

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:

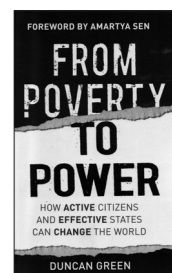
- **Networks.** Do you have links with recognised local, national or international networks for practitioners of participatory learning? If so, what does this network provide – training? newsletters? resource material/library? a forum for sharing experiences? Please tell us about the network and provide 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

Book reviews



From Poverty to Power
 How active citizens and effective states can change the world

● Duncan Green
 Foreword by Amartya Sen

Oxfam International, 2008
 ISBN 978-0-85598-593-6

This book explores efforts to grapple with inequality and poverty in three key areas: politics, markets, and vulnerability. In each case it finds that efforts to tackle inequality are best achieved through a combination of active citizens and effective states.

Active citizenship is a combination of rights and obligations that link individuals to the state, including paying taxes, obeying laws, and exercising the full range of political, civil, and social rights. Active citizens use these rights to improve the quality of political or civic life, through involvement in the formal economy or formal politics, or through the sort of collective action that historically has allowed poor and excluded groups to make their voices heard. For those who do not enjoy full rights of citizenship, such as migrants or (in some cultures) women, the first step is often to organise to assert those rights.

Effective states can guarantee security and the rule of law, and can design and implement an effective strategy to ensure inclusive economic growth. Effective states, often known as 'developmental states', must be accountable to citizens and able to guarantee their rights.

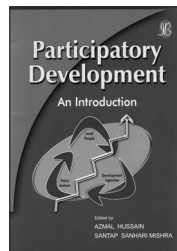
Why effective states? History has

shown that no country has prospered without a state that can actively manage the development process. The transformations of countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Botswana, or Mauritius have been led by states that ensure health and education for all, and which actively promote and manage the process of economic growth. The road to development lies through the state.

Why active citizenship? People working together to determine the course of their own lives, fighting for rights and justice in their own societies, are critical in holding states, private companies, and others to account. Active citizenship has inherent merits: people living in poverty must have a voice in deciding their own destiny, rather than be treated as passive recipients of welfare or government action.

This book argues that active citizenship and effective states are compatible, as well as desirable. The challenge is to combine them as early as possible in a country's development. However, the relationship between the two is complex. They march to different rhythms, the steady grind of state machineries contrasting with the ebb and flow of civil society activism. In many cases, long-term development requires an element of deferred gratification, requiring businesses to reinvest rather than skim off profits, rich people to accept redistribution of wealth and income for the sake of national stability and growth, and poor people to limit demands for the improved wages and social spending that they so desperately need.

■ Available from Oxfam Publications.
www.oxfam.org.uk/publications



Participatory Development: An Introduction

● Azmal Hussain
Santap Sanhari Mishra
ISBN: 81-314-0799-3
The Icfai University Press, 2008

A participatory approach to development has emerged mainly because of the recognition of the limitations of the conventional approach. The major limitation of the conventional approach is that it does not necessarily hold all the stakeholders accountable. Participatory approach involves local people, development agencies, and policy makers, deciding together how progress should be measured, and how results are acted upon. It can reveal valuable lessons and improve accountability. The incorporation of "local knowledge" in development projects is now commonplace and this has been made possible only through the introduction of participatory development modules.

This book focuses on how participatory development is attracting interest from many quarters by offering new ways of assessing and learning from changes that are more inclusive, and more in tune with the views and aspirations of those directly affected. It provides an opportunity for development organisations to focus better on their ultimate goal of improving people's lives.

■ Price: US\$ 17 (PB) (Overseas Orders)
INR 425 (Special Indian price)
Available from The Icfai University Press.
www.icfai.org Email
icfaibooks@icfai.org



Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS)

● Practical Action
Publishing, 2009
ISBN 978-1-85539-679-3

The Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) are a set of international guidelines and standards for the design, implementation and assessment of livestock interventions to assist people affected by humanitarian crises. They provide guidance on the identification of appropriate livestock responses, followed by detailed information on a number of interventions, namely: destocking, veterinary services, the provision of feed, the provision of water, livestock shelter and settlement, and restocking. LEGS is a multi-agency initiative supported by a number of donors and based on consultation and contributions from a broad range of individuals and agencies from around the world.

