

## Editorial

You cannot have failed to noticed the recent proliferation of special issues of the *Notes*. Although providing valuable material in considerable depth, they have meant a long wait for those of you submitting more general articles. We feel that both types of article are useful, and so are trying to combine them in 'semi-special' issues. In this issue, along with 10 general articles, we are including a small selection of pieces which describe experiences and discuss issues relating to participatory approaches to HIV and AIDS programmes. We hope that these few articles, and the useful editorial overview by Alice Welbourn, will stimulate some discussion and perhaps encourage others to share their experiences of working in this field.

The articles in the more general section of this issue have clustered around three main themes: participatory approaches to planning, reflections on the potentials and limits of PRA, and the development of new methods.

### Participatory approaches to planning

Five articles in this issue provide some useful approaches to using or adapting PRA for participatory planning. The first three of these discuss approaches to planning that incorporate factors such as external forces and internal conflict, which can often undermine community planning processes and natural resource strategies. The opening piece by Michael Warner discusses the importance of ensuring that plans made with communities take into account the external forces which will largely determine the success or failure of those plans. He suggests ways in which strategic planning can become an integral part of a broader process of participatory planning and how an internal appraisal can be linked to external appraisals of the wider context of community strategies. Similarly, Richard Montgomery recognises the need for planners to be aware of the wider forces acting on any development

process. He outlines a method called force-field analysis which can help to determine the constraints and opportunities which shape the future of any aspect of development. His article provides us with two case studies from widely differing contexts - public transport and primary school education - illustrating the potential of such a method. These two pieces - suggesting ways of linking community appraisal to analyses of broader political and economic forces - point to one area where PRA approaches still need further development.

If external influence is one type of force which can undermine the viability of community resource management, another such force is local conflict among different social groups. Derek Armitage and Suman Garcha outline their experiences in Tanzania of developing community-based land and resource use plans in such a context. They suggest an approach they feel was especially suitable for an area where the 'community' consisted of a number of different ethnic groups, including pastoralists and settled farmers, who all had distinct land and resource use patterns. The planning process aimed to be both a tool for planning and a means to bring smallholder groups together. Nick Osborne then gives a more specific example of how participatory methodologies were used in a roads rehabilitation programme in Zambia to allow local people to prioritise and plan for themselves. The case is interesting for it shows how participatory planning increases the community 'ownership' of an infrastructural project. It is also a case where a successful pilot led to the programme-wide adoption of PRA planning processes.

Finally, the piece by Kamal Kar and colleagues assesses the value of PRA in the development of village resource management plans in Sri Lanka. This article also touches on a problem which is key to encouraging the scaling-up of the participatory approach and its institutionalisation. This is the challenge of how to facilitate the reversal of attitudes of civil servants "*locked into age old hierarchical*

*bureaucracy and accustomed to top-down planning, inflexibility and an 8-5 day*"? One of the conclusions is that the preparation of village resource management plans with those civil servants is one step along the way in this process of reversal. However, the broader challenge of institutionalisation of this reversal in a whole bureaucracy remains, and we would welcome any contributions showing how this process has occurred, or is beginning to occur elsewhere.

## Reflections

The second section groups three pieces reflecting - on the basis of experience - on the pros and cons, potentials and pitfalls in work with PRA and PRA training, particularly in national, local and institutional contexts. The first piece, by Andrew Inglis and Ann Lussignea, draws lessons from experiences with using participatory approaches in Scotland. They suggest that PRA does indeed have a role, but that effort will have to be made to ensure quality if its role expands. Interestingly, they also argue that despite the many differences between the developed and developing worlds, the same old problems of institutionalising participatory approaches and of giving a voice to local people are once again all too familiar, in Scotland as much as anywhere else.

Carrie Turk's detailed and thought-provoking piece on identifying poverty in Vietnam takes us one step beyond well-being ranking. She emphasises the inherent difficulties of trying to target development assistance at the truly poorest members of a community and comes up with some useful well-being categories which reflect the constantly fluctuating fortunes of rural households. Her article also shows how community resistance can frustrate the use of well-being ranking to target only the poorest in a village. People may participate in planning processes and methods but they may not want to participate in certain uses of the information generated by that 'participatory' planning.

It is always interesting to read the reflections of those who have conducted PRA training courses. The experiences vary so much from situation to situation and there is always something new to learn. Saloni Singh and Birendra Bir Basnyat's lively and thoughtful account of their experiences in Nepal provides

some lessons on how to stimulate interest in participatory approaches and how to deal with the unexpected!

## Methods

As always, this issue contains some creative innovations and adds some new approaches and methods to the repertoire. De Groot and colleagues provide a lively and highly readable account of how they tested and adapted stories in villages in North Cameroon to stimulate discussion and provoke thought. The technique has much potential for application in a variety of ways and settings. Finally, David Archer's fascinating article describes how PRA can be adapted for reforming adult literacy programmes. He bemoans the common misinterpretation of Paulo Freire's teachings and assesses how PRA can be used to put his innovative approach back on course.

## Your letters...

We are always pleased to receive comments about *PLA Notes*. Please keep your letters coming! A recent spate of letters indicate that most of you are pleased with the new title. I hope there is general agreement on this - we certainly feel that the name is much more appropriate to the content of the journal. However, we should emphasise that the term "*PLA*" is not intended to be the name for a new 'methodology' and we do not use it as such. It is a collective term which refers to the whole range of participatory approaches to development and research.

Some of you have mentioned that the *Notes* contain rather too many articles on process and that you would be pleased to see more articles on impact and action. We agree with you. The focus on process has certainly mirrored the development of participatory methodologies. We feel that they have now come of age and it is time we turned our scrutiny on how well they are working in practice and the extent to which livelihoods are being improved as a result. In particular, it will be important to know cases where the impact of participatory approaches has moved from the local to a far larger scale. If any of you would like to write up your experiences of how the use of participatory approaches to development have led directly to

action, empowerment and/or improved livelihoods, we'd love to hear from you.

### **Your space...**

On turning to the back pages, you will notice that *Endnotes* has a new title and a slightly new format. These changes reflect our hope that these final pages will become much more of a

resource for readers. There is so much happening in the field of participation around the world - networks springing up, training being carried out, books being written and so on. We feel that there is a pressing need for a forum to keep us all in touch. Your comments and ideas are vital for making this work.

#### SUBSCRIBING TO PLA NOTES

This issue is the first issue for which subscriptions will be charged. Although we are only asking readers from OECD countries to pay the subscription charge, it is important that any reader who is currently on the mailing list fills in the green form which arrived with this copy of *PLA Notes*. Completing and returning this form will ensure that your name is kept on the mailing list and that you continue to receive *PLA Notes*.

If you do not return the green form we will assume you no longer wish to receive *PLA Notes* and you will eventually be dropped from the mailing list.

## 1

## A strategic approach to participatory development planning: the case of a rural community in Belize

Michael Warner

### · Introduction

In July 1991, in collaboration with a local agricultural development NGO, the Environmental Research Unit of the University of Keele worked with the community of St. Margaret's village in Cayo District, Belize, Central America. The main objective, as decided by the village council, was to design a medium-term village development strategy which would have community-wide benefit.

This paper describes our experiences in incorporating participatory methods into strategic development planning at the community level.

### · Components of strategic development planning

Participatory approaches to planning often tend to concentrate on analysing community problems or opportunities from within a village, cooperative or group. This stance is understandable since it is the basic principle of PRA that the starting point for sustainable local rural development should be the knowledge base, priorities and perceptions of the local community (Chambers et al. 1989). However, when community strategic development planning is the goal, the appraisal also needs to address how a community's development decisions will be affected by outside, macro-economic or political forces.

The benefits of combining an internal appraisal with one external to a community lie at the heart of approaches to strategic planning for organisations and groups, developed largely for businesses (Quinn, 1980; Schmidt-

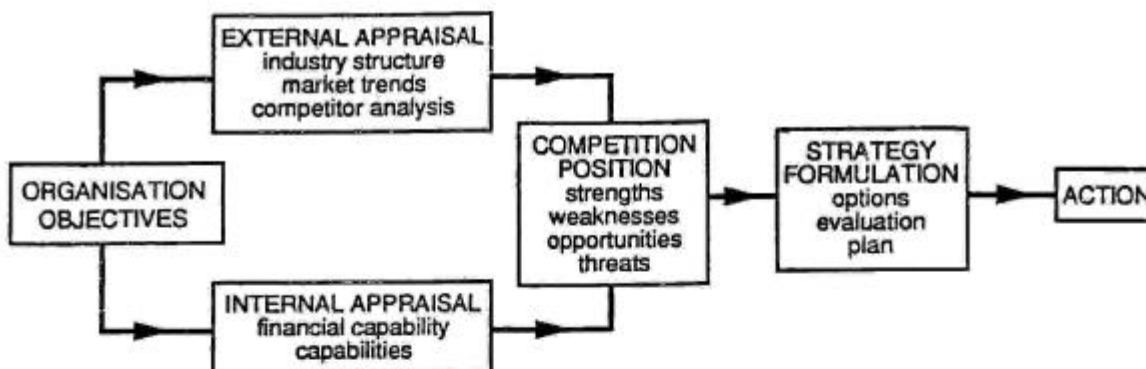
Pauleen, 1990). Principally, this approach provides a framework for establishing achievable development objectives and practicable development strategies and can be summarised as follows (LEK, 1990):

1. set the organisation's development objectives;
2. conduct an external appraisal of, for example, market trends, competitors etc.
3. conduct an internal appraisal of, for example, financial and resource capabilities;
4. analyse the options of the plan; and,
5. prioritise development options to make a strategic plan of action.

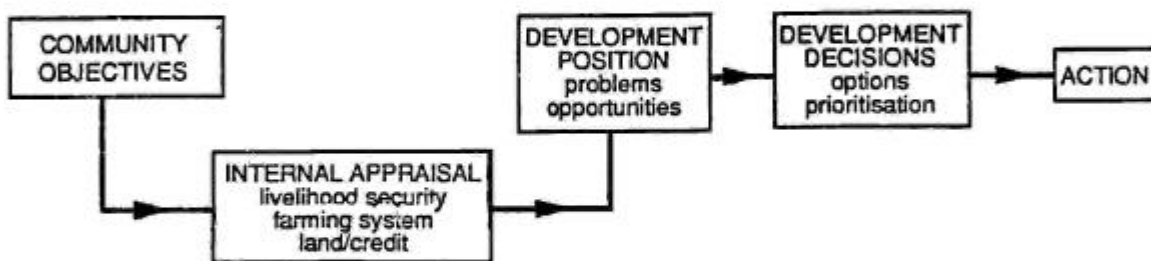
Participatory planning often contains parts (1), (3), (4) and in a few cases (5) (Kabutha and Ford, 1988). Figures 1 and 2 below compare the components of organisation strategic planning with those of participatory community planning. To ensure that our planning approach was more strategic in St Margaret's village, we adopted three additional steps (Figure 3):

1. a formal external appraisal of NGO and government policies and services, and macro-economic forces in relation to the development aims of the village;
2. participatory analysis of the village's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats ('SWOT' analysis); and
3. formulation of a village development strategy designed to achieving a range of development objectives.

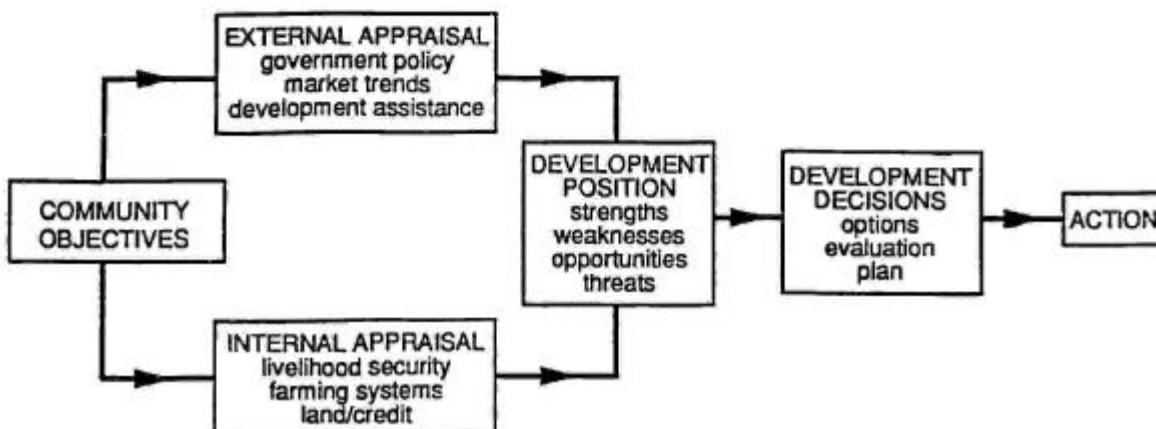
**Figure 1 Process of Organisational Strategic Development Planning**



**Figure 2 Process of Participatory Planning**



**Figure 3 Process of Community Strategic Development Planning**



## • The external appraisal

Early on in the planning process we undertook a formal external appraisal to identify the wider political and economic forces likely to affect St. Margaret's village council's development objectives. This involved two weeks of interviewing government departments, local NGOs and representatives of international assistance agencies. The interviews were semi-structured, based on a checklist of key issues derived from a secondary data review and revised by our umbrella NGO. The exercise provided us and the community with an understanding of the wider political, economic and technical arena within which potential community decisions would be implemented.

Some of the benefits of our approach were demonstrated early in the project. For example, one issue was the possibility of smallholder expansion into citrus (orange and grapefruit) production. Frosts in Florida in the late 1980s had caused a shift in citrus cultivation southwards into Central and Southern America. The resulting increase in fruit processing capacity and the relatively high price of citrus attracted many rural smallholders in Belize to expand their citrus production. The external appraisal sought to identify whether there were likely to be political or commercial forces affecting this expansion in the future. In particular, were there any pressures which would undermine the sustainability of village smallholders converting areas of their subsistence crops to citrus?

Surprisingly, the external appraisal revealed that both the Government of Belize and the country's large commercial producers were supportive of smallholders moving into citrus. Not only did the Government view citrus as encouraging settled agriculture, but since Belize is a small producer on the world stage, the Government and commercial producers were keen to develop the country's citrus production capacity wherever possible.

The appraisal concluded that there were no political barriers to the villagers expanding their citrus growing. These findings then fed into the subsequent participatory analysis in

the village about the overall plan to diversify smallholder crops.

In another case the external appraisal discovered important information for the fertiliser producing cooperative in the village. The cooperative learnt that its ideas for a fuelwood plantation (required to ensure the long term viability of production) had potential funding support from a local NGO, and resource support from two Government Ministries. Furthermore, potential sites for fuelwood plantations had already been proposed by the Government, one of which would be accessible from the village. These were factors of which the cooperative was previously unaware.

In a third case, the results of interviews with the High Commission for Refugees revealed that the refugee population of St. Margaret's had reached a critical size. This suggested that the village council was eligible to apply for educational funding assistance from the Commission. Such funding would help the council pursue its objective of community-wide primary education.

## • Internal strengths and weaknesses

Our overall goal was to facilitate a medium-term village development strategy. To provide a framework for villagers to identify and assess their community's internal strengths and weaknesses, and the external political and economic opportunities and threats affecting them, we introduced a common strategic planning technique known as SWOT analysis (Bryson, 1988), where:

**SWOT = Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

The village council then incorporated the results of this assessment into the community's preferred development strategy.

For example, a substantial portion of the smallholders in the village were unaware of either the Government's policy towards smallholder citrus production, or of the trends in world commodity prices for citrus. If this had been a conventional PRA, it is possible that development decisions concerning citrus

expansion would have been made in an environment of uncertainty. Decisions may have been taken without knowing about the availability of Government extension services for citrus, venture capital, and preferential land allocations for citrus production and without knowledge of a trend of declining market prices.

We encouraged the village participants to assess these findings by identifying threats and opportunities relevant to an expansion of citrus production. These threats and opportunities then fed through to the village council to be translated into a village development strategy for crop diversification. The strategy finally selected was to promote expansion of citrus cultivation within the village; but, in response to the knowledge that future citrus prices were expected to fall, the community also decided to take up the available Government extension services and venture capital provisions. It was concluded that this would improve yields and maintain competitiveness.

