEANuT website (including the booking forms): [www.northumbria.ac.uk/peanut](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/peanut)

#### PEANuT Introduction to Participatory Appraisal 1 (IPA1)

- 22nd–26th January 2007
  - 16th–20th April 2007
- Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK

#### PEANuT Introduction to Participatory Appraisal 2 (IPA2)

- 24th–26th January 2007
- 18th–20th April 2007

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK

IPA2 moves beyond the focus of 'doing' PA (IPA1), and considers the use of PA through the entire project cycle. Course participants should have previously participated in the PEANuT IPA1 course (or equivalent), or have practical experience in the use of PA (if the latter, please get in touch prior to booking). The course is run over 3 full days.

The course will cover:

- how to plan and develop PA based projects;

- how to record and collate PA 'data';
- how to organise effective verification events;
- how to write PA reports; and
- how to evaluate and monitor a project.

It will also allow you to:

- share new tools and experiences with other PA practitioners;
- become more aware of power issues within PA at all stages of the project cycle;
- better understand how to work with stakeholders/communities and manage expectations;
- think and reflect upon your use of PA;
- develop informal support networks, and shared experiences with other PA practitioners; and
- be more aware of how to use PA to effect meaningful change.

Cost: £400 excluding accommodation and travel. Places are strictly limited so please book early. If you have difficulties in meeting the full course costs, please contact PEANuT.

Booking form:

[www.northumbria.ac.uk/peanut](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/peanut)

■ For more information contact: Dr Duncan Fuller, Senior Lecturer/Programme Leader, BA Geography, Division of Geography, Ellison Building D Block, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8ST, UK.

Tel: +44 191 227 3753 or + 191 227 3428;

Fax: +44 191 227 3519;

Email: [ge.peanut@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ge.peanut@northumbria.ac.uk)

#### Courses from IMA International Monitoring and evaluation in development

- 5th–16th February 2007

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

12th–23rd March 2007

Pretoria, South Africa

This intensive and practical two-week course focuses on designing and implementing a monitoring and

evaluation (M&E) system for use in the workplace and on projects.

Includes:

- the role of M&E as the key to continuous sustained development and improved decision-making; and
- a logical approach to integrating M&E with planning and project management.

This course is aimed at both managers and staff who have an active responsibility for M&E within their organisation.

#### People skills for development managers

- 5th–9th February 2007

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

7th–11th May 2007

Budapest, Hungary

This one-week course provides insight into how to manage people more effectively. It introduces participants to a wide range of people management concepts and tools together with practical personal skills, which can be used in the workplace to build and manage effective teams and organisations. It includes teambuilding, facilitation and presentation skills, leadership in a cross-cultural environment, decision-making, managing change and conflict.

This course is designed for professionals in development who have both management and technical responsibilities and wish to enhance their people management skills.

#### People skills workshop for experienced development managers

- 12th–14th February 2007

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

14th–16th May 2007

Budapest, Hungary

This three-day workshop focuses on specific people skills to enhance and

sustain performance in teams and organisations. Themes will include the role of leaders in effective change, coaching and learning, motivation and managing across diverse perspectives. It will involve analysis of specific scenarios to enable in depth understanding.

This workshop is designed for managers in all areas of development with a minimum of five years experience in managing teams of people.

■ For more information, please contact: Course Coordinator, IMA International, Randolphs Farm, Brighton Road, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex, United Kingdom, BN6 9EL. Tel: +44 1273 833 030; Fax: +44 1273 833 230; Email: Naomi@imainternational.com; Website: www.imainternational.com

### **MA Participation, power and social change**

● October 2007

Institute of Development Studies, UK

This Master's degree aims to deepen knowledge, innovation and practice of participatory approaches for engaging people in decision-making and citizenship in diverse contexts.

Designed to meet learning needs of practitioners with at least three years experience in the use of participatory approaches, the programme combines intensive coursework with work-based learning, action research and processes of critical reflection and analysis.

Applicants need an acceptable first

degree or equivalent academic qualification, and at least three years experience of using participatory approaches in development-related work. The minimum acceptable level of English language competence is grade 7 in each section of the IELTS test (or equivalent).