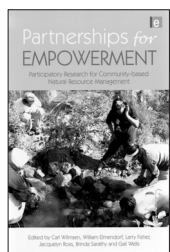
The post-publication activities are as follows:

- Development of training materials based on LEGS;
- Recruitment of a team of 'consultant trainers' to carry out Training of Trainers courses based on LEGS;
- Implementation of the training in 12 regions across the world;
- Translation of LEGS into French and other languages (to be made available as soft copies for download from the website)
- Application to the Sphere Project for 'companion module' status (see: www.sphere.org);
- Maintenance of a technical support capacity.

If you are interested in hosting a

training in your country, please contact the LEGS Coordinator: coordinator@livestock-emergency.net.

■ Available to purchase in hard copy from Practical Action at http://developmentbookshop.com/product_info.php?products_id=1534 and available to download for free in pdf format from the newly updated LEGS website: www.livestock-emergency.net



Partnerships for Empowerment. Participatory Research for Community-based Natural Resource Management

● Edited by Carl

Wilmsen, William Elmendorf, Larry Fisher, Jacquelyn Ross, Brinda Sarathy and Gail Wells
Earthscan, 2008
ISBN 9781844075638

Participatory research has emerged as an approach to producing knowledge that is sufficiently grounded in local needs and realities to support community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), and it is touted as crucial to the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources.

This book analyses the current state of the art of participatory research in CBNRM. Its chapters and case studies examine recent experiences in collaborative forest management, harvesting impacts on forest shrubs, watershed restoration in Native American communities, civic environmentalism in an urban neighbourhood and other topics. Although the main geographic focus of the book is the United States, the issues raised are synthesised and discussed in the context of recent critiques of participatory research and CBNRM worldwide. The book's

purpose is to provide insights and lessons for academics and practitioners involved in CBNRM in many contexts.

■ Available from Earthscan: www.earthscan.co.uk

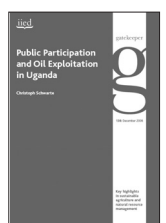


Village voice: towards inclusive information technologies

● IIED Briefing Paper
Ben Garside
IIED, 2009

A decade ago it was dubbed the 'digital divide'. Now, the gap in information and communications technologies (ICTs) between North and South is slowly shrinking. The developing world accounts for two-thirds of total mobile phone subscriptions, and Africa has the world's fastest growing mobile phone market. By gaining a toehold in affordable ICTs, the poor can access the knowledge and services they need to boost their livelihoods. But to be sustainable, technologies need to factor in social realities. These include how people already share knowledge, and adapt to introduced technologies. Participatory approaches that keep development concerns at their core and people as their central focus are key.

■ Downloadable at www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=17051IIED



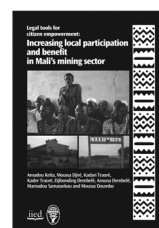
Public Participation and Oil Exploitation in Uganda

● Gatekeeper 138
Christoph Schwarte
IIED, 2008
ISSN 1357-9258

In 2006 oil was discovered in Uganda. With the country's economy highly

dependent on fuel imports, national oil production could make a long-term contribution to poverty alleviation. But for sustainable development to occur, participatory governance must ensure that people are involved in the decision-making processes affecting their lives. This paper first analyses the adequacy of the existing legal framework on access to information and participation. On the basis of interviews and focus group studies it further examines the main practical barriers to better public participation. The author finds that in practice, public participation is subject to several financial, technical and political constraints. The culture of secrecy within government bodies, weak civil society structures as well as the politics of patronage remain substantive challenges for the fair and equitable management of natural resources in Uganda.