#### • **Limitations**

We hope that this approach is a first step towards highlighting the importance of a strategic approach to development planning at the community level. However, we recognise that our approach has some limitations. First, the structure of an organisational strategic planning methodology devised in a North American business environment (Figure 1) clearly cannot be transplanted unchanged to a village in rural Central America. Not only are there obvious wealth and socio-cultural differences between the two environments, but the development goals of a community tend to be heterogeneous whereas those of an organisation are more homogeneous. However, we would argue that the village council of St. Margaret's did demonstrate some similarities with a homogeneous organisation. In particular, the council shared the common goal of community-wide benefits.

Another problem is that the external appraisal was conducted by the PRA team alone. Although we had the development objectives of the village council to guide us, we decided which information was relevant to the community decision-making process without the participation of community members. The

external appraisal could therefore be criticised as being biased towards our academic disciplines and value systems. One counter argument might be that the use of outsiders brings the benefit of easier information access (Messerschmidt, 1991). However, in future we would recommend that the external appraisal include representatives of the village. This is likely to improve the benefits arising from the process greatly.

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## 2

## Force-field analysis: identifying forces for and against change

Richard Montgomery

### • Introduction

This note describes the use of force-field analysis which I first came across during an ODA-commissioned institutional appraisal course. Originally, this technique was intended as a workshop tool for analysing a static situation (to identify the forces which keep an institution in its present state). However, during two recent project visits it was used in a modified form to provide a way of drawing staff and stake-holders into the planning process, defining possible objectives and how to attain them. The fact that the two examples described here are very different (a non-formal education project and an urban environmental improvement project) suggests that the method might be valuable in a variety of contexts including village PRAs, and be useful to those interested in participatory planning generally.

In both examples there was a need to reflect on the present situation ("*where we are now*"), to identify an ideal future ("*where we want to be*"), and to assess the factors which may determine the feasibility of attaining an objective ("*can we get there, and if so how?*"). In both examples, the exercise was carried out using a diagram drawn by participants (see figures below), and once the exercise was under way the facilitators stood back and were confined to an occasional prompting role.

### • Assessing rural non-formal schools in Bangladesh

While undertaking an evaluation of Concern Worldwide's primary school programme in Bangladesh in early 1994 it became evident that there was a pressing need for more non-formal

education (NFE) schools in the *haor* (low-lying, flood prone) areas in the north-east. Concern already has five pilot NFE schools, but is thinking about extending their activities. Community PRAs, which included wealth-ranking of households with school-age children, clearly showed that poorer families are not being served by existing government schools. More flexible school timings and curricula are needed for this target group.

Concern's five teacher trainers regularly come into contact with all existing schools, and therefore have both local level and broader knowledge of the programme. This group is based in Dhaka, but individuals circulate between both rural and urban schools to give in-service training. Conducting a force-field analysis with them revealed a range of positive and negative factors which they deemed important for deciding on how to expand the NFE project.

We first discussed the present situation of the five existing NFE schools which had a total of 30 teachers (working in a three-shift system). Most of the teachers are quite well qualified which meant that many are not from the villages in which they are teaching, most are men, and are being paid well by local standards. This latter point means that the schools are relatively costly. The teacher trainers then outlined an ideal future sometime early in the next century where there would be 50 schools and 300 teachers.

The brief definitions of "*where we are now*" and "*where we want to be*" in the future were then scribbled onto opposite ends of a large sheet of paper, with an arrow linking the two (see Figure 1). The trainers then set about discussing and drawing in positive and negative



forces, using arrows to indicate the direction of the forces. The resulting diagram took about two hours to create.

Out of the exercise came a recognition by all participants that a major task lay ahead. False expectations were not being raised because negative forces were being clearly identified, but the trainers remained optimistic that expansion was possible. They concluded that some positive forces could be accentuated as long as some changes to the programme were made. For example, the training unit could be expanded, new training courses devised, community-school relations could be strengthened by recruiting more local people and more women onto the staff, and school effectiveness could be increased by liaising with local government officials in planning school sites.

Conversely, some of the negative forces could be countered. Financial resources could be used more efficiently by reducing school unit costs, especially if less highly qualified teachers were recruited. Existing staff, potentially unhappy at new staffing policy, could be absorbed slowly by creating new training posts, a head-teachership for the larger schools and finding work in other projects, for example the urban schools.

Overall, the exercise led the trainers to suggest that any expansion be carefully phased. New schools, employing local teachers, needed to be opened on a pilot basis, in areas away from the old NFE schools (partly so that existing staff have more time to be absorbed 'naturally'). Expanding the project in the original areas should be delayed for some years. Liaison with local education officials was also highlighted, to create a 'satellite' system, enabling class III

NFE graduates to continue in government schools if they wished.

Throughout the exercise detailed notes of the discussion were taken and the ideas generated by the trainers' analysis were incorporated into the final evaluation report which was then circulated amongst Concern's staff, and is still under consideration by the organisation.

### • **Cleaning-up Calcutta's transport sector**

While working on an appraisal mission for an urban environmental programme in Calcutta we wanted to involve NGOs and individuals in the preliminary project planning. Given that urban environmental improvement implies a vast range of potential sectors, we chose just one - the transport sector - as a dry-run for participatory planning.

The exercise was too brief (and the problem too large) for a fully satisfying outcome. However, while concrete plans failed to materialise, the principle of NGO participation in the project gained importance. The exercise therefore played a useful strategic role.

Calcutta suffers, like any large metropolis, from poor transport services. Particular problems are inefficient bus services, a collapsing tram system, and congestion caused by taxis and the growing car-ownership amongst the middle classes. Traffic congestion leads to chronic air pollution which has major health implications, especially for the more vulnerable such as the poor and children. Major problems with enforcing existing legislation (eg. on vehicle emissions) are also evident.

Figure 1. Teacher trainers' force-field analysis for expanding a rural non-formal school programme in Bangladesh

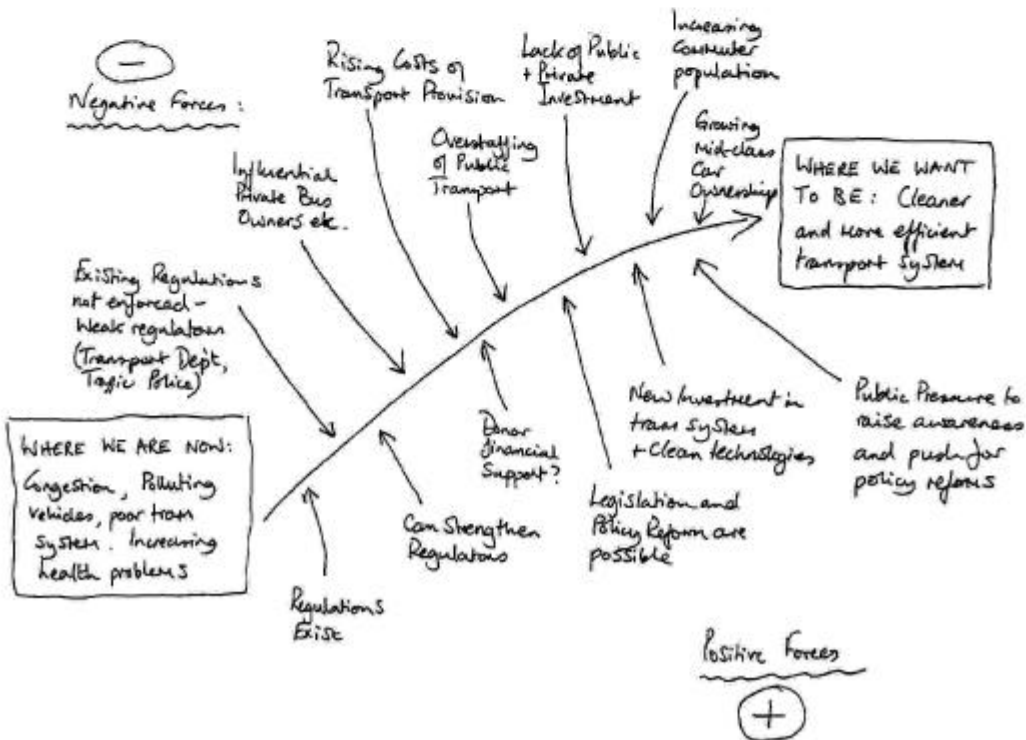
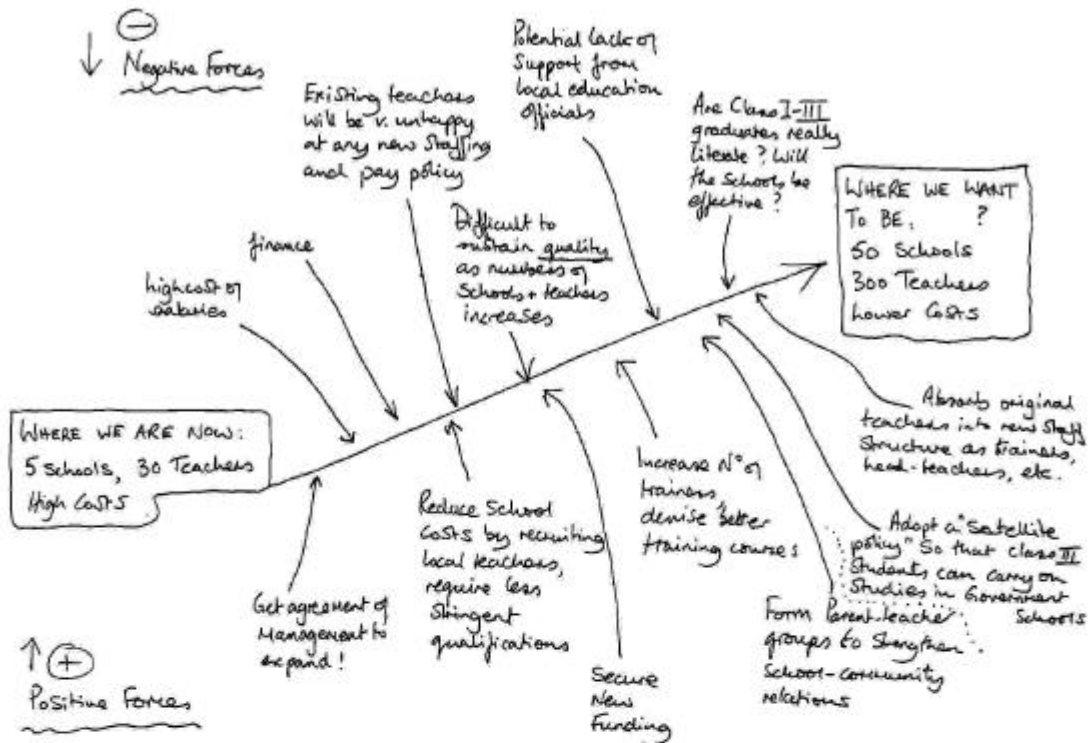


Figure 2. NGO and government representatives' analysis for cleaning-up Calcutta's transport system

This outline of the present situation was drawn up by a small group of both government and non-government organisation staff in a collective discussion. Both advocacy and development NGOs were represented in the group (people representing 'green' and low income groups' interests). All participants agreed that there was a serious need to develop a cleaner and more efficient metropolitan transport system over the next two decades. Forces acting for and against achieving this objective were then discussed and the outcome is shown in Figure 2.

Having outlined the various forces, the participants then considered how negative ones could be reduced, and the positive ones accentuated. Lack of finance could be off-set by attracting donor funds, devising local policies to attract private investment and create new pricing policies to encourage such investors. The need to increase the efficiency of the transport department was highlighted, so that existing legislation could be applied more effectively.

During the discussion the key role of public awareness (and pressure for change in policies) was highlighted. For this to be effectively stimulated more transparency in the Transport Department's planning process was suggested by NGO representatives. They pointed out that NGOs could contribute to this planning process, as well as to awareness-raising campaigns amongst various public constituencies and activities to gain the support of the press.

Out of this force-field analysis came a strong justification for NGO involvement in the improvement programme (not just transport sector planning), and a realisation that a formal consultative structure for NGO-government cooperation was needed. The exercise, by bringing together diverse interested groups, therefore appeared to further the principle of stakeholder participation in the overall project.

#### • **Variations on a theme**

The original force-field exercise outlined in the ODA course also suggested a checklist of questions for following up the initial analysis:

- What are the relative importance of the positive and negative forces (eg. can they

be ranked in terms of strength, ease of change or impact)?

- What are the reasons behind such rankings; and what implications do these have for the sort of action that can be taken?
- Which stakeholders have the most influence?
- What will happen if we don't achieve the desired objective(s)?

To these, one might add:

- Have the interests of other stakeholders (especially the less organised and more vulnerable) been taken into account during the analysis?
- Should the exercise be carried out with a different group of interested stakeholders to see what different objectives and perceptions they have?

#### • **Conclusions: wider applications of the exercise?**

Force-field analysis should not necessarily be confined to workshop situations. While both case studies above involved literate participants who could draw out the diagram themselves, there is no reason why people should not attempt to use the technique in other PRA situations. One analogy to illustrate this point is the use of time-lines. Force-field analysis is a little like doing a future time-line for forecasting the factors which will have to be considered if a desired objective is to be achieved. Just as time-lines can be constructed using symbols, counters or representative objects rather than text, so might force-field exercises be feasible for non-literate community groups.

In both the case studies, the final outcomes were not perfect by any means. In the Calcutta example the subject was very broad (the transport sector for 12 million people!), and difficult to handle in anything other than a general sense. In the Bangladesh example, the ideal objective also began to look a bit too grand, and it needed expanding from a simple

quantitative target to a more qualitative idea of what the schools should be trying to achieve. In fact, the discussion did lead to this. When the trainers started talking about school quality and the need to set up a satellite system with local government schools they were recognising that they should be developing their original objective. If we had had more time, perhaps the exercise could have been repeated with revised objectives in mind.

However, force-field analysis is a useful way of involving different people in the analysis of objectives and how they can be achieved (and not just the collection of data). It is therefore a potentially empowering tool. In the Bangladesh case study, the teacher trainers felt enthused by their contribution to the planning process. In the Calcutta case study the NGO participants felt that they had proved their importance to government representatives. Hopefully, the latter also increased their commitment to NGO involvement in the planning process.

If there are any *PLA Notes* readers with participatory planning tools similar to, or improving on, the above please drop me a line.

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## 3

## A participatory methodology for community-based land and resource use planning: a case study from Tanzania

Derek Armitage and Suman Garcha

### • Introduction

This paper provides a short account of a participatory methodology used in the development of land and resource use plans. This methodology overcomes constraints imposed when traditional processes focusing on technical issues such as land use capability are employed. Moreover, it allows stakeholders to develop their own land and resource use designations and encourages local-level resource management. The outcome of the process is, we argue, a more sustainable and appropriate land and resource use plan.

### • Background

For centuries the Lake Eyasi basin in Tanzania's Rift Valley has been inhabited by a small hunting-gathering community (the Hadza) whose complex understanding of the local ecology enables them to cope with the harsh environment.

However, since the middle part of this century land and population pressure in surrounding areas has meant that agriculturalists (the Iraqw) and pastoralists (the Barabaig) are migrating into the area in search of 'open' lands. The result has been significant land loss for the hunting and gathering group, environmental decline of the fragile dryland ecosystem (eg. habitat loss and wildlife decline, deforestation, and overgrazing), and increasing land and resource use conflict.

To address this situation, a land and resource planning process was initiated by an international NGO in consultation with representatives from the Hadza community.

The process was undertaken for an area of approximately 150,000 hectares in the western zone of Mbulu District. Three core villages formed the primary focus of activities. Each village is inhabited by one of the three groups. The western zone of Mbulu District has largely been ignored by District authorities for several reasons. Physically, the environment is harsh with little potential for agricultural use. Although located in an area of high population density, the zone remains isolated partly due to a steep escarpment that has hindered the construction of roads. One of the greatest barriers to community involvement in this zone is based on the attitude of government workers. Most Tanzanians consider hunter-gatherers and pastoralists as 'backwards' and 'primitive'. The zone has a long history of forced settlement schemes that impose agriculture as the

Hadza and the Barabaig are now reluctant to discuss matters with the District authorities when their viewpoint has been excluded for so long. Activities were thus implemented where possible through the District government in an effort to further collaboration and support.

