

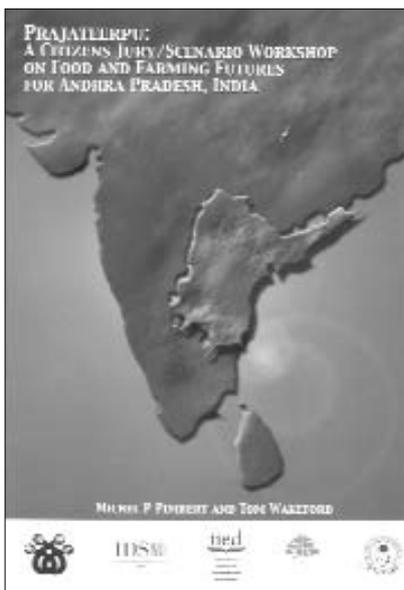
editorial

Welcome to issue 46 of *PLA Notes*

Special theme

This special issue of *PLA Notes* reproduces the material generated during a recent e-forum about participatory approaches for policy change, so as to share the discussion with a wider audience.

In 2002, IIED and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) jointly hosted the e-forum to discuss issues raised following the publication of *Prajateerpu: a citizens' jury/scenario workshop on food and farming futures for Andhra Pradesh, India*.¹ The report, co-published by IIED and IDS, was the outcome of a collaborative project resulting in a one-week scenario workshop. It proved to be extremely controversial, raising many



¹ The full report can be downloaded from the IIED website. The direct address is www.iied.org/pdf/prajateerpu.pdf or you can go to www.iied.org and follow the links for the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme. Hard copies of the report can be ordered from Earthprint, PO Box 119, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 4TP, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1438 748111. Price US\$30.

important questions about citizen engagement in policy processes.

The aim of the e-forum was to highlight the many positive aspects of deliberative, inclusive, people-centred procedures, using the *Prajateerpu* experience as the starting point. The discussions focused on four thematic areas: issues of representation, issues of evidence, issues of engagement, and issues of accountability.

This special issue includes all of the statements made by the many contributors to the four thematic areas, and provides an overview of the *Prajateerpu* citizen jury and scenario workshop and its outcome. Except where indicated, all photographs in the special theme section are reproduced courtesy of the University of Hyderabad and Bansuri Taneja of IIED.

The conclusions drawn from the discussions on the whole seem to agree that the *Prajateerpu* exercise was an innovative attempt to develop and extend methodologies for participation in policy making. The challenge now is to continue with, and improve on, such innovative experiments, as a means of helping poor and marginalised people to engage in policy processes in the future.

The guest editors for this issue are **Ian Scoones** and **John Thompson**. Ian Scoones is a professorial fellow from the Environment Group at the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex UK. An agricultural ecologist, he has worked on agriculture, food security, and livelihoods issues, particularly in Southern Africa. He is co-author of *Understanding Environmental Policy Processes – cases from Africa*. (Earthscan, 2003). Recent work has focused on the politics of development policy making surrounding agricultural biotechnology in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (see www.ids.ac.uk/biotech).

John Thompson, Director of the

Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme at IIED, is a resource geographer and specialist on human-environment interactions. His work focuses on the political ecology of food and agriculture and the policy and institutional dimensions of agri-food systems, both in the South and the North. Currently, he is leading new research on the restructuring of agri-food systems and the future of the small farm sector.

As ever, I would like to thank the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) for their generous support for the *PLA Notes* series. Additional support for this issue came from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), India and from the Rockefeller Foundation through the 'Democratising Biotechnology' project coordinated by IDS (www.ids.ac.uk/biotech). Thanks go to all these organisations. However, please note that the views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of SIDA, DFID, the Rockefeller Foundation, IDS or IIED.

General section

Our general section for this issue contains five articles, which focus on quite different applications of participatory methodologies.

The first, by **Ditch Townsend** and **Anne Garrow**, looks at how PLA has been used to help tackle problems with drug users and potential drug users, especially amongst the socially excluded and vulnerable. They examine how tools such as livelihoods analysis and causal diagrams have been successfully employed to empower and educate, as well as some of the constraints faced, and discusses implications for longer-term outcomes.

Our next article, by **Gbenga Ishola et al.** discusses how participation has

been used in secondary schools in Nigeria in life planning and reproductive health programmes. It looks at how a variety of tools such as body mapping and pair-wise ranking have been used in workshops with students, and how the findings have contributed to designing appropriate strategies for further school-based programmes.

Michael Hartfield and **Sarah Kindon** present an innovative account of how PLA has been used in Aotearoa/New Zealand to help different cultural and ethnic groups within communities to contribute to the process of deciding what in their built environment should be protected. It looks at how local knowledge about what is important to people within their own communities can contribute to heritage planning.

Next, **Bashir Ahmad** et al. discuss ways of diagnosing priorities for rural women's welfare through participatory approaches in Pakistan. The article looks at how diversifying sources of income for rural women can contribute to improving their standard

of living, and uses participatory approaches to assess the successes and impacts of two different income-generating enterprises.

Lastly, **Giacomo Rambaldi** and **Le Van Lanh** look at how participatory three-dimensional modelling has been used in Vietnam and the Philippines to enable communities and practitioners to more accurately and visibly represent local spatial knowledge, helping towards a more balanced approach to power sharing in collaborative natural resource management.

Regular features

A recent exchange of emails within the UK Community Participation Network was the source of inspiration for this issue's Tips for Trainers. Here we bring you four working examples of a training exercise 'Drawing Shields' by **Perry Walker**, **Ghee Bowman**, **Gwen Vaughan**, and **Rowena Harris**. The examples show how the exercise can be used in different settings with participants in workshops, from using the shields as an icebreaker, to encouraging an atmosphere of trust within a group.

Our regular In Touch section includes, as always, book reviews, information about up and coming workshops, and our e-participation page, which for this issue includes links to other deliberative democracy information resources. There are also updates from our partners in the RCPLA Network, about their recent activities.

Our thanks go to guest editors **John Thompson** and **Ian Scoones**, to **Michel Pimbert** and **Tom Wakeford** and everyone who worked on the *Prajateerpu* citizens' jury project, and to all the contributors to the e-forum for making this special issue possible. I would also like to thank all the authors who provided this issue's stimulating selection of articles for the general section, the *PLA Notes* editorial team, and the RCPLA Network.

We hope that you find the articles and discussions in this issue of *PLA Notes* constructive and informative, and as ever, welcome your thoughts and views, and feedback about your own experiences.

Holly Ashley, Acting Editor