■ Downloadable at www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=14574IIED



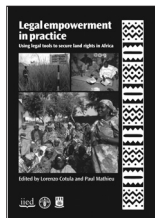
Legal tools for citizen empowerment: Increasing local participation and benefit in Mali's mining sector

● Amadou Keita,
Moussa Djire, with Kadari Traoré, Kader Traoré, Djibonding Dembelé, Arouna Dembelé, Mamadou Samassekou, and Moussa Doumbo
IIED, 2008
ISBN 978-1-84369-713-8

Mali's mining sector has grown greatly since the early 1990s, and is now the second largest source of export income. But while the state receives significant revenues, at the local level mining operations have been associated with loss of land rights and

environmental pollution. This study identifies legal tools that can be used by local people to better secure their land rights and to participate more effectively in investment decisions and benefits.

■ Also available in French. Downloadable at www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=12554IIED



Legal empowerment in practice. Using legal tools to secure land rights in Africa

● edited by Lorenzo Cotula, and Paul Mathieu
FAO and IIED, 2008

ISBN 978-1-84369-703-9

In recent years, many legal services organisations have developed innovative ways for using legal processes to help disadvantaged groups have more secure rights over their land. The approaches, tools and methods used vary widely across contexts – from legal literacy training to paralegals programmes; from participatory methodologies to helping local groups register their lands or negotiate with government or the private sector, through to legal representation and strategic use of public interest litigation. In 2008, the Food and Agriculture

Organization of the UN, the International Institute for Environment and Development, and the Faculty of Law of the University of Ghana jointly organised an international workshop to promote an exchange of experience among practitioners. This report captures the highlights of workshop discussions.

■ www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=12552IIED

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Events and training

The Workshop 09 - 13th International Commune on Participatory Development

● 30 September-9 October 2009

Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) Campus, Thrissur, Kerala, India

The Workshop 09

13th Praxis Annual Commune on Participatory Development

The Workshop is an annual event where development workers, policy makers and proactive individuals come together from across the world to share information, experiences and keep themselves abreast of the latest in the field of participatory development.

This is the 13th Workshop organised by Praxis – Institute for Participatory Practices as part of its efforts to promote participation in all forms of human development.

Workshop 09 is a residential 10-day workshop and provides both a

theoretical understanding of participatory approaches and tools as well as the opportunity to apply them in the field. The ten days include general and specific module based theory, three days in various rural, peri-urban and urban field settings, as appropriate to the module content, and finally a sharing, reflection and feedback session.

The following training modules will be included:

- Child Participation: Methodology and Good Practice
- Community-led Local Level Planning
- Community-led Monitoring and Evaluation
- Community-led Poverty Assessments
- Participatory Methods and Approaches
- Participatory Theatre
- Public Accountability: Approaches and Challenges
- Training of Trainers

Fees: INR 25, 000 for Indian participants
Euro 1,400 for International participants

■ For more details and/or to apply:
Email: info@theworkshop.in

Website: www.theworkshop.in

Praxis website: www.praxisindia.org

Participatory Appraisal Workshop

● 7-11 September 2009, the University of Edinburgh, School of GeoSciences, Institute of Atmospheric and Environmental Science

An intensive five day workshop organised by the Office of Lifelong Learning, concentrating on the practical applications of PA and including a placement at the end of the week to put the skills learned into practice. Previous placements have taken place with the Bilston Wood Community Project and the Woodland Trust Scotland.

The cost of the workshop is £575 (volunteer rate £375 by special application) which includes all tuition costs, in-course transportation, documentation, refreshments and a sandwich lunch on four days.

Registration deadline: 10 August 2009

■ Full information can be found on the website at www.lifelong.ed.ac.uk/cpd/courses/geosciences where you can download the registration form and course flier and also book online.

Environmental Consensus & Conflict Resolution

● 1-3 September 2009, the University of Edinburgh, School of GeoSciences, Institute of Atmospheric and Environmental Science

This is an intensive 3-day workshop which applies theory and consensus building skills in a practical way and encourages participants to work in depth on their own case study material. The scope and format of the workshop has been developed in response to positive feedback from previous participants, who have been attracted from government agencies, business and NGOs.

The cost for this workshop is £450. A special discount rate of £350 is available for a limited number of volunteers (a special application should be made for the volunteer rate). The fee includes all tuition costs, in-course transportation, documentation, refreshments and a

sandwich lunch on four days during the course. Registration deadline: 4 August 2009.