### The need for a participatory approach

There is an emphasis in Tanzania on the demarcation and titling of villages and the development of Village Land Use Plans (VLUP). However, methods for undertaking VLUPs are not well developed, and where they do exist, focus on technical issues and are developed outside the village. The result is a land and resource plan that overlooks critical socio-economic and ecological interactions and that has had little input from those most affected by the process. A participatory approach allows a more sustainable and appropriate planning process to be initiated. If

stakeholders can develop their own land use maps, workable management systems are more likely to be created. Overall resource management activities can be improved by combining technical analysis of land and resource systems with the participatory development of land and resource plans.

A participatory approach to the land and resource planning process was considered essential. There were several reasons for this:

- only a few members in the Barabaig and Hadza community able to read or write;
- resource use patterns necessitating cooperation and dialogue in the development of a broader resource management plan;
- making land and resource interactions more complex. It was felt that PRA approaches would allow a deeper understanding of these issues. Moreover, a flexible approach was needed since the nomadic lifestyle makes scheduling of activities difficult; and,
- trust between the communities and the District authorities was critical. Listening and creating dialogue were key elements of the methodology.

To meet these challenges, several participatory methods were used, including participatory mapping, focus group meetings, semi-structured and open interviews, community transects, and seasonal diagramming.

#### • **Planning process description**

After introducing the project to stakeholder groups, participatory mapping helped to outline physical and spatial aspects of land and resource use (eg. important wildlife areas, grazing areas), and specific sites of importance (eg. dry-season spring sources). Materials used when mapping were chosen by the participants and included seeds, bark, rocks and leaves.

Mapping activities then led to broader group discussions about various land and resource uses and the key problems associated with land, people, and water resources. No limits were placed on the number of people who could participate. However, while the number of men and women were roughly equal, only a few women would speak on a regular basis. Consequently, focus group discussions and mapping with women as the primary participants were also undertaken.

Having gained an insight into land and resource use issues from the initial mapping and group discussion activities, a second series of mapping activities was initiated. The objective was to facilitate a more focused discussion on demarcating certain areas for specific uses, to clarify the areas of land and resource use conflict and to develop ways to overcome them by adapting resource management systems. In this context, the role of land rights was brought up by the participants who also raised the need for having some tool to protect their resources raised. Throughout the mapping process, other methods were used to verify, enhance, and improve the information gathering and discussion process (eg. transects, seasonal diagramming, interviews).

Through these activities the stakeholder groups developed land and resource use plans for their village territory. The groups are able to present the rationale behind the decisions and this helps them to support their plans. The need for resource management and conflict resolution systems can also be addressed. For example, the Hadza and Barabaig communities have already developed an informal management system for using certain springs in the dry season. Such management systems can be formalised with greater precision through plan development. And as each village completes and agrees to the plan, it can be passed through the ward and district government levels for approval, official status, and legal recognition.

#### • **Lessons learned and insights gained**

The process proved both challenging and illuminating. Outlined below are several lessons and insights gained during the planning process.

participants placed relevant landforms on the map, it was a straightforward process to identify the significant land use areas for their traditional economy.

- will help overcome problems that arise from the fact that village boundaries bear no resemblance to actual land use. This is of particular importance in this context given that two of the three groups are nomadic.

## • **Conclusions**

It is our belief that allowing stakeholder groups to develop their own land and resource plans enhances the sustainability of those plans. This reduces many of the shortcomings of a strictly technical approach to land and resource planning, such as the focus on land capability to the detriment of other important socio-economic and cultural factors. A participatory approach encourages the use of indigenous ecological knowledge and places decision-making capacity in the hands of groups most affected by land and resource changes.

For policy development, this implies that land and resource use is best directed at the local level. Imposing environmental management strategies from national or even district levels can be detrimental. Consequently, a methodological process based on dialogue and trust is the way forward for promoting local participation.

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part because the Hadza have detailed geographical knowledge of their traditional lands. They are accustomed to navigating using physical markers. Once

## 4

## Who should choose? Community participation in prioritising road network rehabilitation

Nick Osborne

### • Introduction

In May 1994 PRA methods were used with the people of Katuba, Ndola Rural East in Zambia with the aim of enabling communities to identify and prioritise their own District feeder road networks, a function traditionally carried out by outside 'experts'. The methodology has subsequently become standard, and has been applied and used on all further feeder road improvement programmes undertaken by the Smallholder Development Project. This paper outlines the approach taken, and explains how the approach of community participation in the decision making process has been expanded enabling local communities to take on the role of organisation, co-ordination, and management at every stage of the project cycle, with minimum external assistance. This is thus a case study where a local experience with PRA was subsequently scaled up to the level of a whole programme. It also demonstrates how initiating a programme with community planning increases the likelihood that the programme will be sustained.

### • The feeder road improvement programme

The Smallholder Development Project was initiated in April 1988 to improve the productivity of smallholder farms in Ndola Rural East. A major aim has been to establish a labour intensive rural Feeder Road Improvement Programme (FRIP).

Experience has shown that more often than not improving rural feeder road networks is an important priority for rural communities. A

poor road network often has an adverse effect on the livelihood security of the rural population because it leads to problems of access, especially during the rainy season. This, in turn, causes a decrease in agricultural production because it reduces availability of and access to inputs, markets for produce, health care, and educational facilities. This inevitably leads to isolation and a lack of incentives for local communities to prosper by expanding production, diversifying their farming, developing enterprises, or adopting new methods and techniques.

Feeder road studies are traditionally carried out by technical experts or consultants in conjunction with government staff. Indeed, this was the approach that had previously been taken in the project area. A road inventory would be carried out by the outside experts on a limited number of roads. Roads would be prioritised according to future population growth, development potential etc. This method is time consuming, costly, and unlikely to establish the true value and priority of the feeder roads to the community, the main beneficiaries. Farmers who were consulted afterwards commented that:

*... although the road structures had improved movement and access, they had been badly constructed. The community should have been part of the decision-making, and using their own local knowledge, labour and other available resources would have been mobilised to implement construction work, rather than the outside domination.*

Another important issue is the future maintenance of these rural feeder road structures. If communities feel that the work



done by outsiders was of a poor standard, there is little hope of community maintenance and rehabilitation in the future. It was thus decided to use a pilot PRA to assess how far communities in the project area could be effective in identifying, locating and prioritising their own feeder road network.

#### • **Methods**

Katuba Ward was chosen for the pilot because the project and District Council have done little work in this area. About 50 local people, agricultural staff and the local Councillor took part in the exercise.

The local people were asked to draw a map of Katuba showing all the main roads in their Ward, along with other facilities such as rivers, markets, schools, clinics and so on. The group were able to map and name 34 District feeder

roads. Next the group was asked to list all criteria that they considered to be important when choosing roads to be improved. The results are summarised in Table 1.

#### **Identification of key district feeder roads**

To identify the most important feeder roads out of the 34 already named, the group was split into three smaller groups. Each group was asked to list the 10 most important roads and to then list the reasons for their choice according to the criteria they had identified earlier. The results from the three groups were then combined. The number of times each criterion is used is added together for each of the groups. The scores for each of the groups are added together to give a final score in order to rank the criteria in order of importance (Table 2).

**Table 1. Criteria used for the prioritisation of feeder roads (in no particular order)**

Criteria	
Access to clinic	Access to Chief
Access to school	Access to market
Access to railway station	Access to sand pits
Access to road for farm produce	Access to depots
Access to farm inputs	Impassable road
Access to agricultural camp	Large population of farmers

**Table 2. Ranking of criteria used in the prioritisation of roads**

Criteria	Number of Times Criteria Used			Total Number of Times Criteria Used	Rank
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3		
Access to clinic	2	4	6	12	3
Access to school	3	5	8	16	1
Access to railway station	1	3	1	5	5
Access to road for farm produce		3		3	7
Access to farm inputs		1		1	11
Access to agricultural camp	1	4	1	6	4
Access to Chief	1		3	4	6
Access to market	2		1	3	7
Access to sand pits	1		1	2	9
Access to depots	1		1	2	9
Impassable road	1			1	11
Large population of farmers	1	2	10	13	2

The results from the table show that three criteria were particularly important to people: access to clinics; access to schools; and the presence of a large population of farmers.

Each of the three groups were asked to prioritise the 10 chosen roads using pair-wise ranking. Each road chosen was compared against each of the other roads in turn to assess whether it is of greater or lesser priority. The results were tabulated in matrix form. When the matrix was full each road's score was totalled and was then ranked in order of priority from 1 to 10.

The scores from the pair-wise ranking for each of the groups were added together giving a final total score. These scores were ranked and the results are shown in Table 3.

A final group discussion was held to summarise and confirm the results, and to ensure that the community as a whole agreed. The group was happy with the results, and confirmed that the ranking of roads obtained from the exercise was correct according to their chosen criteria. This

then concluded the exercise, which took approximately four hours to complete.

### Project strategy

The methodology described above has subsequently been adopted by communities throughout the District, forming the basis for all roadwork projects implemented under the FRIP. This approach allows local communities to make decisions at the very beginning of the project cycle, which is ultimately the most important stage given limited resources, capital funds and time. Following the identification by the community of the priority roads, there are four further stages to the FRIP (see also Figure 1):

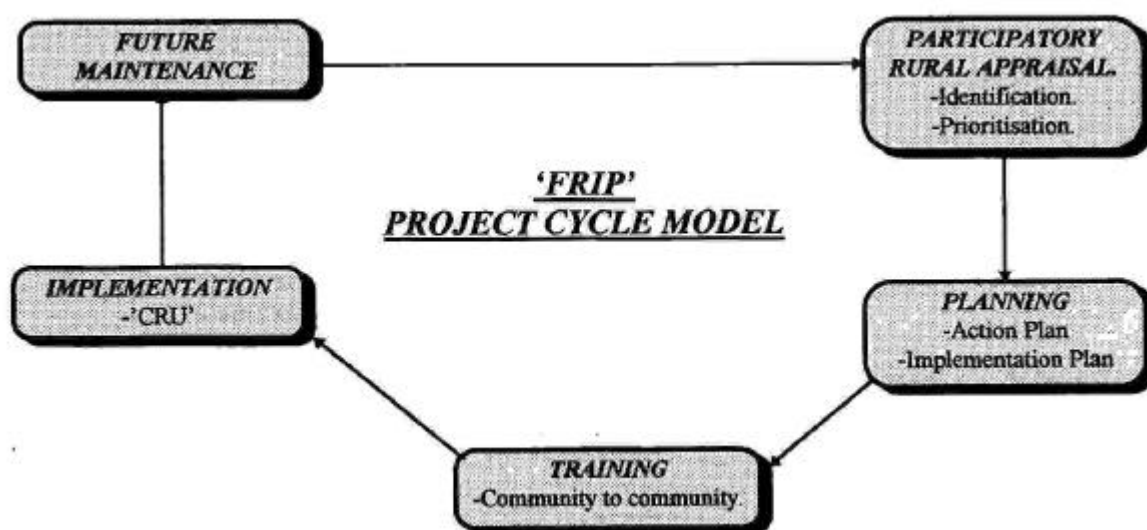
1. Planning
2. Training
3. Implementation
4. Future maintenance

Community facilitators provide a vital link in assisting the local people with all stages of the project cycle.

**Table 3. Final community prioritisation of district feeder roads in Katuba Ward**

Road Name	Group Scores			Total Score	Final Rank
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3		
Mupapa 1	9	9	7	25	1
Mukubi	4			4	10
Katuba	8	8	5	21	2
Mwanakonse	7			7	8
Senseta	1	4	3	8	7
Kango	2			2	15
Chabalankata	7	0	8	15	3
Chintilye	4	6	2	12	4
Mikula	3			3	13
Chela	4			4	10
Mupapa 2		1	9	10	6
Saka 1		6	6	12	4
Palace Road			4	4	10
Lamba Lima Extension			0	0	17
Mulobelega		6		6	9
Shinkonde		3		3	13
Chikululu		2		2	15

Figure 1. The FRIP project cycle model



## Planning

Following the prioritisation exercises, people then decide how they would like to participate in the rest of the project. Communities draw up detailed action and implementation plans and select members for a Technical Committee to be responsible for co-ordinating reconstruction works and future maintenance works. There is always a balance between men and women.

Having identified and prioritised roads, the community is set a target number of days in which they can use the Core Roadworks Unit<sup>1</sup> (CRU) to complete their proposed project. This period is usually 14 days, but can be increased up to 21 days, although from experience this is the maximum period of time that communities are able to continuously commit to the project. The community sets a date to start work. With the help provided by the CRU, the local community is able to plan and commit periods of their time to the intensive work programme, which would otherwise interfere with farming, business, or family activities.

Organised through the locally-selected Technical Committee, communities provide all the labour requirements for the implementation

of the road reconstruction and rehabilitation works.

## Training

In addition to being involved in both the planning and implementation stages of the programme, the community also gains experience in road rehabilitation and maintenance. The community sends members of the Technical Committee to visit roadworks in other areas. In this way they are taught the basic skills of labour intensive rural road rehabilitation. The members then return to their respective community prepared to implement their programme having acquired the relevant skills, which are then passed onto other community members during implementation of their roadwork programme. This cycle of training continues for all future areas.

## Implementation

Local communities work on their feeder road network for the pre-determined period of days. The Project assists through the provision of the CRU. Having agreed on the identification and prioritisation of feeder roads as a community, there should be no confrontation between individuals during implementation since everyone is aware of the reasons and benefits of their working programme, with no questions of favouritism.

<sup>1</sup> The CRU is run by the Project, and provides tools, transport, materials and technical advice for rural road rehabilitation.

## Maintenance

Most road maintenance only requires the most basic of skills. A lack of maintenance by communities in the past can partly be attributed to their perception that expert technical knowledge was required.

The project enables local people to acquire all the skills necessary to maintain their own feeder roads. The fact that communities have been involved in choosing the roads themselves, and that maintenance is being carried out on their most important roads greatly improves the chances of those roads standing the test of time.

## Community monitoring and evaluation

All the outputs from the PRA exercises are kept by the Technical Committee for use by the community for the following reasons:

- As a record of the decisions made by the community;
- As a management tool for planning and programming the implementation of the project;
- To enable performance indicators to be set;
- To monitor the progress of roadworks;
- To evaluate the project when completed and to plan future projects; and,
- To act as a record base for future feeder road improvements.

## • Conclusions

It is clear that simple PRA methods enable communities to prioritise their feeder road networks effectively and efficiently. The methods enable people to explain the criteria that are important to them but which would otherwise have been omitted by external technical experts. For example, the external technical experts would use access to farm inputs and depots as an important factor when making an economic evaluation of feeder roads. Table 2 showed how low a rank these criteria were given by people when compared with access to facilities such as schools and clinics.

Through community participation the time spent in relation to the information gained is exponential. In just under four hours a

community is able to locate, identify and prioritise the entire feeder road network in their Ward. Technical experts would find this very hard to match using their techniques. If community members were to be trained in the PRA methods described above they could conduct similar exercises in their own areas. This would enhance the technical experts' understanding of the priorities on which they can then carry out their road inventories and economic evaluations. The end result is a feasibility study that is more thorough, cost effective and has a greater chance of future success as opposed to other alternative external forms of mechanical implementation which continue to leave communities 'watching and wondering'!

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## 5

# Villagers in Sri Lanka plan their future in partnership with government development authorities

**Kamal Kar, Gareth Phillips and Sunil Liyanage**

### • Introduction

The North Western Province Dry Zone Participatory Development Project in Sri Lanka is implemented through the Ministry of Policy, Planning and Implementation, supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and GTZ. Its main objective is to improve the standard of living of the rural poor in the dry zone of the North Western Province. It aims to do this through the formation of village resource management plans, prepared mainly by the villagers themselves using locally trained facilitators and PRA methods.