For entry in October 2007, fees are £11,000 for all students. A limited number of IDS scholarships are available – please contact the Programme Administrator.

■ For further information contact: Julia Brown, Programme Administrator, Postgraduate Admissions, Sussex House, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, UK. Tel: + 44 1273 678869.

Email: teaching@ids.ac.uk or pg.admissions@sussex.ac.uk; Website: www.ids.ac.uk/ids/teach/index.html or www.sussex.ac.uk/pgapplication (to download University's postgraduate prospectus and application form).

### **Courses from Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Unit for Environmental Communication, Department of Urban and Rural Development**

#### **Integrated Water Resource Management**

● September 2007, two-years international master programme

Application: before February 1st, 2007

This masters programme focuses on Integrated Water Resource

Management (IWRM). IWRM seeks to combine technologies, institutional strategies and processes needed for facilitation of sustainable management of watersheds, basins, rivers and coastal waters in the face of conflicting interests. Using action learning principals, the course participants will undertake a journey of iterations between concepts, case studies, methods and thesis work.

■ For more information contact: Neil Powell +46 18 671965 or Kevin Bishop +46 18 673131; Email: IWRM@sol.slu.se; Website: www.sol.slu.se/environ/edu

#### **Environmental Communication and Management**

● September 2007, one-year international master programme

Application: before February 1st, 2007

Often projects in natural resource management fail. One reason is that people and their different perspectives and interests are not taken into account. When working practically with environmental issues you work with a variety of people and organisations. How can we organise effective projects in these socially complex conditions? This programme prepares you to work in a critical and independent way with facilitation, communication and organisation.

■ For more information contact: Lars Hallgren +46 18 672584; Email: Mk@sol.slu.se; Website: www.sol.slu.se/environ/edu/



# e-participation

## Collaborative NR management in Zimbabwe

[www.policy-powertools.org/related/campfire.html](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/campfire.html)

Some of the articles in this special issue are based on processes and tools developed under the CAMPFIRE programme. WWF-SARPO supported this work through the SupCamp project, and has published a series of manuals and toolboxes to guide users through the tools in its Wildlife Management Series. Whilst the authors of the articles in this issue reflect critically on the tools and their use, and consider how far they helped communities to empower themselves, the manuals provide practical how-to-do it information.

Most of the wildlife management series are guideline manuals that explain how to perform a particular task, for example counting wildlife. In addition there are several toolboxes that are designed to guide a facilitator through a process, for example setting hunting quotas. SupCamp also developed the CAMPFIRE game, which is a participatory training tool for financial management.

The wildlife management series and the CAMPFIRE game can be downloaded in PDF format (see below).

### Wildlife management series manuals

- Quota setting:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/quota\\_setting.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/quota_setting.pdf) (1187K)
- Counting Wildlife:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/counting\\_wildlife.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/counting_wildlife.pdf) (1622K)
- District Toolbox:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/district\\_toolbox.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/district_toolbox.pdf) (944K)
- Electric Fencing:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/electric\\_fencing.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/electric_fencing.pdf) (1497K)
- Financial Management:  
[\[docs/financial\\\_management.pdf\]\(http://docs/financial\_management.pdf\) \(4060K\)](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/</a></li></ul></div><div data-bbox=)

- Fire Management:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/fire\\_management.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/fire_management.pdf) (2556K)
- Maintaining Electric Fencing:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/maintaining\\_electric\\_fencing.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/maintaining_electric_fencing.pdf) (903K)
- Marketing Wildlife:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/marketing\\_wildlife.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/marketing_wildlife.pdf) (1585K)
- Problem Animal Reporting:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/problem\\_animal\\_reporting.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/problem_animal_reporting.pdf) (2483K)
- Project Planning:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/project\\_planning.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/project_planning.pdf) (2030K)
- Safari Hunting:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/safari\\_hunting.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/safari_hunting.pdf) (725K)

### CAMPFIRE game

- Board:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/board.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/board.pdf) (382K)
- Rules:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/Rules.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/Rules.pdf) (1020K)
- Financial Management Toolbox:  
[www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/financial\\_management\\_toolbox.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/related/docs/financial_management_toolbox.pdf) (1365K)