■ Full information can be found on the website at www.lifelong.ed.ac.uk/cpd/courses/geosciences where you can download the registration form and course flier and also book online.

Community-based Mapping (on-line course)

● 28 August-2 October 2009, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) at Colorado State University

Mapping can be a powerful tool for communities to use to better manage their resources, plan for the future, record and utilise local knowledge, raise awareness about areas of concern in their environmental and social landscape, and communicate their priorities and concerns to external agencies or government officials. This course will explore

theories, ethics, applications, and methods of community-based mapping and its role in participatory learning and action as well as larger processes of integrated community-based development. This course, while drawing on many of the recent case studies, academic writings, and reports from the field, will be highly interactive and will emphasize the sharing of experiences, ideas, and insights from course participants.

This is an online course, organised in a seminar format with weekly readings, presentations and assignments along with discussion among participants. While participants are not required to access the courses at specific times it will be necessary to access the course at least two or more times each week to download assignments, post reactions, and give feedback to other course participants.

■ For more information visit www.colostate.edu/Orgs/IISD/courses/Mapping.html



e-participation

Agriculture and New Technologies: Web 2.0 in Africa

<http://tinyurl.com/ctaweb2inafrica>

Educational video on how farmers have been using Web 2.0 applications in Africa by People TV and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation EU-ACP (CTA).

Amnesty International Campaigning Manual

www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ACT10/002/2001/en

A campaigning manual which covers starting a campaign and engaging with the media.

Association for Progressive Communications

www.apc.org

A global network of civil society organisations that aims to empower and support organisations, social movements and individuals in and through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Common Craft: Social Media Pack

www.commoncraft.com/social-media-pack

A series of short video introductions to a wide selection of social media tools and ideas. Presented in Plain English with the option to watch in French, Spanish, German or Portuguese. Free to watch online – can be downloaded for a fee. Also available on Dotsub.com with multiple language subtitles (search Dotsub for 'Commoncraft').

Communication Initiative Network

www.comminet.com

An online space for sharing the experiences of, and building bridges between, people and organisations

engaged in or supporting communication for economic and social development and change.

DGroups: Web2ForDev Discussion Group

<http://tinyurl.com/dgroupswb2fordev>

Electronic discussion group dealing with topics related to Web 2.0 for Development.²

Euforic

www.euforic.org

Uses Internet applications to produce web-based information services, including alerts, country profiles, thematic dossiers, organisation directories, an email digest, an online repository, event listings, and search tools to share, access and assess information on development.

The Fiankoma Project

www.fiankoma.org

A development education project that used video and other digital media as tools to promote development awareness, working with teachers, students and communities in Ghana and the UK.

ICT Update: a current awareness bulletin

<http://ictupdate.cta.int>

ICT Update is a bimonthly bulletin about information communication technologies for development. Each issue focuses on a specific theme relevant to ICTs for agricultural and rural development in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

Impact Assessment of ICT for Development Projects: a compendium of approaches

<http://tinyurl.com/ICT-SED>

Presents a set of frameworks that can be used by ICT4D practitioners, policy-makers and consultants to understand the impact of informatics initiatives in developing countries.³

The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD)

www.iicd.org

IICD is a non-profit foundation that specialises in ICT as a tool for development.

The Machine is Us/ing Us

<http://tinyurl.com/machine-us>

Educational video on Web 2.0 by Professor Michael Wesch, Kansas State University.⁴

Muti

www.muti.co.za

A social bookmarking website dedicated to content of interest to Africans or those interested in Africa. Users bookmark and vote on URLs and can add tags to bookmarks.

NewsForDev: News for development professionals

<http://NewsForDev.org>

NewsforDev is a CTA project that uses RSS and email to share information with agricultural development practitioners in ACP countries.

¹ Full URL: <http://video.google.co.uk/videoplay?docid=-2469769595078354835>

² Full URL: <http://dgroups.org/Community.aspx?c=d84f51bb-0442-4f21-bd84-1a03e0d68cef>

³ Full URL: www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/research/publications/wp/di/di_wp36.htm

⁴ Full URL: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLIGopyXT_g

Open Forum on Participatory Geographic Information Systems and Technology

www.ppgis.net

Supports community mapping for conservation, development, natural resource management and customary property rights.