The following exercise was carried out as part of the project's training programme in which facilitators, core trainers and members of the Technical Support Team put their newly acquired skills to practical use for the first time. The seven facilitators comprised the Technical Support Team from the Departments of Agriculture, Livestock, Engineering, Land Commission and Rural Credit.

### • The challenge

Notwithstanding the extent of NGO work, government departments still remain the single largest implementors of development programmes in many developing countries. As the importance of people's participation in the planning of sustainable development initiatives becomes more widely appreciated, we are thus faced with a new challenge.

Most of the success stories of participatory development approaches to date are being experienced by NGOs who generally conduct

smaller programmes covering a more limited area. Although there have been applications of the methodologies in government field institutions, experiences are rather dispersed and not systematically reviewed. It appears that at present due to international demand and internal pressure the participatory jargon has entered government departments often without substantial changes taking place. Even where the governments of developing countries are gradually bringing in changes geared towards encouraging people's participation in development, the vast and old organisational set-up and traditional functioning of the departments mostly remain unchanged and are designed to implement and administer development activities from the top down.

It has been widely noted that the behaviour and attitude of government officials and field staff are vital for the initiation and sustenance of the participatory process, and are also the key reason for distortion of and resistance to attempts to introduce PRA in government institutions.

However, it is not impossible to bring about the desired change in the functioning of government departments. The participatory approach to development demands a little more time and commitment on the part of officials, a bit of flexibility in the rigid administration, a bit of freedom for the field staff, frequent mobility and also a strong political will.

If government departments are to become successful facilitators and implementors of participatory development programmes, civil servants locked into age old hierarchical bureaucracy and accustomed to top down planning, inflexibility and even an 8 to 5 day, need to come out to the villages with

a willingness to listen and learn. Many of the attitudes and aspects of behaviour of a large number of government employees need role reversal. This is the challenge facing PRA trainers in general and this project in particular.

**The location**

Rajakandayaya is a small village in the North West Province of Sri Lanka. The farming is a mixture of lowland paddy and rainfed upland agriculture with some supplementary irrigation, producing seasonal vegetables and staples such as beet, chilies, pumpkin, maize, cassava and sweet potato. There are some livestock visible and shrinking forest on the tops of surrounding hills. This much is obvious, but how much more could we learn about the community in the next two and-a-half days?

**Rapport-building and information sharing**

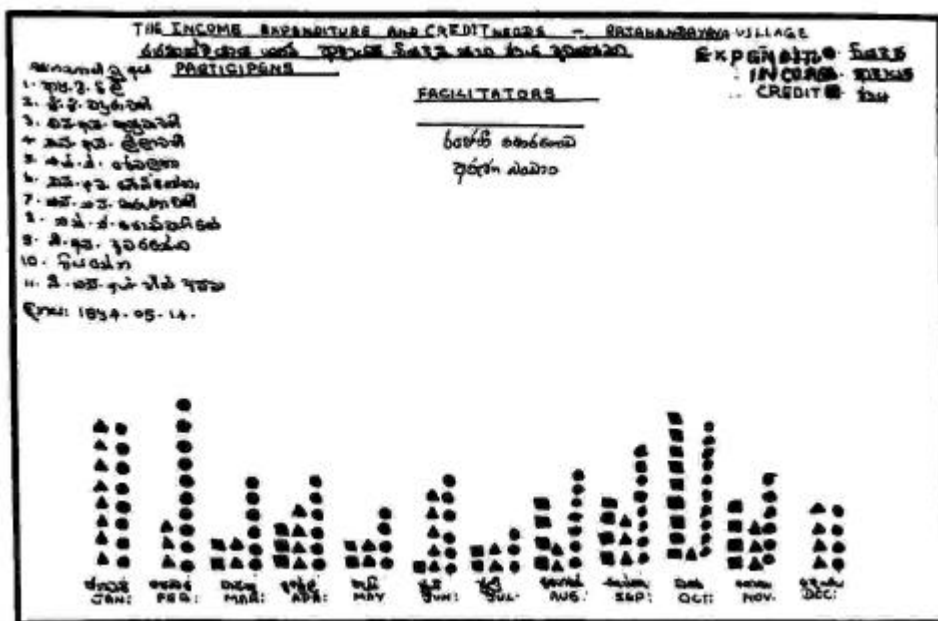
On the first evening, the team arrived in the village and joined in friendly and informal discussion with the farmers. The team stayed overnight in the villagers' houses and the following morning we met in the community hall. When 15 or 20 men and women were present the facilitators gradually started things

moving and a physical map, drawn with chalk on the rough cement floor slowly took shape. After much discussion, the map showed paddy field boundaries, roads, wells, waterways, houses, upland fields and forest. As more farmers became involved, one of us drew some away to discuss productivity trends for different crops. They identified six or seven commonly grown crops and using piles of seed, and later marker pens and paper, identified decreasing yields in several crops.

With four or five women, another team member facilitated a seasonal analysis of rainfall and cropping patterns. This showed that most rainfed crops were grown in the *maha* season from October to January. A species matrix for trees confirmed that *jak* (*Artocarpus hirsuta*) was the favourite tree, closely followed by mango and cashew. Mahogany and teak came close to last. Now familiar with the seasonal analysis technique, Ranjani and the ladies moved on to a seasonal analysis of credit demand, investment and income (Figure 1).

This shows that there is a strong demand for credit at the start of the rainy season in October. This is used to purchase seed and agro-chemicals.

Figure 1. Seasonal analysis of income, expenditure and credit needs



• **Chapatti diagrams**

Some local people were very enthusiastic and late in the evening they came to the house where we were staying. This discussion was lively and resulted in a Venn or Chapatti diagram indicating the relative importance of the women's organisation compared to the insignificant role played by the national banks and other financial institutions (Figure 2).

The most significant organisation shown on the Venn diagram is the *seettu*. This is an informal financial institution managed by the villagers themselves or by specific interest groups. The *seettu* in Rajakandayaya was managed by a group of women. Members of the *seettu* make regular payments into the fund which is used to provide small loans to members in need of credit. Because the loans are small and made to members, no collateral is required. The money is stored in cash in the village so the loans may be made immediately. Borrowers pay 10% interest on a monthly basis and this income is distributed to members on a yearly basis.

The information sharing was now complete and all the tables, charts and matrices were

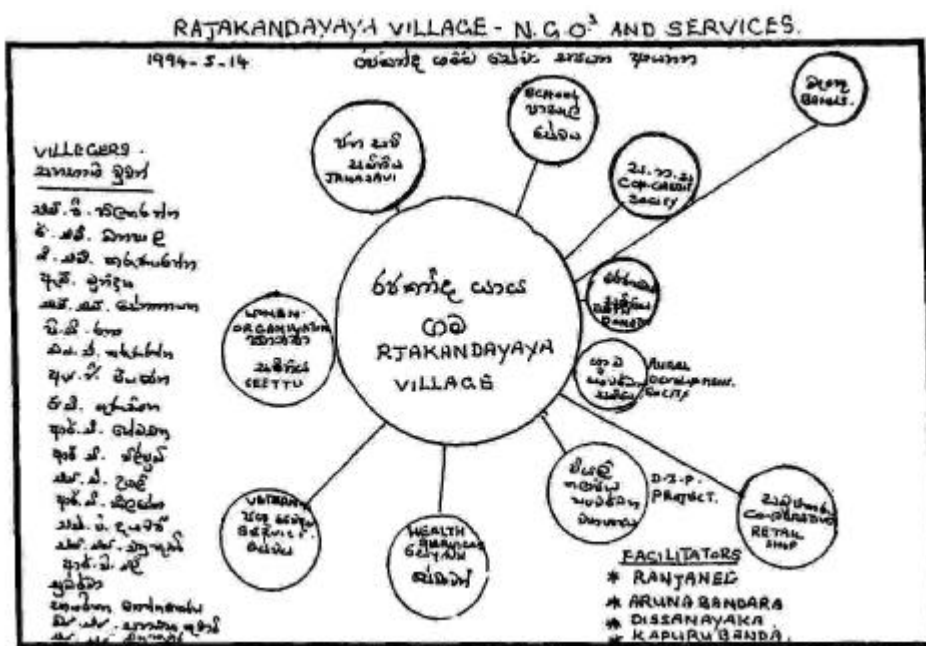
displayed to enable the villagers to cross-check and triangulate the information.

• **Problem identification, prioritisation and participatory planning**

Before breaking for lunch, a group of 11 farmers compiled a list of problems facing upland and lowland agriculture, and presented them to the rest of the farmers. This was very helpful because it focused people's minds on problem identification. When everyone returned in the late afternoon, they were quick to form groups and write down their problems on pieces of card. These problems form the basis of the Village Resource Management Plan (VRMP) (Figure 3) and as we will see, they extended beyond farming.

The importance of identifying the target group became apparent as we moved into prioritisation of the problems. For the wealthy farmers, the lack of permanent housing was the major problem. For the middle and low income farmers the market price for agricultural produce slowly emerged as the major problem, and housing was gradually moved down the list.

Figure 2. Venn diagram







## • The village resource management plan

At this stage, the facilitators were rather disappointed because it seemed that the primary solution the villagers were working towards was one of price guarantees for agricultural products, but when they came to produce their own solutions, the picture changed. The village participants decided that the single most important problem was the poor prices received for agricultural produce. When the harvest is in full swing, prices fall very low but because the farmers are in debt, they cannot wait until the price increases (Figure 1). Without hesitation they decided that rural credit was the solution to this problem, and that all farmers could benefit from it. The other problems identified are listed, along with solutions, beneficiaries etc. in Figure 3.

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## • Conclusions

Our experiences from this exercise are twofold. A high proportion of the facilitators, civil servants from five government departments, found the exercise very rewarding and have demonstrated a strong commitment to the participatory planning approach. This was undoubtedly helped by the attitudes of the villagers, who were enthusiastic from the start.

The transition from the appraisal to the participatory village plan has been very smooth. The rapport building, night stay, application of PRA techniques and triangulation encouraged the villagers to speak spontaneously and without reservation about their problems. The most appropriate possible solutions to the problems, the beneficiaries, the expected costs, villagers' contributions and responsibilities were openly expressed, culminating in a VRMP that included many problems and solutions beyond the scope of what the project can provide support for, but also included problems from four out of five of the areas specifically addressed in the project.

The PRA and VRMP have created a new understanding of the problems faced by the community, and in doing so, they may have helped to encourage the villagers to act together to improve their standards of living.

## 6

## Participation in Scotland: the rural development forestry programme

Andrew S. Inglis and Ann Lussignea

### • Introduction

The use of RRA and PRA in developed countries has been increasing over the last few years, and includes examples from Austria (Kievelitz and Forster, 1994); Switzerland (Scheuermeier and Ison, 1992), Australia (Ampt and Ison, 1989; Dunn 1993), North America (Gaventa and Lewis, 1991) and the UK (Cresswell, 1992) on topics ranging from land degradation and farming research to economic education and health. However, few of the studies have examined in any detail the application of the methodology and how well it transfers to a developed country. This paper deals with one experience in PRA in the planning of forestry activities in Scotland. On the basis of that experience we also make observations on how far PRA may be more widely applied in the Scottish environment.

### • Participation in Scotland

Forestry is a land use with much to offer rural Scotland. However, to date many of the benefits have accrued to interests other than local people, who see the sale of forest resources to local buyers increasing, small nurseries and sawmills closing down, and a decline in local employment prospects. It was in this context that the idea of using PRA in Scotland was introduced by the Scottish Rural Development Forestry Programme<sup>1</sup>. The aim was to give local people a voice in these changes.

The first activity undertaken, for which Reforesting Scotland was given sole

responsibility, was to produce four case studies analysing different local situations regarding rural people and forestry around Scotland. PRA was chosen for this analysis. A major reason for this choice was that NGOs' attempts to introduce change had failed to convince policy makers in the past. We felt that presenting local people's aspirations would be a far more convincing approach in signalling that change was required.

The most widespread form of public participation in natural resource matters in Scotland at present is through the Town and Country Planning system. This is limited to the right to make comments concerning development proposals and further limited by the fact that many aspects of natural resource management fall outside the scope of planning legislation. Other participatory initiatives, such as *Planning for Real* (Gibson, 1994) have been used with great success in urban environments, but whether and how they can be adapted to encompass the diverse problems of rural areas has yet to be demonstrated.

Those involved in this programme who also have experience of overseas rural development forestry work felt that many issues facing the project were similar to those being tackled by many development projects working in developing countries. These include:

- enabling a process through which local people themselves analyse their situation; and,
- including the options and increasing the confidence of those who don't normally get involved in discussing local issues.

<sup>1</sup> Run jointly by three NGOs: Reforesting Scotland, Rural Forum and Highlands and Islands Forum

Thus there was no reason why PRA would not be an equally effective approach in a Northern setting.

Some of the NGOs involved were unconvinced about the value of PRA as an appropriate approach in this context. However, as described below, they too became swept up in the process and realised the value of the approach.

### The case studies

The case studies were conducted from March to June 1994. They were facilitated by different combinations of people at different times. For example a team of 25 people, which included 12 forestry civil servants from India, facilitated the Laggan case study. The studies thus served two purposes; to stimulate a participatory process of analysis and discussion with local people and an opportunity for practical experience for trainees. We were honest with the community about the aims and limitations of the study right from the start. It would have been unrealistic to make false promises that the work would stimulate change. All we could provide was an assurance that we would present people's aspirations and ideas that emerged during the PRA to the policy makers.

The work was conducted in four communities.

Laggan is a small village in the Central Highlands where a group of people from the Community Association have been trying to buy a block of neglected Forestry Commission<sup>2</sup> forest so that they can manage it to provide employment and income for people in the local area.

Tomintoul is situated to the east of the Cairngorm mountains. Most of the land and forest around Tomintoul is owned by the state. The land is managed for tourism and recreation and local people have no involvement in administering its use. People would like to have more access and control over the land and are looking for ways in which to achieve this.

The third community, Carsphairn, is a hilly sheep farming area in south-west Scotland which has undergone rapid commercial

afforestation over the past 50 years. Anti-forestry feeling in the area is strong and people want to gain more local benefits from the forests and have a greater say in decision making over planting and management.

Finally, in the crofting<sup>3</sup> community of Borge on the Isle of Skye, crofters were frustrated in their efforts to initiate an afforestation scheme by the owner of the land. They subsequently joined together to buy the whole township from the landowner, and now plan to go ahead with a tree planting scheme on some of their common grazing land. This is a communal venture in an area which in the past has had very little interest in or tradition of planting trees.

### The process

All the case studies followed roughly the same process. Having introduced the aims and approach of the study to local contacts in the villages, a village meeting was held in a local venue (a village hall or a large room in someone's house). Local people were separated into small task groups to produce social maps, land use maps, seasonal calendars, Venn diagrams, timelines and livelihood analysis charts. These meetings took place in a cheerful informal atmosphere with plenty of tea and cakes, after which local people presented their work back to each other for comment.

The following two days consisted of more focused semi-structured interviews with individuals in their own houses (both those who attended the village meeting and those who didn't) and then a final presentation of information obtained by the facilitators back to local people for cross-checking and comments. During the process different potential benefits that would be derived from local forests were suggested by many of the people. At the end of the process people voted for those benefits they felt would be most important. Each person had a certain number of beans to vote with which they distributed anonymously.

<sup>2</sup> The agency which runs and manages the state forest land.

<sup>3</sup> Crofting is a system of small-scale farming peculiar to the marginal lands of Scotland.

**Table 1. Ranking of the benefits Borve Township can gain from its forestry proposals**

Benefit	No. of Votes	Rank
Shelter for livestock	16	1
Pleasant surroundings	12	2
Employment	11	3
Ease of sheep management	10	4
Timber products for local use	8	5
Income from timber	7	6
Wood-based local enterprise	6	7
Wildlife conservation	4	8
Increased tourism potential	3	9

Table 1 is an outcome of this ranking exercise when conducted in Borve. The table shows that priorities are based on enhancing current farming activities and creating jobs to bring people to, or keep more people in the area.