### Legal Assistance Centre, Namibia (land issues)

[www.lac.org.na](http://www.lac.org.na)

The Legal Assistance Centre is a public interest law centre. LAC strives to make the law accessible to those with the least access, through education, law reform, research, litigation, legal advice, representation and lobbying, with the ultimate aim of creating and maintaining a human rights culture in Namibia. The LAC's main objective is to protect the human rights of all Namibians. You can also find out

about LAC's current projects, and download for free various documents and publications related to LAC's work: [www.lac.org.na/publications/default.htm](http://www.lac.org.na/publications/default.htm)

### Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation Namibia

[www.irdnc.org.na](http://www.irdnc.org.na)

IRDNC Trust strives to improve the lives of rural people by diversifying the socio-economy in Namibia's communal areas to include wildlife and other valuable natural resources. This website includes information about IRDNC's ongoing projects and programmes, a selection of discussion papers, and information and resources related to conservancies. There is also Working with communities and communal area conservancies, a facilitator's toolbox. Each section is available to download separately in PDF format.

### Namibia Nature Foundation

[www.nnf.org.na](http://www.nnf.org.na)

The Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation. NNF's primary aims are to promote sustainable development, the conservation of biological diversity and natural ecosystems, and the wise and ethical use of natural resources for the benefit of all Namibians. The website lists NNF's recent publications. Many of these are freely available from the offices of NNF, and some are available to download for free. NNF also has an extensive library of over 150 environmental and conservation videos and DVDs, which are available to borrow. For a list of videos and DVDs, visit: [www.nnf.org.na/NNF\\_docs/Video\\_Film\\_list.pdf](http://www.nnf.org.na/NNF_docs/Video_Film_list.pdf) (1,175kb). You can also find information about how to join NNF's film library.

**Source**

[www.asksource.info/res\\_library/participatory.htm](http://www.asksource.info/res_library/participatory.htm)

Source is an international information support centre designed to strengthen the management, use and impact of information on health and disability. Browse reviewed lists of key resources on participatory communication topics, or view the latest resources to be added to Source. Topics include theatre for development, communicating for advocacy, communication for social change and participatory evaluation. Source welcomes details of additional resources and accounts of how they are useful – please email these to: [source@ich.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:source@ich.ucl.ac.uk).

**Poverty and Conservation Learning Group (PCLG)**

[www.povertyandconservation.info](http://www.povertyandconservation.info)

PCLG is a forum for facilitating mutual learning between key stakeholders, from a range of backgrounds, on conservation-poverty linkages. The learning group has two major – but different – functions:

- promoting good practice through information provision and dissemination; and
- influencing policy change through provision of a programme of 'learning activities' to organisations actively working on conservation-poverty linkages.

The website is PCLG's key

mechanism for sharing and dissemination of information and experience on conservation-poverty linkages. The site includes fully searchable databases:

- a bibliographic database, providing details of the literature on conservation-poverty linkages;
- an organisations database, highlighting the range of organisations working on conservation-poverty linkages; and
- an initiatives database, describing significant international initiatives designed to explore the links between conservation and poverty reduction, from broad poverty-environment programmes to focused single-issue agendas.



# RCPLA Network

In this section, we 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. RCPLA is a diverse, international network of national-level organisations, which brings together development practitioners from around the globe. It was formally established in 1997 to promote the use of participatory approaches to development. The network is dedicated to capturing and disseminating development perspectives from the South. For more information please contact the RCPLA Network Steering Group:

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**Asia Region:** Tom Thomas, Director, Institute for Participatory Practices (Praxis), S-75 South Extension, Part II, New Delhi, India 110 049. Tel/Fax: +91 11 5164 2348 to 51; Email: [tomt@praxisindia.org](mailto:tomt@praxisindia.org); [www.praxisindia.org](http://www.praxisindia.org)  
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**News from the RCPLA Network Coordinator**

RCPLA activities for year 2007-2008 are designed to disseminate global participatory initiatives providing members with opportunities to learn about individual and institutional work implemented internationally, as well as sharing the knowledge and experience gained. The network coordinator is currently working on identifying the theme focus for the coming two years and building the relevant activities around it. The choice of the theme and activities will be based on RCPLA members' needs and interests and at the same time reflecting the network's main objectives:

- help maintain the integrity of participatory learning and action principles;
- encourage the allocation of

resources to make information management a priority in project planning;

- focus on the generation and distribution of appropriate research and development approaches regarding policy change and institutional capacity building;
- encourage the creation and production of grassroots documentation;
- encourage the creation of language and non-text accessible documentation and communication to record the experience of local people;
- create a culture of sharing information;
- encourage a non-exploitative ethic on research and documentation.