Personal Media Learning Center

www.ourmedia.org/learning-center

A rich educational resource for everything you wanted to know about user-created video, audio, and other forms of citizens' media.

Social Bookmarking Sites

<http://tinyurl.com/bookmarks-review>

Review of the top ten social bookmarking websites.⁵

The 59 smartest non-profit organisations online

www.squidoo.com/org20

These charities were chosen for their excellence in online storytelling and collaboration with their donors and because of their use of Web 2.0 tools to engage their constituents far beyond asking them for donations.

Video for Agricultural and Rural Development

<http://video.cta.int>

This video portal initiated by CTA in 2004 is a collection of video clips and films about ARD issues in ACP countries. This portal shares experience/knowledge about using video for agricultural and rural development.

⁵ Full URL: <http://websearch.about.com/od/best-websites/tp/freebookmarks.htm>

Web2forDev 2007 International Conference website

<http://2007.web2fordev.net>

This website offers a collection of resources including recorded presentations by keynote speakers at the Web2forDev conference.

Web2forDev Gateway

www.web2fordev.net

A virtual meeting point for innovators dealing with the use of Web 2.0 applications in development. Provides access to a number of related social networking spaces. Recommends websites dealing with Web 2.0 for Development.

Web2forDev WebRing

<http://tinyurl.com/web2fordev-ring>

This is the hub of the ring of websites, blogs and wikis sharing common interests in collaborative online applications used in the context of development work. This WebRing aims to facilitate access to relevant Web2forDev information and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.⁶

ARTICLES ON PRIVACY CONCERNS OVER WEB 2.0 TOOLS

For further discussions on issues related to Web 2.0 and privacy, censorship, terms of service and intellectual property rights see e.g.:

BBC News

<http://tinyurl.com/bbcfbbook>

News article: 'Websites "keeping deleted photos"'.⁷

⁶ Full URL: <http://h.webring.com/hub?ring=web20fordevelop1>

⁷ Full URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/8060407.stm

Digiactive

<http://tinyurl.com/digiactivefb>

Blog post by Gaurav Mishra: 'The Perils of Facebook Activism: walled gardens, serial activists and hackers.'⁸

Eric Lee blog

<http://tinyurl.com/ericlee-faceb>

Blog post by Eric Lee: 'Bandwagons and Buzzwords: Facebook and the Unions.'⁹

Global Voices Advocacy

<http://tinyurl.com/gvbloganon>

Article by Ethan Zuckerman: 'Anonymous Blogging with Wordpress & Tor.'¹⁰

Wikipedia

<http://tinyurl.com/wikipfbook>

<http://tinyurl.com/wikipmsp>

Discussions related to social networking websites Facebook and MySpace.^{11 12}

EXAMPLES OF ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Africa ICT Network

<http://ictafrica.ning.com>

A networking community for people who are professionally involved in the African ICT Industry.

Development CAFE

www.thedevelopmentcafe.org

Development CAFE is an interactive online social network for development professionals for people

⁸ Full URL: www.digiactive.org/2009/04/17/the-perils-of-facebook-activism-walled-gardens-serial-activists-and-hackers

⁹ Full URL: www.ericlee.info/2007/11/bandwagons_and_buzzwords_faceb.html

¹⁰ Full URL: <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/projects/guide>

¹¹ Full URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Facebook

¹² Full URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Myspace

from all over the world to meet and interact and share information and resources based on the development sector.

The Environment Site

www.theenvironmentsite.org/forum

A social network for people interested in environmental issues.

Forest Connect

<http://forestconnect.ning.com>

A social network dedicated to Small and Medium Forest Enterprises (SMFEs).

i-genius

<http://i-genius.org/home>

Supports social change and helps members develop partnerships with established organisations.

OneWorldTV

<http://tv.oneworld.net>

Non-profit video-sharing network aimed at people interested in development, environment, etc.