All the methods worked well and the mapping was especially good. Most groups were very enthusiastic and inventive, others more hesitant. Getting people along to meetings proved the most difficult part but even with this, an amazing amount of information and insight was obtained in a very short time and the PRA was considered a success. At the end, all the maps and diagrams were left with the case study communities. This was a symbolic gesture to demonstrate that unlike more conventional research processes, the information collected was for the use of the local people.

After the Laggan case study we held a slide show to describe the process to the previously sceptical NGOs. Laggan residents with links to these NGOs reinforced the view that the participatory approach had been a success.

#### • **Sustaining the process**

In November, a national follow-up seminar was held. Participants included representatives from each of the case study locations, community groups and local forestry initiatives, forestry and rural development NGOs. The aim of the seminar was to create a level playing-field on

which policy-makers and local people could meet and communicate. To achieve this, the local people presented the case study findings themselves. The impact of this on policy makers was likely to be greater than if the researchers or NGO staff had made the presentation on their behalf. The presentations provoked much discussion and analysis of the opportunities and constraints of the various forestry initiatives.

Local workshops for local forest action planning are to be held in the case study locations and also in new areas. They will provide support and advice for local people in the planning of their initiatives, and PRA will again be the approach taken.

#### **Constraints and opportunities for using PRA in Scotland**

##### **Opportunities**

The use of PRA enabled Reforesting Scotland to allow local people in the case study locations to analyse the situation themselves and to include the opinions and increase the confidence of those who don't normally get involved in discussing local issues. It was found that the approach used was able to get beyond the one or two community activists who tend to do most of the talking at public meetings (Box 1).

BOX 1

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN LAGGAN

Whilst conducting the PRA in Laggan, it became clear that the local people were deeply divided in their opinions about the forestry initiative. About half of the people present were not in favour. The PRA process enabled people to analyse their livelihoods more objectively than they would without the presence of outsiders. Forestry was deliberately not highlighted as a particular issue during this process. During this analysis, it emerged that people were not opposed to the forestry proposal itself - they were against it because of the personalities involved and the domination of the process by certain key activists. The PRA process did not permit domination by these assertive individuals and so ordinary people could make their views heard.

Another advantage of the PRA approach was that it allowed local people to analyse historical changes in local resource management. Complex communal systems of resource use and land tenure existed in many parts of Scotland 300 years ago, but there have been many changes, in particular the dramatic and traumatic Highland Clearances to make way for large sheep farms. Traditional resource management systems have subsequently largely been lost. There are some who believe we need to return to the traditional resource management systems if rural areas are to have a sustainable future.

However, the past cannot be recreated and the Programme is attempting to facilitate a fusion of lessons learned in rural development forestry overseas with a revisiting of old Scottish systems.

Everybody involved agrees that in this fusion process the knowledge and aspirations of rural people are the key to success.

The methods helped to spur people on to further action and created wider local involvement, exposed conflicts, the constraints and opportunities for greater local involvement, and presented an opportunity for many people to put forward their ideas for the future potential for forestry in the areas.

### Constraints

Notwithstanding these opportunities, there are also a number of constraints to the wider use of PRA in Scotland. Firstly, there is no history of participation in Scotland. People instead tend to be reserved when faced with authority. As a result, many PRA techniques can be alien to people. Furthermore, public meetings are very unpopular fora, widely regarded as boring and

futile, and so are rarely attended by ordinary people.

Another problem is that at present there are few trained PRA facilitators in Scotland. The skills needed are ones that are difficult to teach - people must learn by practice and making mistakes, but to do this there must be practical opportunities to learn. Organisations which can act locally need to develop and train their staff for participation and funding bodies must provide the resources for this to happen.

Finally, in many organisations in Scotland are reluctant to incorporate PRA as an approach. They argue that it is not acceptable to transfer a methodology used in the Third World to a country like Scotland. They argue that people are more literate, are likely to be offended by being asked to play games, and do not depend so directly on natural resources.

### Conclusions

On balance, however, there is demand for more PRA work in Scotland. The Scottish Rural Development Forestry Programme will continue using PRA and developing its participatory approaches as the programme progresses. There has also been a lot of interest shown by other Scottish government agencies and NGOs in the case studies and the PRA approach used. Further training sessions will be run.

Obviously there is the need, with all this interest, to ensure that all activities carried out under the title of 'PRA' can be considered good practice. This will require a critical amount of reflection and self analysis on the part of the PRA facilitators, while at the same time being positive about the process and convincing the many sceptics of the potential of PRA for Scottish situations. Not an easy task, but one

that those involved in are taking seriously. It is also acknowledged that changing institutional attitudes and working methods will be a slow process, but those involved are prepared for a long haul.

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#### NOTE

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## 7

## Identifying and tackling poverty: ActionAid's experiences in Vietnam

Carrie Turk

### • Introduction

ActionAid Vietnam (AAV) has been working in Mai Son District of Son La Province since 1989. In 1990 AAV conducted RRA and socio-economic surveys in which the key problems identified by the community were falling agricultural production in the uplands and resultant food deficits. AAV's response was to develop an agricultural programme in which an extension service would promote soil conservation techniques. Agricultural activities began in 1992, and by the end of 1994 there were 1069 adopters across the 2633 households.

Despite the results of the surveys, AAV felt that we had insufficient information on the causes, extent and dynamics of poverty at the village and household level. At this time, the local administration was adamant that all farmers were equally poor and that, on these grounds, there was no need to target assistance at any particular group. This did not fit with what we were seeing in the village. We knew that the agricultural activities alone would not be sufficient to address the problems confronting the poor households, but before designing any more programme components, AAV felt it necessary to conduct further research into the issues surrounding poverty. The research, which is ongoing, has two main aims:

1. to help AAV understand the dynamics of poverty and therefore assist in the design of appropriate poverty-alleviation activities; and,
2. to assist AAV to identify and target the poorest groups and monitor their participation in the project.

This paper describes AAV's work to date on the identification of poverty and the programme interventions we have designed as a response.

### • Identifying the poorest households

Villagers ranked their fellow villagers according to socio-economic status (as defined by the ranker) using techniques which are now widely used by many agencies working in Vietnam. AAV had attempted this exercise as part of the RRA in 1990, but had found villagers extremely reticent on the subject of relative wealth and poverty, shy because of the continual presence of local officials. Two years later, when AAV was free to operate without an official escort, villagers were quite happy to perform this exercise. The results showed a high degree of consensus between the different respondents as to who were the richest and poorest groups in the villages, indicating that wealth differences were quite clear to villagers.

This exercise led to the production of village ranking lists, in which all households are listed along with their socio-economic positions. These lists allowed AAV to locate the poorer households who were subsequently interviewed about their poverty. Perhaps more important than the production of village lists, the wealth-ranking exercise demonstrated to the local administration that there are great differences in well-being among village inhabitants. As a training tool for both our own staff and our local counterparts, this exercise has been extremely valuable.

## Household categorisation and socio-economic mobility

Producing a ranked list of households indicating relative well-being is a fairly simple task. However, defining socio-economic categories to indicate absolute wealth or poverty is more complicated. There are a number of reasons for this, the most important, perhaps, being the lack of clear indicators which may be used to categorise households and the high degree of mobility between socio-economic classes which characterises village life.

### Lack of indicators

The food deficit, which most households use to describe their poverty, is itself an awkward indicator to define. Some households will say they have a food deficit if they are forced to eat cassava or maize ("*animal food*") instead of rice for part of the year. In other households the food deficit represents a real hungry period. Even wealthier households claim to have food deficits because they eat less (although still adequately) during some months than during others.

One might look at the coping strategies that households use to address the food production deficit since rich and poor households may cope in different ways<sup>1</sup>. This is still a formidable task, however. As an example, one might assume that households with outstanding, unserviceable loans at high interest rates might be classified as poor. However, this would exclude some of the very poorest households to whom moneylenders and the formal sector will not lend because they are high risk. It might also include some of the wealthier households who have had access to larger loans for investment. They may currently be in debt, but with the promise of increased income in the future. Their indebtedness may be a sign that their household enjoys relative stability and is in a position to embark on longer term, higher-risk investments. One could also examine the dependence on wage labour as an indicator of poverty, the assumption being that the poorest households are more dependent than wealthier households. This assumption is not yet easy to

substantiate. It is possible, for example, that the returns to day labour are higher than the returns to labour in agricultural production. Work that AAV has conducted in Quang Ninh Province suggests that the returns to labour in paddy production were comparable, perhaps even lower, than returns from other activities, such as collecting shellfish or day-labouring in quarries.

### Socio-economic mobility

The changes in rural Mai Son are bringing increased vulnerabilities alongside increased opportunities for improved well-being. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that relatively wealthy families might find themselves on a rapid downward spiral or that poorer households find that they are able to improve their circumstances. Unforeseen expenditure commonly means that households have to take loans at high interest. This then drains their resources. Illness, for example, may lead to an expensive loan, which may deplete household resources to the point that they cannot purchase adequate agricultural inputs at the right time. This causes reduced agricultural output, which leads in turn to an increased food deficit. The failure of an investment which has been made with loan funds can be similarly destabilising. Where, perhaps for lack of other choices, the preferred investments are fishponds and livestock and where mortality rates can be as high as 50%, this is a common occurrence. Households find it extremely difficult to climb out of this spiral, which can be largely self-reinforcing. But AAV also has tales of households moving quite rapidly in the opposite direction through good investment and, probably, good luck. The upward spiral also appears to be self-reinforcing, but fragile at the same time.

In the face of such mobility, the wealth-ranking lists present a rather static snapshot of householders' status. AAV has tried to develop categories which capture the dynamism which characterises village relations at a given moment. These categories have been helpful in enabling AAV to understand poverty, but have not been easy to apply. This is largely because field workers have had difficulty identifying the differences between the middle two groups. The four categories, which attempt to include what the villagers have told us about wealth and poverty, are described in Box 1. Employment

<sup>1</sup> Details of more in-depth studies on villagers' coping strategies are available from ActionAid, UK.



and debt (plus the direction in which the household is moving) are the two most

important factors in determining which category reflects the conditions of a household.

## BOX 1

**WELL-BEING CATEGORIES AND INDICATORS***A. Leading Rich*

They are rich and will remain rich. They have good and well furnished houses, and large livestock. They are probably educating their children who are well-nourished and healthy. They have good contacts with commune and district officials, may have access to bank loans and may well hold or have held official positions, such as Village Manager. They may employ day labourers and lend rice or cash (probably with interest) to non-relatives. They are likely to take or seek substantial loans, invest them profitably and have no difficulty in repaying. They stand to benefit from Land Allocation Certificates (LACs), which will protect their upland cash-crop investments, but they may resist taking these up if they feel they may reduce their chances of getting more land. Their position is stable and they are unlikely to fall into the lower categories.

*B. Striving Rich*

These households are potentially but not yet prosperous. They are a broad category usually to be found in the upper half of the wealth rankings but some may have been ranked lower because they may live in relatively modest houses and own little furniture. They may or may not be educating their children, some of whom may be in poor health. They may be in debt through investing in new houses or in production (new fishponds, fruit trees, livestock) and would like to invest even more. They have reasonable contacts and are able to get some finance, but not enough to satisfy their ambitions. They may employ labour seasonally but may also seek to work as day labourers themselves on occasions. They do not have the resources to lend substantially to others and may face short term agricultural deficits themselves and have to borrow seasonally. They may seek LACs. They may soon move up to join the Leading Rich (whom they exceed in number) or they may fall.

*C. Aspiring Poor*

It is often not easy at first sight to differentiate between this category and the Striving Rich. The aspiring poor are generally found below the top third of the wealth rankings. They live in run-down houses and their children may be in poor health. They are in debt both for consumption and investment purposes. They do not lend to others. But they are ambitious and usually young households who are looking forward to prospering. They have to supplement farm income with day labouring or self-employed labouring. They are not employers. Some may lose out on the LAC system if their families are still growing and if they- have not taken much upland into use yet. They may go up or down. Their neighbours expect them to prosper.

*D. Vulnerable Poor*

They are invariably found at the bottom of the wealth rankings. They live in run-down houses, and have poorly nourished and often unschooled children. They are in chronic debt and are unable to finance their farming adequately. They supplement their farm income by day labouring (when they can get it) or self employed labouring and in some cases begging. The adults may well be in very poor health and may be elderly or the household may be female headed. They may lack ambition and be perceived by others – and sometimes themselves – as poor managers or lazy. LACs will not help them directly as they have trouble farming the land they hold but may affect their work habits by providing more day labouring jobs. They are a potential future landless labouring class who are extremely unlikely to move up without help.

## • Programme responses to the problems of poverty

AAV has designed a number of programme interventions which we believe to be appropriate to the needs of the poor<sup>2</sup>. The overall aim of the programme is to improve the socio-economic position of poor households, enabling them to take control over key aspects of their daily life. Some activities are designed to address the core problems and some are designed to reinforce coping strategies.

The aim reflects AAV's belief that poor households need assistance first with stabilising their economies before they can be expected to invest in new, often high-risk opportunities. Once households have addressed the fundamental problem of how to cover their annual food needs without becoming increasingly indebted, then it may be possible and attractive for them to diversify their livelihood systems. However, AAV does not expect poor households in the precarious position of insufficient food supplies and dependency on expensive loans to invest in risky enterprises which might jeopardise their livelihoods further<sup>3</sup>. AAV programme interventions are designed with a view to promoting greater stability and to helping households first with their consumption needs. Once the downward spiral of poverty has been halted, AAV hopes that the poorer households will be better placed to participate in and take advantage of the growing market economy in Mai Son. AAV anticipates that it may take a number of years before the poorer households feel secure enough to embark on new activities which will actually increase their household incomes.

<sup>2</sup> Further details of this work are available from ActionAid.

<sup>3</sup> Some householders have been asked the question "how would you measure if your well-being had improved in five year's time?" in order to gauge community aspirations. Those in lower categories felt if they had sufficient food and a tile roof they would be better off. Those interviewed from the top category felt that a fishpond and an orchard - both risky undertakings - would improve their well-being. This has emphasised the need to help poor households find greater stability so that they might then be in a stronger position to take advantage of the new opportunities arising.

## Targeting activities at the poorest

ActionAid has an organisational mandate to help the poorest of the poor. In some programmes in other countries certain activities are targeted exclusively on the poor. Our attempts in Mai Son to target the poorest to the exclusion of other groups have been fraught with difficulties, in particular:

- *Community resistance.* In the communities with whom we are working there has been considerable resistance to the exclusion of households from programme activities. This stems in part from the difficulties involved in categorising the poor, given the high socio-economic mobility. Within communities there is consensus about who are the very poorest households, but above this level there is a grey area with some households moving up and some moving down. This has made AAV's cut-off point (the bottom 50% of the wealth-ranking) quite arbitrary and has led to confusion as to why some households are included in activities whilst others are excluded. Some more resentful households have caused problems for the Programme.
- *Resistance by local project partners.* Our partners have found it extremely awkward standing up to more influential villagers who wished to be included in activities, but should have been excluded on the basis of the wealth-ranking lists. Once some wealthier households were included in the activities, it became very difficult to exclude other wealthier households.

As a result, AAV is no longer excluding wealthier households from the programme. Instead, all extension efforts are directed towards ensuring the participation of the poorest households. The wealth-ranking lists are used for this purpose. Programme activities, such as the savings and credit programme, are designed in such a way as to limit the possibility of wealthier participants capturing the benefits.

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NOTE

This paper draws widely on other work by AAV, available from ActionAid, UK.

## 8

## Some notes on conducting PRA training in Nepal

Saloni Singh and Birendra Bir Basnyat

### · Introduction

In recent years in many developing countries PRA has gained increasing popularity among NGOs as a powerful technique to involve local people in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development projects. Nepal is no exception. Increasingly, the interest of donor agencies in participatory approaches has led many professionals and trainers to conduct PRA training here in Nepal. But they would, certainly, be deeply hurt if they knew that many ex-participants of those PRA trainings argue that they would never suggest any one to participate in PRA training in future. This is, indeed, a serious matter. If anyone is to be blamed for this, we the trainers should appear on top of the list. This is sour and difficult to digest. But providing PRA training has become a 'bread earner' for many of us and lack of seriousness among trainers is a grave matter.