**New members**

Over the last few months, many

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organisations have shown interest in joining RCPLA. We have the pleasure to welcome on board Stairway Management, Nepal; CARAVAN, Pakistan; Swat Participatory Council, Pakistan; and Soba Sri Environmental Forum (SOSED), Sri Lanka.

**Stairway Management** was established in 1994 with the mission of catalysing a shift in the way organisations are developed; designing and implementing more effective and innovative coaching, and consulting programmes for development practitioners in private and public organisations; enhancing the skills of consultants, coaches, mentors, and facilitators; and finally promoting participatory learning and action in development sectors. Currently this institution is one of most professional leadership

development institutes in Nepal and is considered the centre for understanding and expanding the leadership capabilities of individual and organisations from across the public, private, and civil sectors through a participatory approach.

**CARAVAN** is a sub-national NGO, with headquarters in Swat District of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) Pakistan. It was established by social workers and development professionals from NWFP in 1998.

Its mission is to contribute to poverty reduction by supporting local communities. It helps them to harness their potential and capabilities. This is done by helping them organise themselves into village and supra village level self-managed, self-reliant and sustainable institutions. They should be capable of taking the development agenda into their own hands through active participation at the local level. To do this, the NGO approach is based on proved and tested models of participatory philosophy of development, through effective partnership between all the development actors in an organised manner. To find out more about CARAVAN please visit [www.caravan-swat.org](http://www.caravan-swat.org).

**Swat Participatory Council** is a regional network of 32 community based and development organisations. SPC was established in 2001. Its mission is to enhance the capacity of local communities, especially marginalised groups through promoting education, dialogues and information dissemination. It contributes to participatory development processes at different levels through advocacy and network development while utilising potentials of the devolved system to realise positive change.

Also, SPC establishes coordination mechanisms with government line agencies to institutionalise citizen's participation for ensuring good governance practices in transitional tribal environment.

**Soba Sri Environmental Forum** is an alliance of organisations which have come together to conserve the region's environment through designing awareness and advocacy campaigns, conducting research and developing networking among different stakeholders. SOSEF was established in 2001 with the aim of empowering disadvantaged communities, especially women, who live in environmentally sensitive areas, to participate in the protection of the environment through making use of traditional knowledge and the inherited culture. To learn more about Soba Sri Environmental Forum, please visit [www.geocities.com/sosefsl/](http://www.geocities.com/sosefsl/)

#### News from the Asian Regional Coordinator



#### Praxis Institute for Participatory Practices

We believe that money alone will not eradicate poverty. Inclusion of the poor in the development process will. As an Institute for Participatory Practices, we at Praxis, take as well as create opportunities to spread the concept of **Participatory Development**.

The Praxis International Thematic PRA Training Workshop, an annual event, is one such proactive effort. It is bookmarked by all those who are interested in the concept of participatory development. In

September this year, the 10th workshop was held at the National Institute of Small Industry Extension and Training (NISJET), Yusufguda, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. This year the event had about a 100 participants from over 13 countries. The workshop was very well received; the participants took back with them clear ideas on how to include the voice of the excluded in the mainstream. As part of the opening session, an International Symposium on Three decades of PRA took place at the same venue. For more information on the workshop, visit the Praxis website at [www.praxisindia.org](http://www.praxisindia.org)

Another area that we at Praxis are keen to explore is the promotion of **Immersion**. Inadequate knowledge of communities often results in policies that are neither sympathetic nor relevant. Staying with intended beneficiaries sensitises the development worker to the ground realities and puts them within earshot of what the poor actually have to say. We are initially looking at creating a platform that will enable all those who have undergone **Immersion** to interact and share their experiences.