Research and Media Network

<http://researchandmedia.ning.com>

A social network for people who communicate about sustainable development research.

Social Source Commons

<http://socialsourcecommons.org>

A useful website to find new communications tools. Lists groups of web-based tools from different people working in the non-profit sector, grouped into 'toolboxes' and ranked by popularity.

EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPMENT WIKIS

Appropedia

www.appropedia.org

This wiki explores collaborative solutions in sustainability, poverty

reduction and international development through the use of appropriate technology and the sharing of project information.

Kabissa: Space for change in Africa

<http://wiki.kabissa.org>

An online wiki manual for African civil society organisations who want to learn more about integrating Web 2.0 technology into their work.

Telecentres-Africa

www.share4dev.info/telecentres

A platform for sharing experiences about telecentre activities in Africa. Includes a wiki which provides a collaborative space for sharing related experiences.

Web2forDev on Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web2fordev>

Editable description and definition of the Web2forDev concept on Wikipedia.

WikiAdvocacy

<http://wikiadvocacy.org>

WikiAdvocacy is a free, reader-built guide, as well as an online community for advocacy.

WikiEducator

www.wikieducator.org

An online collaborative community project that focuses on the learning for development agenda. Search for Community Empowerment, a new and evolving section on the new WikiEducator website.

Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org>

Wikipedia is a free online encyclopaedia that anyone can edit. Wikipedia is multilingual and is now the ninth most popular website in the world. Includes useful development content.

EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPMENT BLOGS

Afrigator

<http://afrigator.com>

Afrigator is a social media aggregator and directory built especially for African digital citizens who publish and consume content on the Web.

Alive in Baghdad

<http://aliveinbaghdad.org>

A website and blog dedicated to showing the conflict through the voices of Iraqis, with testimonies from individual Iraqis, footage of daily life in Iraq, and short news segments from Iraq.

Blogsessive

<http://blogsessive.com>

A website which includes blogging tips, Wordpress tools and plug-ins, themes and answers to your blogging related questions.

BROSDI audio blog

<http://audioblog.podbean.com>

The Busoga Rural Open Source and Development Initiative audio blog about effective local agricultural practice.

Brussels Development Briefings

<http://brusselsbriefings.net>

This blog includes all the relevant documents about the regular development briefing sessions in Brussels on key issues and challenges for rural development in the context of EU/ACP cooperation.

CEDICT: Communication, Education and Development using ICT

<http://cedict.blogspot.com>

A blog about individual and community development using new information and communication technologies, especially e-learning, open educational resources, open source, Web 2.0, blogs, wikis, social networking, social

bookmarking, semantic web and other social software.

CrissCrossed

www.crisscrossed.net

CrissCrossed focuses on how social changes occur via communication, online tools, their impact, potential and challenges in the context of cultural diversity. Includes topics related to network learning and knowledge management for development.

CTA Brussels

<http://brussels.cta.int>

This blog shares information on key ACP-EU programmes and events from Brussels relevant to agriculture and rural development in ACP countries. Users can subscribe online to the weekly e-newsletter.

Ghana GINKS storytelling blogs

www.ginks.blogspot.com

GINKS is a network of individuals and organisations that seeks to promote ICT4D in Ghana. Includes a video blog (vlog).

Global Voices

<http://globalvoicesonline.org>

An international advocacy network. Collates, translates and reports on blogs and citizen media everywhere, with an emphasis on voices that are not ordinarily heard in international mainstream media.

Global Voices Advocacy: Blog for a Cause!

<http://tinyurl.com/globalvoicesblog>

A series of manuals focused on the

topics of circumventing Internet filtering, anonymous blogging and effective use of Internet-based tools in campaigns for social and political change.¹³

I collaborate, e-collaborate, we collaborate

www.icollaborate.blogspot.com

This blog is run by the members of the E-collaboration learning community who work in development organisations based in the Netherlands.

ICT-KM Programme

<http://ictkm.wordpress.com>

The ICT-KM blog focuses on the promotion and support of the use of information and communications technology (ICT) and knowledge management (KM).

Indian Kisan Blog

<http://kisan.wordpress.com>

Discussions, data, figures and articles on issues related to food security in India.