Nonetheless, the purpose of this paper is neither to count the strengths of PRA, nor to make attempts to change attitudes of those ex-participants who have already acquired negative attitudes towards PRA methods. This paper has been prepared in the realisation of the need to share training experiences among trainers. We report on a PRA training course that we gave recently to the field staff of World Neighbours and its collaborating local NGOs - Baudha-Bahunipati Family Welfare Project, Samaj Sewa Samuha, Tamakoshi Sewa Samiti, and the Nepal Agroforestry Foundation. The training was conducted at Hinguwapati, a village in Kavrepalanchowk District, Nepal in December 1993.

### · On participants

In this training the participants were very heterogenous in terms of experience, socio-economic background, educational qualifications, position in the organisations and so on. Often trainers do not like to train heterogenous groups. In the beginning it seemed a challenge for us, but we came to realise that a heterogenous group of participants is an advantage for conducting PRA training. In our view, sharing experiences among the participants was a factor that contributed to the success of the training. For this it is essential that trainers meet some prospective participants beforehand to assess their needs, expectations and knowledge of PRA. Course materials should be prepared in advance, taking into account the needs of such diverse groups.

### · On entry to the subject

Before starting the training course our major concern was how to introduce PRA to the participants. Should we start by defining PRA, or by discussing why PRA is conducted? In both cases, the danger loomed that response from the participants would be minimal and that we would be delivering a one-way lecture, counting the strengths of the PRA, as if we were suggesting a new approach to replace the old traditional one. We wanted to avoid the emergence of this top-down situation.

After hours of discussion amongst ourselves, we decided to start the session by asking the participants to list the characteristics of development workers who they feel are responsible for the unsatisfactory performance of many rural development projects. To our satisfaction this question proved a good entry point to the PRA training. The participants

listed a number of practices/behaviours that we could easily relate to the professional biases often described by Robert Chambers. We passed nearly a whole morning session discussing these issues which enabled us to then introduce PRA. The participants seemed so convinced about the need for a participatory approach that their participation in the following training sessions was fully motivated and exciting for us.

The purpose of this argument is not to suggest that the question we asked is appropriate and should be used as a model or blue-print to start a training course on PRA. It is obvious that the question depends on the nature of participants and situations. But we do want to argue that it is beneficial to start PRA training by not entering directly into the subject, but with a question such as the above so as to motivate participants as to the value of learning PRA methods. A hasty introduction to the subject might lessen the interest of the participants.

#### • On the training session

We have observed that in Nepal, PRA training courses last anything from 3 to 15 days. Of course, the duration of training depends on the subject areas to be covered, the nature of participants and so on. However, a long PRA training seems rather a waste of resources and confusing for the participants. For development practitioners or field staff who have no earlier exposure to PRA methods, an initial training of 5-7 days seems optimal. It is our contention that one can never learn PRA methods unless one practises them. In the beginning, only a few methods should be introduced and participants should be encouraged to practise them. Indeed, PRA is a new culture to many people, demanding unlearning of many things that they have been doing/practising for number of years.

For field practice participants were taken to the settlement of Judi gaon. Judi gaon has 58 households, most of which (more than 90%) belong to the *Danuwar* tribe. Although the villagers were earlier briefed about the purpose of the training, their participation and cooperation during the training period was exciting, encouraging and motivating.

Following a set pattern of discussion, practice and reflection each day gave the participants confidence in their work and training. Participants were asked to carry out triangulation each day with the farmers before using a new method. Reminding participants regularly about the basic guidelines for conducting PRA is important. Because the core of good PRA is based on specified behaviours and attitudes, these should be restated and reinforced many times during the training session.

#### • On closing the training session

The closing event is very important for every training session. Our prime concern over the training period was how to close the training session so that participants would go back to their jobs, not only with continued motivation for PRA, but also committed to practising it honestly.

Firstly, discussing dangers for PRA was a good start that made all participants realise the potential problems. Secondly, we told the participants that they were now the graduates of the PRA training and therefore, eligible for receiving PRA's *Mul Mantra* (*Mul Mantra* is a Nepali term which approximately means fundamentals to PRA that one should not forget over one's life as *mantra*). All the participants were delighted and they seemed eager to hear that *Mantra*. For this we gave them two words: REAL and LEARN.

	R	-	RESPECT FOR THE PEOPLE
	E	-	ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO SHARE IDEAS
REAL	A	-	ASK QUESTIONS
	L	-	LISTEN CAREFULLY
	L	-	LISTEN
	E	-	ENCOURAGE
LEARN	A	-	ASK
	R	-	REVIEW
	N	-	NOTE

Because the training was conducted in Nepali, we tried to find Nepali equivalent terminologies for the above terms. However, we could not find a better translation that would really solve our problem. Reluctantly, this time we had given this *Mantra* in English. This was liked very much by the participants. It really touched their heart. They pledged to

practise it all over the rest of their life. Our search for the equivalent terms in Nepali continues.

Thirdly, in response to increasing demands for a manual by the participants, we decided to distribute a manual for PRA methods - said to be used by the Krishi Gram Vikas Kendra of India. The book was completely blank except the last page which contained the message:

"USE YOUR OWN BEST JUDGEMENT AT ALL TIMES"

Showing the cover page, we told the participants that they could ask World Neighbours to buy a book for each of them, should they think that the book was useful. Each of them was given one minute time to go over the book. Many participants were surprised. How could they assess the value of such a big book within a minute? We insisted that the book can be evaluated in one minute. Upon the circulation of the book all participants except one were delighted and happy. Since we had no way to know how participants would feel react, and whether they would take it seriously or as a joke, we had been a bit concerned and were pleased with the outcome.

However, one participant seemed angry that we were making a fool of him. His anger was a shock for us. We tried our best to explain our reasons for handing out the book. Our intention had been to stress that everyone should take responsibility for what he does. At the end he was convinced and we were pleased that we were able to further enhance the value of the training. Had he not expressed his dissatisfaction, we might not have an opportunity to further reinforce the idea what we wanted to emphasise at the end. Indeed, it was a good lesson for us. We learned many things from this last exercise. Our sincerest thanks go to him.

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## 9

## Storytelling for Participatory Rural Appraisal

Wouter T. De Groot, Franke H. Toornstra and Francis N. Tarla

### • Introduction

This paper describes how we designed and tested storytelling as an approach during a PRA training course in Cameroon. Besides being the oldest form of entertainment, storytelling may well be the oldest 'method' people use to transfer culture and to discuss moral dilemmas. The rural areas of the developing world still abound in stories, hidden in people's heads and seldom told to strangers. One of the sources of our idea to test storytelling as a PRA method may have been a romantic wish to participate in this hidden world! But on a more rational level, we felt that storytelling can have three main functions in rural development work:

1. *For teaching.* Stories designed for this can convey an image in the minds of the storytellers to those of the listeners. Communicating through storytelling can be much deeper and more relaxed than through direct teaching. A good story and story-teller can easily involve people for half an hour on an issue that might normally cause embarrassment or conflict. This would not be possible using direct questioning, for example "*Don't animals have rights too?*" or "*Do you think you should protect nature?*".
2. *To elicit discussions.* Stories can be designed to articulate a problem in the village, in which the storytelling medium serves to create an open discussion platform, enhancing the self-help capacity of the village. For this purpose, the content of a story will closely resemble the actual situation in the village, and should be told in such a way as to generate intense discussion among the villagers.

3. *For learning.* In this function, stories are designed for communication in the opposite direction to that of the 'teaching stories', namely, from the villagers to the researchers. Stories are especially appropriate here for discussing sensitive issues. Although not expressly designed for this purpose, the trial story in Box 1 can be used as an example of this, since it aims to present the issue of the role of religion in environmental matters.

### • The trial stories

The storytelling exploration described here was part of a course on general problem-oriented methodology and PRA held at the Centre of Environment and Development in North Cameroon. During a preparatory meeting of the PRA group, two stories were tested for their form and content. They were told by the authors to the rest of the team. The first story is reproduced in Box 1.

The line-by-line format of the story was chosen because the stories needed to be translated into the local language in the villages. The short lines mean that the translator does not have too much to remember. This resulted in a slow but natural narrative flow. The same format was also chosen by the farmers themselves when they told one of their own stories back to the PRA researchers. Another aspect of the story's form is its 'forked' structure. Two alternative decisions are put to the people in the story, and then later to the listeners.

## • The village stories and discussions

After the teaching sessions the PRA group was separated into three teams to use storytelling and other PRA activities in three villages. The villages were located in landscape typical of the Sahelian zone (800mm rain per year) of North Cameroon, just south of the Waza National Park.

On the fourth day, all three PRA teams began the storytelling sessions in their villages. The basic content and structure of the stories told in the villages were essentially the same as the trial stories. However they were enriched with all kinds of agricultural and environmental details learnt from the village histories and other results of the preceding PRA work in the village.

The story-telling often took place at night, around the fire. During the preliminaries of one story-telling session, the translator spontaneously commented that the white man (one of the authors) would now relate a story told to him by his grandfather. We were concerned that this would confuse the villagers. However halfway through the second story, the village headman interrupted saying *"This may be the story told to you by your grandfather, but I have lived it!"*.

In most cases, the stories provided a useful entry point for intense discussions. In the third village the stories did not evoke much discussion, however. People merely voted for one piece of advice or another, and that was it. This may have been a result of the setting; in a special storytelling session around a fire in the dark you don't discuss agricultural problems, you want the next story to come!

The third story told by the PRA team in the third village addressed the conflict of interest between people and nature. It had been written just a few hours earlier, triggered by what people had said about their difficulties with the

authorities of the nearby Waza National Park. The story focused not on the usefulness of nature for local people but on nature's intrinsic value. The role and horrible fate of the hyena, much applauded by the listeners, had been added because a hyena, looking for a goat to eat, had to be chased from the village just the night before. It is printed in Box 2 because it illustrates the flexibility of the story-telling medium (please note that due to space restrictions, the story is not arranged by line as the trial story was). This is also the story people later said they liked best.

After the story had ended the people voted to leave the animals in peace, without any discussion. Does this really indicate a general attitude towards nature? Or does it mean that people would leave the animals in peace if only they would really come and ask? Or were people just being friendly to the storytellers? Here we were left with a feeling that a story like this may be a powerful medium to involve people in the point of view of others (even nature), but that its status as a valid tool to elicit true attitudes is very uncertain. We felt we had experienced an instance of participatory teaching rather than of participatory learning, having used storytelling for the purpose it has had since time immemorial, that is, the conveyance of culture from the storyteller to the listener. But it was greatly enjoyed by both parties, and what would be wrong in participatory teaching, if there really is something worthwhile to teach?

In the third village, after three stories had been told by the PRA team the people told back two of their own. The stories told by the villagers were very similar in style to those told by the PRA researchers. They posed a moral question to the listeners and ended in a question. It is quite possible that the storytellers chose question stories as a response to the three stories they had just heard. However, it proved that the question form of our stories was not strange to our listeners.



**BOX 1**  
**TRIAL STORY**

A long time ago the earth was still young ...  
There were many trees with all kinds of fruits ...  
There were many plants with tubers you could eat ...  
There was wildlife all around.  
And people? They were only very few ...  
They gathered the wild fruits and the tubers ...  
They hunted the wild animals ...  
And life was good. God provided for everything ...  
People took their food straight from God's creation.

But slowly, times began to change ...  
People multiplied, there were more and more of them ...  
They needed more and more fruits and tubers ...  
So that the fruits and tubers could not regrow sufficiently.  
They hunted more and more wild animals ...  
So that the animals became less and less.  
People went around hungry ...  
They did not know what to do ...  
So they went to ask their wise men.  
There were two of these wise men ...  
And what they said was very different.

The first wise man spoke as follows:

"God has created everything ... He will never let us die.  
Our problem is just a test of our faith in Him ...  
So be patient, trust in Him ... God will provide!"

The second wise man spoke as follows:

"God has created everything ...  
But if we take away all trees and animals ...  
Where can His blessings go?  
God has blessed the trees and animals with a capacity to grow ...  
But if we take too many, how can they work for us?  
We should not first take everything ...  
And then hope that God will change His own laws.  
So this is what we must do:  
We should prepare a field and take some grains ...  
Plant them and take care of them ...  
So that the grains will grow in great numbers.  
We should take some wild animals, bring them to our houses ...  
Breed them and take care of them ...  
So that they can multiply, and we will have a herd.  
Then God's blessings will come to us again!"

The people had listened well to both the wise men ...  
Both of them had said something really wise ...  
And people wondered which of them they should follow.

.....  
Now, we would like to know your opinion ...  
Which wise man do you think the people should follow?

BOX 2

**NATURE PROTECTION STORY, NAMAREDJI VILLAGE**

In the beginning of the earth, God created people ... and He also created the animals. In those times, there were many animals, But there were not many people. People hunted the animals. But because the animals were so many, they did not mind very much. After many years passed that way, times began to change. People learned how to make fields and to keep cattle. So there was less forest... And people also continued to hunt... So that there were not so many animals any more.

The animals began to worry. And they decided to call a big meeting. The lion was there, he was the chairman. The elephant was there, to keep everyone in check. The rabbit was there, running around to inform everybody. All animals were present .... Except the hyena... The hyena was away stealing a goat from the people's village! But the animals did not like the hyena very much anyway ... And they had their meeting. The animals said:

"Look at us, we are not many any more! People make fields so that our forest declines. People hunt us so that we die...What shall we do?"

After long deliberations, they reached a decision. They would send the rabbit to find out what the people were up to. So the rabbit ran to the village. He listened to what the people were saying around the fire ... He laid his ears on the walls of the huts to listen ... And then he ran back to the meeting of the animals. He said to them:

"I have listened everywhere ... I have come to know the law that people have concerning the animals. People say that they are higher than the animals. They say they are closer to God than are the animals. Therefore, it is permitted for the animals to work for the people. And it is permitted for people to make fields and animals have to go. And it is permitted for people to hunt animals. But the people also have a second law ... The donkey, they say, must work for you ... And if it does not want to work, you are allowed to beat it. But you are not allowed to beat the donkey just because you feel like it. You are not allowed to beat the donkey just for fun. Man is higher than the animals, but God also takes care of the animals. That is what the second law says ... God has created the animals not only to serve people. Therefore, people are not allowed to beat the animals, Or hunt the animals, just for no reason."

The animals listened to the rabbit, and they discussed what he had said. Finally, they agreed with what the rabbit had told them. They said:

"This must indeed be God's law!"

And they went their way. A long time went by, and people became more and more numerous ... The forest became less and less, and people hunted more and more ... So again, the animals convened a big meeting. The lion was there again, roaring loudly. The elephant was there, standing very still.

The rabbit was there, eager for a new job. Even the hyena was there... He had just been chased away from the village... The animals said:

"Look at us! How few we are now! We used to be so many, but now we are the last! There was a time that we could go everywhere ...And now we have only this single little place to go! Another twenty years, and not one of us will be left... There will be no more lions left, no more giraffes, No more elephants, no more bush pigs, No more antelopes, no more monkeys, No more turtles, no more eagles ...Not one of us on the whole earth!"

The animals discussed this situation, and they made a decision. They would go and talk to the people.

And beg them to think about their laws. So the animals discussed which of them would go. The lion wanted to go, But the animals said people would be too afraid and flee. Also the hyena wanted to go, but the animals said:

"No! You only want to go steal another goat! You cannot go!"

contd...

They decided that three animals would go: The turtle because he could speak well ... The elephant because he would look impressive, so that people would listen properly ... And the rabbit to be counsellor, and to run back if things should go wrong.

So, the delegation started out towards the village. After a while, they saw the hyena ... The hyena was secretly following them. The elephant became very angry. He shouted:

"I know you only want to steal a goat when we are talking!"

Then the elephant lifted his big foot and stepped right on the hyena!  
But the hyena was quick ... The elephant caught only the hyena's tail ... The hyena cried and begged:

"Please lift your foot off my tail! I promise never to steal a goat anymore!"

But the elephant did not believe him ... He stood silent like a rock, not lifting his foot.  
The hyena pulled and pulled, until he broke free. But his tail was still under the elephant's foot ... That's why the hyenas have no tail, up to this very day.