By helping this positive trend gain momentum, we hope to bring those at the helm of affairs closer to the ground and therefore to the idea of participatory development.

#### News from the Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

Participation at IDS

The Participation, Power and Social Change Group at IDS has been furthering its work on a number of fronts. In the spring of this year an international workshop took place on **Learning for Social Change**, as part of our Learning and Teaching for

Transformation (LTT) initiative. Involving a diverse group of activists, researchers and organisational leaders from around the world, it looked at how those of us engaged in social change processes can develop our capacities in ways that enable us to be more reflective, innovative and adaptive. We have now produced a report from this workshop entitled **Learning for Social Change: concepts, methods and practice** (download at [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/home/new.html](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/home/new.html))

Continuing our work on deepening our understanding of the complex web of inter-relationships within the aid world we published **Relationships for Aid**, edited by Rosalind Eyben, earlier in the year. Looking at how the top-down international aid system is failing to respond to the needs of the very people it purports to help, the authors call on all aid agencies to reorient their priorities and learn how to build lasting relationships that transfer power to the powerless. See the **In Touch** section for a review of this publication.

Learning about, and encouraging the use of, popular communications continues to be an important part of our teams work. In September, The Development Research Centre (DRC) on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability ran a two week participatory video training with Insight. Taking place in Nigeria, it involved researchers from Jamaica, Bangladesh, Angola, Brazil, Mexico and Nigeria. More information is available from Alison Dunn (email [A.Dunn@ids.ac.uk](mailto:A.Dunn@ids.ac.uk)).

Further recent publications include **Poverty Unperceived: Traps, Biases and Agenda** by Robert Chambers which aims to illuminate

some of the problems of bias in the perception of poverty, which often results in inappropriate decisions being made. It goes on to explore new approaches for experiential direct learning, which are enabling organisations to better understand and be more in touch with the changing realities of people living in poverty. Two additional IDS Working Papers are: **Civil Society Participation in Trade Policy-making in Latin America: Reflections and Lessons** by Diana Tussie and Peter Newell, which explores the question of civil society engagement with trade policy in Latin America; and **Triumph, Deficit or Contestation? Deepening the 'Deepening Democracy' Debate** by John Gaventa. This focuses on emerging debates within the 'deepening democracy' field. A number of other publications are due out soon, including an IDS Bulletin **Exploring Power for Change**, and two books, **Springs of Participation** and **The Power of Labelling: How people are categorized and why it matters**.

For more details of the above publications, email [participation@ids.ac.uk](mailto:participation@ids.ac.uk) or visit our website at [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/)

#### News from IIED

We were sorry to say farewell to **Nazneen Kanji**, fellow member of the *Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity and Livelihoods Programme* of the Natural Resources Group at IIED, who moved to the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in October this year. Fortunately, Nazneen will continue to be a member of the *PLA Strategic Editorial Board*.

Nazneen is heading a programme to assess the impact of AKDN's efforts to improve the 'quality of life',

in the geographical areas where it works, i.e. South and Central Asia and Africa. AKDN consists of seven different organisations addressing rural development, culture, economic promotion, health and education, including the Aga Khan Foundation itself, which is a key member of the network. Nazneen's new role combines methodological development, team building and policy/programme influence with close links to the ground. Her country focus will initially be Mozambique, Mali, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Syria, but she is still based in London. We wish her every success.

#### The unspoken dilemmas of participation: forthcoming December 2007

This special issue of PLA will be guest edited by Tom Wakeford and others. Its aim is to reflect critically on processes which set out to be participatory, but which further disempower those with least power. Problems may be political, for example, when the outputs threaten to undermine a pre-conceived institutional objective. They may also be methodological, for example, organisers are often not aware that oppressed groups, such as women or the disabled, have been further marginalised by the way in which the process was facilitated. We are looking for contributions to this issue that will deepen our understanding of participation, and also suggest ways to improve practices and policies. If you have an idea for a possible contribution, please send a short outline of your article to [pla.notes@iied.org](mailto:pla.notes@iied.org).



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