Mashable

<http://mashable.com>

Mashable is the world's largest blog focused exclusively on Web 2.0 and Social Media news.

Reporters Without Borders

www.rsfblog.org

Brings together free speech activists and other Internet users who are concerned about what is happening in the world and provides a way to publish information that is censored in their own countries.

Roxanna Samii blog

<http://rsamii.blogspot.com>

This blog talks about development, knowledge management, change management, organisational behaviour, ICTs, rural livelihoods, leadership, management and other related subject matters.

Web2fordev Blog

<http://blog.web2fordev.net>

Developed during the Web2fordev 2007 conference, this blog is an archive of interesting debates and resources related to Web 2.0 methods, approaches and applications for development.

Voices of Africa

<http://voicesofafrica.africanews.com>

An African blog, which aims to help talented Africans build a career in media, using currently available technologies that are not yet financially affordable in Africa.

EXAMPLES OF ONLINE PLATFORMS USING MOBILE PHONES

Mobileactivism

<http://mobileactive.org>

A community of people and organisations using mobile phones for social impact.

Ushahidi

www.ushahidi.com

Crowdsourcing citizen reporting tool that uses FrontLine.com SMS services to enable citizens to upload and receive reports, breaking news etc. Developed for humanitarian crisis situations.

¹³ Full URL: <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/projects/guide-blog-for-a-cause>

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) 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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News from the RCPLA Network Coordinator

Deepening Participation for Social Change

Although the concept of participation has become a popular one in development activities, there is often a remarkable lack of an actively participatory process in the implementation of projects.

Deepening Participation for Social Change was identified by the RCPLA members as the theme for the year 2008-09. In this context the network is planning a publication that aims to promote the effective adoption of the participatory approach.

This publication will present conceptual reflections on participation in development, analyse

participation as an active process throughout the project cycle and identify the challenges faced in deepening the use of participatory approaches. The case of the Young Women Leadership Program (YWLP) implemented in Egypt will serve as a successful model for deepening the participatory approach for social change. The publication will also include tips on how to monitor and evaluate the process of implementing the participatory approach and will be followed by a training manual on adopting and strategising this approach.

Participatory Learning and Action 57 now available in Arabic

Readers in the Middle East and North Africa will be particularly interested

to know that *PLA 57* entitled: *Immersion: learning about poverty face-to-face* is now available online in Arabic. Guest edited by Izzy Birch and Raffaella Catani (Praxis), with Robert Chambers, the theme for this special issue centres on experiences of face-to-face learning, or immersions – opportunities for development professionals to spend a period of time living with and learning from a poor family. See www.rcpla.org/page.php?pg=publications#arabic

The RCPLA website has been updated; new publications and resources are now available at www.rcpla.org

To join the network, please contact Ms Passinte Isaak, email: pisaak@nefdev.org

News from the Asia Region: Praxis India – Institute for Participatory Practices

Workshop 09

Praxis is preparing for Workshop 09 – the Annual Praxis Commune on Participatory Development, to be held in Kerala from 30th September to 9th October. For more details see Events and Training in the **In Touch** section.

Voices of the Kosi – A pre-election people's campaign around the Kosi Basin

During April 2009, Praxis coordinated a campaign in Purnia district, Bihar state to connect with inhabitants of the Kosi basin along part of the stretch of the Kosi river. The campaign was undertaken by a number of prominent civil society organisations of Bihar and media representatives. The overall aim was to give excluded, marginalised and vulnerable groups along the Kosi river an active voice in their own equitable and sustainable development.

The area between the embankments of Kosi river comprises over 380 villages and houses nearly 12 lakh people, and it exemplifies the most glaring form of exclusion from basic services and development opportunities. Since the construction of the Kosi barrage in the early 1950s and subsequent submergence of the villages, inhabitants of the area have never been provided with any recourse, in blatant violation of promises of compensation made to them by the then Prime Minister Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru, which included provision of land, employment and houses.