The turtle, the elephant and the rabbit, having got rid of the hyena, continued on their way ...  
Until they arrived in the village. All the people gathered around, and sat down.

The turtle began to speak ... he explained:

"You have a law that says that man is higher than the animals. But you also have a second law A law that says that God also cares about the animals. We have become fewer and fewer  
Now we have come to you to beg. We no longer have a place to go.  
Please do not make more cropland. Please do not hunt us anymore.  
Please do not bring your cattle to our forest."

The people of the village discussed this, and they said:

"We do not only hunt you ... you also hunt us! Will the hyena not come anymore to steal our goats? Will the birds stop eating our millet? You come to ask for something, But do you give anything in return?"

The turtle said:

"We cannot promise much. After all, we are only animals. The hyena, you know, will always be a bad guy, even without a tail! But you may chase him away anytime he comes!  
And maybe, if we are with more animals again, you can hunt again."

The people discussed this, and they said:

"Why do you come to us? Why don't you go and ask other people?"

The turtle said:

"We are sorry. We cannot help this. We have no other place to go.  
The only place left for us is here, with you."

.....

This is the end of our story ...

Now, we have a question for you.

The people of the village could decide between two things.

Either they could take away the last piece of forest from the animals ...

Or they could decide to leave the animals in their last home ...

Even if this would mean that the people would have less fields and less cattle ...

And visits of the hyena ...

What do you think the people of the village should decide?

## • Conclusions

Environmental scientists often find themselves in a difficult moral situation. Researchers concerned with environmental protection will often need to share, discuss and negotiate with people the difference between their problems and environmental problems, such as the impact on downstream populations, on nature and on future generations. Storytelling may be an appropriate way to enter into this process.

It is often said that PRA methods should be fun, giving back to the villagers something in return for their precious time. In that sense, storytelling is a perfect method, also for the researchers. This is especially valuable because going into sensitive or difficult matters such as village conflicts or abstract responsibilities can easily become boring or create tensions and biases. An obvious addition to the work reported in this paper would be to tell and discuss stories with men and women separately.

All in all, we hope to have indicated in this paper that storytelling can be a valuable addition to the PRA repertoire, adaptable to many questions and situations. We also hope that other researchers will apply the method and share their experiences with us.

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### NOTE

This paper is based on a longer version, available from Wouter De Groot at the address below. The full version provides the entire text of 12 stories, including those told by the villagers to the researchers.

### REFERENCE

De Groot, W.T. 1992. *Environmental Science Theory; Concepts and Methods in a One-World, Problem-Oriented Paradigm*. Elsevier

## 10

## Using PRA for a radical new approach to adult literacy

David Archer

### • Introduction

One of the often-quoted roots of PRA is the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire whose own predominant focus of work was in the field of adult literacy. It is thus surprising that developments in PRA have not fed back into advances in adult literacy methodology. ActionAid is now attempting to close the circle by drawing on the principles and visualisation techniques of PRA within three adult literacy programmes in Uganda, Bangladesh and El Salvador.

### Freirean theory

Freire is now almost universally quoted as the inspiration behind adult literacy programmes. He believed that reading the word must be linked to reading the world and that adult literacy should thus be linked to a process which he called "*conscientization*". Literacy classes should allow people to reflect on local problems which will lead to action to address those problems. To achieve this the traditional hierarchical relations between the teacher and learners must be replaced by a "*dialogue*" between equals.

Freire used "*codification*" to develop such a dialogue. Codification is a visual image which represents local conditions. In theory these codifications enable learners to gain a distance from their daily lives while allowing them to analyse them. "*Generative words*" are linked to these codifications. These words, which arise from the vocabulary of the learners themselves, are broken into syllables and rebuilt into new words by the learners, enabling them to understand the structure of written language and thus learn to read and write.

Freire's work is notoriously difficult to read. A good foundation in political philosophy helps before reading key works "*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*" or "*Cultural Action for Freedom*". It is thus not surprising that most people who refer to Freire have not actually read his work. This has led to widespread distortions and abuse.

### Distorted Freirean practice

Most literacy programmes around the world that claim to use Freire's methods are in fact seriously distorting both his theory and his methods. These pseudo Freirean programmes have reduced his method to the use of a literacy 'primer' (or textbook) which has a series of photographs or pictures on social issues linked to words that are regarded by literacy planners as socially relevant. Most primers are produced in urban areas or after cursory surveys of rural areas that are generalised for whole regions or countries. Even where primers have been produced locally after serious research, the fact that the result is packaged in a primer presents serious problems.

In most cases literacy teachers are not the expert educators Freire had envisaged. Usually they are from the same community as the learners. Often they themselves have completed just six grades of primary education, or two or three years of secondary education. They receive one or two week's training - and then they are set loose with a primer and a teacher's guidebook, expecting to generate profound dialogue on local issues using codifications (which at the end of the day are just a set of pictures), generative words (which are just words) and a list of (pre-defined) questions. In many cases the common response to their questions is embarrassed silence or single word answers. Within a few weeks most facilitators

have given up trying and get on with what they see as the 'meat' of literacy, the mechanical teaching of reading and writing, often falling back on the methods they know best - those they learnt from themselves in school. The result is that adults are taught like children, literacy classes are boring and there is a high drop-out rate.

There are exceptions. In some highly politicised literacy programmes the facilitators are keen to keep the focus on social issues. But in these cases, without an adequate methodology for generating dialogue, the result is usually that they attempt to impose a new consciousness on learners rather than allow learners to analyse their own problems.

In my experience, I estimate that there is no dialogue in about 95% of literacy classes. Literacy has become detached from other development programmes and there is widespread doubt about the value of adult literacy at all. Most programmes are failing even to teach basic literacy skills. A recent World Bank discussion paper estimates that literacy programmes over the past 30 years have had an effectiveness rate of just 12.5%.

### **The new approach**

This analysis has led ActionAid to develop a new approach to literacy, based on PRA techniques. The new approach has become known as the REFLECT approach (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques). The approach seeks to build on Freirean theory but provide a more effective methodology by drawing on PRA visualisation methods.

In the REFLECT approach the literacy primer is abolished. Each literacy circle develops its own learning materials through the construction of local maps, matrices, calendars and diagrams. These techniques can effectively help to create the Freirean dialogue which is so elusive in most literacy programmes. As in PRA, these maps or matrices are initially constructed on the ground using locally available materials. They are then translated onto large flipcharts using visual symbol cards as a guide.

This step is fundamental. The move from three dimensions (on the ground) to two dimensions

(using pen and paper) is the first step to literacy. The problem we encountered was that literacy facilitators are not great artists and yet we could not use words to copy the maps. We have thus developed for each programme a set of about 100 visual symbol cards (simple drawings of local crops, activities, illnesses, etc. designed by a local artist and pre-tested). These act as the bridge. In many cases learners add their own cards (and even replace the pre-drawn cards with their own). Interestingly the learners can often draw better than the facilitators. This humbles the facilitators on their own territory (using pen and paper) and gives learners confidence. It is also a lot of fun!

Once a map or matrix has been transferred to flipcharts words are introduced on the flipcharts, either as labels (next to pictures) or comments and observations. Initially just one or two words will be chosen so that all essential syllables (the building blocks of language) are covered. As the course progresses more language is introduced. For example, an agricultural calendar can generate a whole vocabulary around local crops and agricultural activities. A big emphasis is then placed on learner generated writing, so learners are writing phrases to describe the graphics, or paragraphs about their discussions, from an early stage. The writing of local history in Uganda has been particularly exciting, with learners writing remarkable stories in their mother tongue (a language that had never previously been written) within a few months.

In each of the three pilot projects we have developed a sequence of about 30 different types of diagram (maps, matrices, calendars etc.), always seeking to use graphic techniques which will draw out local issues. For example land tenancy maps appear in El Salvador where land reform is a key issue after years of civil war; gender based household decision-making matrices appear in the programme with Islamic women in Bangladesh; and mobility maps are used in the isolated region of Bundibugyo in Uganda.

At the end of the literacy programme the learners have collectively constructed a detailed diagnosis of their villages with complementary records and testaments written by community members whose voice was probably previously unheard. This represents a systematisation of local knowledge, attitudes and perspectives

which places literacy in its true context - not as the only real knowledge (which many literacy programmes implicitly assume) but as itself a set of techniques that can help to reinforce existing knowledge.

In the process we have found that many local community activities have been promoted. These have varied from tree nurseries to demands for focused training courses in agriculture or health (with learners outlining the training agenda), from low-cost drinking water projects to programmes to systematise knowledge of local medicinal plants and herbs. Literacy has become organically linked to wider development - with the learners as the driving force.

### • **Some concerns**

#### **Are we manipulating communities?**

The use of PRA techniques for literacy programmes may raise some concerns for PRA practitioners. It does not appear to be an open-ended process. We are introducing the techniques with a view to teaching literacy rather than using them to let local people decide what they want.

However, it must be stressed that in all cases the literacy programme arose at the request of the communities. It was not (and never should be) imposed! We are therefore responding to one request and enabling people in the process to identify other issues and other needs. We are not using literacy or numeracy as a way of transferring development information to the community. Rather, literacy and numeracy become additional tools to help the community determine their own development. The process of the literacy programme also provides a space for them to reflect on their needs.

Literacy skills often prove useful in addressing many of the other issues that arise through this process of reflection. So the process becomes mutually reinforcing. For example, if the learners wish to receive specific training then the literacy skills help them to keep records of the training. If the learners identify the need to put pressure on a government agency which is failing then letter writing is often an effective aid. As learners begin to take control of their

own development agenda, literacy skills become strengthened.

#### **How can facilitators be trained?**

One major concern is training for the facilitators. How can we expect them to use PRA techniques effectively when they have little education and training? In practice we have found that this is not such a problem. Indeed, the construction of different graphics is often a very structured process which is much easier than trying to structure a dialogue without such methods. Once the learners become familiar with the techniques they take over themselves and the facilitators do not need to play a central role. In all the pilot programmes the facilitators come from the communities where they teach so they become simply another participant. The problem of developing a rapport between 'outsiders' and the community is no longer an issue. In the three pilot programmes the facilitators have been selected by the communities where they teach, with the fundamental criteria being mutual respect (between facilitator and learners).

The pilot programmes have normally given ten days initial training to facilitators. Within this the emphasis is on practical field experience of the PRA techniques. This is a good foundation but it has to be supplemented by ongoing training. In each pilot we have fortnightly or monthly facilitators' workshops where facilitators exchange experiences of the previous period and prepare (and practice) for the following period. In Uganda these exchange workshops are self-sufficient, involving no external trainers. The training is also sustained through a manual for the facilitators, which provides a clear structure for each unit.

#### **How can you triangulate for accuracy?**

Another issue raised by PRA practitioners looking at REFLECT is how can you triangulate to verify the information? The literacy class is only one section of the community and will, in many cases, not reflect the full diversity of community concerns. Some therefore argue that the information is of limited value.

This concern seems to me to be misplaced. The objective of REFLECT is not to do an appraisal to get verifiable knowledge which can be extracted and used for planning by an external agency. Rather, with REFLECT, the PRA techniques are used as part of an internal community process. The product of the group reflects the knowledge, perspective and attitudes of that group and the function of the systematisation of these is internal. If the external agency which has planned the literacy programme wishes to use the information then there may be a desire to triangulate for verification. But in such circumstances the external agency will probably be planning programmes for various communities, and by comparing the graphics produced by different literacy classes they should be able to get a more objective view.

With the REFLECT approach then, we are handing over PRA principles and methods to the communities. Over a six or nine month period the learners within the communities do their own detailed appraisal without external intervention. The issue that has arisen in some cases is not so much the objectivity of the information but rather how the literacy circle relates to the wider community. If solutions to local problems have been identified and discussed in the literacy circle it is not only for the participants in the literacy circle to engage in the consequent actions.

In this context the first step of the literacy circle is often to share the results of their analysis with others in the community, in community assemblies or through regular meetings with community leaders. The literacy participants can use the graphics as the starting point to explain their concerns and can even suggest that certain PRA techniques are re-performed with the whole community (or by separate groups within the community). In many communities in El Salvador the literacy circle has initiated monthly meetings with community leaders to discuss the issues that have arisen and plan ways forward.

#### • **Initial results**

The results of the pilot programmes using REFLECT have been very exciting. Initial observations are that REFLECT is keeping learners motivated, teaching them literacy more

effectively and linking literacy to wider development based on the agenda of local communities. The three pilot projects are now being evaluated using PRA methods and a report on the projects will be available by the end of the year. The facilitator's manuals used by the pilot programmes and many other documents (including the proceedings of an International Workshop on REFLECT held in Bangladesh in November 1994) are available now.

Even before the full evaluation, REFLECT is spreading. There are now REFLECT programmes planned in ten countries. For further information (and to be put on the mailing list of the emerging REFLECT network) contact ActionAid.

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## 11

## Participatory approaches to HIV/AIDS programmes Semi-special issue

Alice Welbourn

### • Introduction

Welcome to this semi-special issue on participatory approaches to HIV/AIDS. We welcome not only our regular readers, mainly practitioners of general participatory development, but also those who are directly involved in HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support work. We hope that this issue will help all development workers to increase their awareness of the influence of sexual health in general, and HIV in particular, on their work. Similarly, we hope that this issue will show HIV workers how participatory approaches can help them learn about the specific contexts of the communities with whom they work. In particular, this issue shows how the use of PRA can help people to feel empowered to address the issues around HIV for themselves. This empowerment, perhaps beyond all else, is our main weapon in the fight against the combined forces of fear and discrimination which feed the spread of AIDS.

This introduction will look first at some personal and professional aspects of HIV for development workers. This will be followed by a brief overview of the papers presented in this issue. I then conclude by returning to the mutual benefits of HIV work and participatory learning approaches.

### **Fear and stigma as a bar to learning**

We need to acknowledge our own individual responsibility for prevention of HIV and care of those with HIV. People are often unaware that they are infected with HIV for several months, or even years, until symptoms begin to appear.

Even when symptoms begin to appear, they may not be immediately recognisable as HIV. People with HIV can continue to lead normal, healthy, productive lives for several years after becoming infected. Therefore, most people do not realise that they may be infecting others (through, for instance, sex without a condom or donating blood) until a long time after the event. HIV is no respecter of different groups of people. Yet those with HIV are often greatly stigmatised and thus fear to speak openly about it. In this way, the opportunity to learn from them of their own experiences is lost. The best door to learning, through peer education, stays firmly closed. What can we as development workers do about this?