Praxis initiated a boat journey across the stretch of the Kosi river between embankments to connect

with the affected people for whom the river has been flooding for the last five decades. The people of the Kosi basin expressed their anger and spoke of their demands. A people's manifesto was generated in the process and each community visited by the team came up with a plan to confront candidates of the 15th Lok Sabha elections with their manifesto. Issues and vulnerabilities were profiled using participatory video, GPS and satellite imageries, and participatory research processes.

This campaign will be documented more fully in a future issue of *PLA*. For more information visit www.praxisindia.org/kosi

News from the Latin America Region: Grupo Nacional de Trabajo para la Participación (GNTP)

GNTP's environment and sustainable landscapes programme is working on two key projects. With Conservation International it is running a conservation and knowledge management project that focuses on landscape conservation, sustainable economic development, comanagement and other areas. They are also starting a project to analyse Human Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Madidi landscape (Bolivia). In this project PRA methods will be used to examine how communities are feeling the impacts of climate, the adaptation mechanisms they have developed, and how climate change will affect their well-being. This participatory research will be combined with a scientific analysis of climate change models, predictions and historical weather data, to produce more rigorous project results.

GNTP is part of a new consortium

with Cooperation Housing Foundation (CHF) International and the Bolivian Federation of Municipal Associations that is implementing a five year project to strengthen the management and investment capacity of municipalities in Bolivia. For more information visit www.gntp.org

News from the European Region: PPSC Group at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

The Participation, Power and Social Change (PPSC) Group at IDS has been working on a range of issues over recent months. Amongst many activities, colleagues have been facilitating a workshop in Mali focusing on rights-based approaches; convening the third and final session of the BINGO (Big International NGOs) group who have been exploring their role as agents of social change; and researching the impacts of the food, fuel and financial crisis on the world's poorest people.

Last autumn saw the publication of Robert Chambers' new book, *Revolutions in Development Inquiry*, published by Earthscan, which was launched at the Edinburgh Radical Book Fair. Also published by the team were the IDS Bulletins *Reclaiming Feminism: Gender and Neoliberalism* (Cornwall, A.) and *Intergenerational Transmissions: Cultivating Agency?* (Moncrieffe, J.). The Citizenship Development Research Centre published the IDS Focus Policy Briefing 05, *Building Responsive States: Citizen Action and National Policy Change* and the Pathways of Women's Empowerment programme published *Conceptualising Women's Empowerment in International Development Agencies* (Eyben, R. and Napier-Moore, R.).

Applications are now open for the

2009 Masters Programme in Participation, Power and Social Change which will commence in October this year. This action learning course offers experienced development workers and social change activists the opportunity to critically reflect on their practice while deepening their knowledge and skills. For more information on the MA or any of the activities please contact ppsc@ids.ac.uk

News from the European Region: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

Democratising the governance of food and agricultural research

The latest chapter of an online multimedia book in the making *Towards Food Sovereignty. Reclaiming autonomous food systems* focuses on the need to transform agricultural

research. It also addresses the politics of knowledge associated with conservation and natural resource use as well as notions of cognitive justice and equivalency between indigenous knowledge systems and western science. Authored by Michel Pimbert, the chapter is called "Transforming knowledge and ways of knowing."

Pimbert proposes a new way of working in which policy makers, scientists and local people set strategic research priorities together, and in which research serves local interests ahead of those of private companies and technocratic elites. He proposes a two pronged approach. The first gives a more central place to farmers and other citizens in the actual governance and running of a strengthened public research system. The second seeks to expand horizontal networks of knowledge producers and users to enhance learning and action *by, with and for* people.

Download the chapter at www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=G02493

Promoting practical, just and sustainable forest use using films

As part of the **Forest Governance Learning Group**, IIED's partners are working with a filmmaker to prepare short videos to show that many key forest problems are related to social justice, and that such problems *can* be worked on, and how this can be achieved. These films will include an overview plus case studies from Malawi, Ghana, Vietnam and Uganda, as well as material contributed by Forest Governance Learning Group members in several other African and Asian countries. The films are due to be completed by autumn 2009. Further information on the Forest Governance Learning Group is available on the IIED website: www.iied.org/natural-resources/key-issues/forestry/forest-governance-learning-group



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