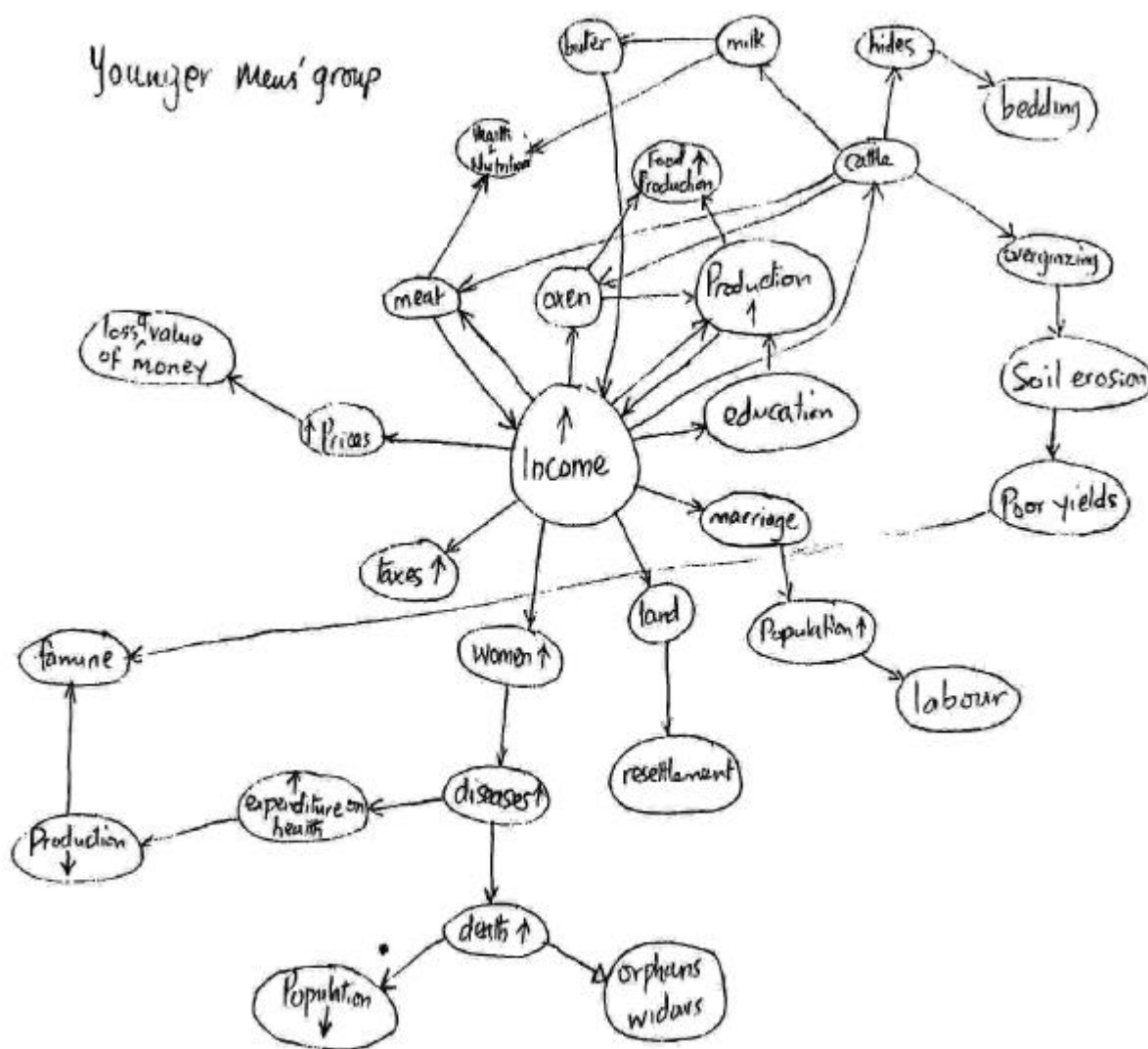
### **A personal level: AIDS affects all of us**

As development workers we have often set ourselves apart from those with whom we work. Slowly, through the adoption of PRA and other participatory approaches, we have appreciated that community members are not different from us after all, in terms of intelligence and knowledge. The major differences between development worker and community member lie, not in these matters, but in access to opportunity, to education and to cash. Through PRA we have learnt that our role should not be to lecture at community members, but rather to empower them to develop their own solutions to the problems they face. This approach recognises that we have little to offer in the way of answers. Instead our potential strength lies in the role of facilitating a learning process in which the main actors and decision-makers are community members themselves, and in which we too as development workers have much to learn.

As we see the increasing social, economic and psychological pressure which HIV and AIDS is having on individuals and communities around the world, it is our responsibility as development workers to turn our new-found learning to address AIDS. Much early HIV work focused on a top-down, ABC approach to

the problem: "Abstain, *Be faithful* or use *Condoms*". Predictably, this approach had little effect. Thus HIV workers have started to use approaches such as PRA which begin with what community members themselves understand about the issues.

Figure 1. Flow diagram showing effects of increased income



## A professional level: how AIDS is a development issue

As development workers we need to recognise that our development interventions may inadvertently increase rates of HIV transmission amongst target communities. We have a responsibility to help communities to recognise this possible outcome and to define ways for themselves of limiting the possibility.

Figure 1 illustrates the kind of problem which faces many of us. It was produced by a group of young men in Seroti in Eastern Uganda, during a PRA training workshop<sup>1</sup>. Seroti is a drought-prone area where livestock are of great economic importance. The young men had been asked to comment on the likely effects for them of increased income, brought about by a planned re-stocking programme in the area. Such programmes, if well planned and managed, are generally considered to be valuable ways of helping livestock owners to get going again after a period of drought.

The men quickly made wide-ranging links to many different aspects of their lives, including labour, population, soil erosion, taxes, food production and so on. Of particular interest here is the direct link which they made with women. They expected the number of sexual liaisons they would have with women to increase, and described how this would lead to an increase in sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. They foresaw that this would result in increased health costs, death, orphans, widows and famine, and reductions in production and population. A grim picture. But these kinds of perceived connections on flow diagrams are not isolated<sup>2</sup>. We as PRA practitioners know and have repeatedly documented the interconnectedness of people's lives. We understand how all these things link together. So how

should we respond? We need to acknowledge that AIDS is a part of the whole picture and needs to be addressed as such. Otherwise, as many parts of the world are now witnessing, the most economically productive members of communities will die out.

### • In this issue...

The four papers presented here highlight some of the exciting contributions which participatory approaches can make to HIV work in Africa and in Asia.

Ssembatya et al. write about their work in south west Uganda. This paper shows how effective PRA can be in enabling community members to recognise the relevance of various aspects of their lives to the spread of HIV. Through a variety of mixed and single-gender group activities, the authors enabled people to recognise when they are most vulnerable to HIV infection. The women and men remarked on the usefulness of what they had learnt, as did the staff involved. This new-found knowledge, which included a recognition of the links between money, gender relations and sex, was then used by community members to discuss possible alternative strategies which might reduce the risks of infection.

Dusit Duangsa's article about innovative HIV risk awareness work in Thailand explains how important it is for people to learn "*that they are not passive victims of the AIDS problem, but there are things they can do to prevent, control, and live with, AIDS.*" The article describes how PRA AIDS awareness sessions ask people of the same gender, age-group, social or marital status to work together to assess HIV risk for different sub-groups in their community. Through a gradual process of discussion, division and linking, participants grow to recognise that all members of their community, themselves included, are in some way at risk from the virus. This exercise has been carefully described and clearly has a powerful effect on the participants. As Dusit points out in the conclusion, this is, of course, only a starting point which then needs to be followed up with a wide range of learning activities. To leave a group with no more than this initial exercise could create more harm, in terms of fear and prejudice, than good. But Dusit is certainly aware of this.

<sup>1</sup> This was conducted in November 1994 by Redd Barna. Trainers were Irene Guijt of IIED and Tony Kisadha of Redd Barna.

<sup>2</sup> See also Redd Barna and IIED 1994 *It is the Young Trees That Make a Thick Forest* for another Ugandan example. For examples from Zimbabwe see Welbourn, A. forthcoming: *PRA, Gender and Conflict Resolution: Some problems and possibilities* in Guijt I. (ed) *The Myth of Community: Gender Issues in Participatory Development*. IIED, London.

Roger Chamberlain's piece illustrates how communities in western Kenya are being challenged through drama to reconsider their attitudes towards HIV. The acting is used as a tool for exploring different people's perspectives towards traditional practices within the community (such as 'widow inheritance'), as well as towards more recent problems, such as teenage pregnancy. Through drama, actors and audience have a chance to explore different situations. The audience can directly question the motives of the actors, or can take to the stage themselves in their own attempt to handle the situation more effectively. Whilst the acting sessions were initially designed to work with young people, the work team soon found that whole villages flocked to the events. This enabled an invaluable interaction and sharing of perspectives between community members. The drama facilitated a spontaneous shift in the attitude of the audiences. As Chamberlain points out, and as with the work of all the authors contributing to this semi-special issue, it will be interesting to see if and how such attitude shifts are translated into practice.

The last article is also from Kisumu in Western Kenya, where Sellers and Oloo describe the careful strategic planning on which their HIV work is based. Their article explains how the communities with whom they work asked them for counselling and testing facilities. The authors quickly recognised the importance of providing such facilities in a coordinated framework of HIV prevention work, based on the communities own perceptions of all the related issues. This article sets out how they planned and undertook five-day exploratory sessions in each village. Once more, issues around access to and control of money between partners were perceived to influence STD and HIV transmission. And once more, the authors state *"villagers feeling powerless... is giving way to a feeling that they can take on the responsibility and actually do something to change the situation."*

#### • **HIV and PRA: contradictions or synergies?**

One thing which has struck me about good HIV workers is how much they have learnt to challenge their own beliefs, attitudes and practices in the process of becoming good listeners, communicators and facilitators. They

have had to do this to develop the trust of those with whom they are working. Those of us involved in general development work have rarely faced the need to do this in the way that HIV workers have. There is much that we can learn from them about this. At the same time, however, HIV workers often face the challenge of addressing an issue which communities rarely want to discuss, let alone prioritise. How do we introduce a subject that is usually not a perceived need? Surely this contradicts all that good PRA has taught us about putting community groups' priorities first?

I believe that the use of PRA has tremendous value here. Communities are already fully aware of the inter-relationships between gender, economics, power and sexual health. If HIV workers or general PRA practitioners elsewhere ask communities the right questions, similar maps, seasonal calendars, flow diagrams and other charts could be produced in abundance. Sexual health is always an issue in every community and, though they may not be explicitly aware of it until they start to address it in this way, people very quickly describe how it links to so many different aspects of their lives. All that the facilitators then need to do is to add *"and what about HIV?"* The communities can then already begin to see the potential impact of HIV for themselves, as they look again at their own diagrams. And as we have seen from the articles here, in communities where HIV is already of some concern, PRA can also play a central role in empowering them to take control of the situation.

In conclusion, we hope that you find these articles stimulating and we look forward very much to receiving your comments and accounts of your own experiences. If we receive enough articles, we would hope to have another semi-special issue on HIV and AIDS. Let's make it soon!

• **Alice Welbourn**, c/o IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, UK.

#### FURTHER READING

If you are a PRA practitioner wanting to learn about AIDS, here are a few good references:

*AIDS Action*: a regular newsletter, published by AHRTAG, at Farringdon Point, 29-

35 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3JB, UK. Free to developing countries.

*AIDS is Our Problem*, in six parts. Arid Lands Information Network, 1993 and 1994. Available from ALIN, Casier Postal 3, Dakar-Fann, Senegal. Cost £1 each. £6 for the set.

*Living with AIDS in the Community*. A small booklet outlining basic facts about HIV and AIDS, which also corrects some common misunderstandings and false assumptions about the virus and its transmission. WHO Global Programme on AIDS. 1992. Based on work done by TASO, Uganda. Free to developing countries.

*Strategies for Hope*: a series of booklets and videos about good AIDS prevention, care and support programmes in different parts of Africa and Thailand. The next booklets in the series will be about Ivory Coast and India. Available from TALC, at PO Box 49, St. Albans, Herts. AL1 4AX, UK.

*Talking AIDS*: A guide for community work. IPPF. Macmillan. 1988. A guide for those wanting to develop AIDS prevention work. Cost £2. IPPF, Regents Park, London, NW1 4NS, UK.

*The AIDS Home-Care Handbook*: A large manual. WHO Global Programme on AIDS. 1993. Based on work done by organisations in Uganda and Zambia. Free to developing countries.

## 12

## Using Participatory Rural Appraisal to assess community HIV risk factors: experiences from rural Uganda

Joseph Ssembatya, Anne Coghlan, Rachel Lumala and Deo Kituusibwa

### • Introduction

The Rakai AIDS Information Network (RAIN) used PRA methods to help community members identify and analyse factors which put them at risk of HIV infection. This article describes the different methods used and what community members and programme staff learned about community HIV risk factors.

### HIV infection in Uganda and Rakai district

Of Uganda's 19 million inhabitants, over 1.5 million are estimated to be infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The first known Ugandan cases of AIDS appeared in 1982 in a small fishing village in Rakai District. Rakai is a rural district located in south-west Uganda two hours by road from the national capital, Kampala, and borders on Tanzania and Lake Victoria. HIV prevalence rates in Rakai have now reached epidemic proportions. The overall HIV prevalence rate in the District is 13%, however, rates vary considerably by geographic locale. For example, it is estimated that 39% of all adults in main road trading centres are HIV positive, 25% in rural trading villages on secondary roads, and 9% in rural agricultural villages (Wawer, 1991).

The major modes of HIV transmission in Uganda are through heterosexual contact and from mother to child (vertical transmission). Because of the nature of HIV transmission in Uganda, the devastating impact of the disease on geographic communities and limited government resources, it is essential that communities be involved in promoting sexual

behaviour change and sustaining AIDS prevention programmes.

### The Rakai AIDS information network

The Rakai AIDS Information Network is an Ugandan NGO with the goal of reducing the spread of HIV infection in Rakai District. It is run and managed by health care providers, health educators, counsellors and trainers from Rakai District. The organisation's strategy is to provide integrated AIDS prevention interventions within a community-based health care framework. Its programmes include community-based health care (CBHC) which trains village health committees, community health workers, and traditional birth attendants. The training includes basic community health care but with a special emphasis on HIV prevention. RAIN also conducts a peer education programme for village youths, consisting of a three day training on HIV prevention and condom promotion. Finally, RAIN has an HIV counselling, testing and medical treatment programme which operates through eight decentralised sub-clinics. Both the CBHC and peer education programmes are community-based, with community members selecting amongst themselves the participants to be trained. In addition, community members are responsible for implementing programme activities within their own communities.

In 1993, the Chairman of RAIN attended a Ugandan Community Based Health Care Association/World Neighbours participatory rural appraisal training. The training focused on using PRA for general community health. However, the Chairman thought the methods might be particularly useful in helping community members and programme staff explore factors which put people at risk of HIV

infection. Thus, in 1994, RAIN facilitated PRA sessions in two rural high HIV prevalence areas.

### • **Methods used and lessons learned**

In order for community members and programme staff to assess community HIV risk factors, we used several different PRA methods. These included mapping, seasonal calendars and men and women's 24-hour activity clocks.

#### **Mapping**

Participants organised themselves by village. Each group then drew a map of their village on the ground, using locally available materials such as ash, beans, maize and stones. They first identified the physical features of their communities such as hills, swamps and roads, followed by social features such as homes, churches, schools, and agricultural lands. For each house, participants also identified residents by age and sex and the number of deaths that had occurred in the past 12 months. Participants were also asked to identify which deaths were caused by AIDS. However, because of the stigma still attached to the disease, participants declined to do so.

The village maps were transferred onto paper, and then presented to the group at large. By identifying the number of deaths in the past 12 months, participants realised that there had been at least one death in each home. Although the causes of death were not identified, participants knew that many were in fact caused by AIDS. By seeing the amount of death, participants came to realise the prevalence of AIDS within the community and the implications this has for the community's survival. Next, participants identified specific locations that might put them at greater risk of HIV infection. For example, they identified drinking establishments at which residents often drink alcohol and take outside sexual partners. They also identified isolated areas, such as wells and wooded lots, where women are at risk of being raped.

As solutions to these problems, men proposed that all drinking should be done during the day and that they come home early in the evening. Women suggested that they should go in groups to collect water and firewood, and decided that

no water should be collected at night. Some men also offered to accompany their wives and one even said *"I shall do the collecting of water to avoid the risk."*

#### **Seasonal calendar**

A group of about 12 community members also created a seasonal calendar on the ground to identify seasonal health risks. Participants marked the 12 months of the year on the ground and then indicated the amount of rain or sunshine within each month. Under each month, participants then identified the prevalence of both malaria and diarrhoea. When finished, participants transferred the chart to paper (see Table 1).

While analysing the chart with the group, knowledgeable participants related the prevalence of the two diseases to the amount of rain or sunshine. A good portion of the participants were surprised. They had previously thought that malaria and diarrhoea were caused by eating certain foods, such as maize or mangos, which are present at specific times of the year. The facilitator then asked, *"Does HIV transmission have a season?"* He expected participants to say no because transmission occurs throughout the year. However, programme staff and many community members were surprised when a village elder stood and said, *"Yes, in our own community here, we have found that when it is harvesting time and men have money, even a lady ... will accept (to have sex) because she knows he has money."* To investigate this further, the facilitator added a third row to the chart and asked participants to indicate the prevalence of HIV transmission in each month. They said transmission was greatest in June, July and August. The facilitator asked why and participants explained that these are the harvesting times for maize, beans and coffee. Thus, these are the months men have money to spend on alcohol and additional sexual partners. Participants added that transmission is also higher in March and December. This is because men often sell their stored crops to prepare for the Easter and Christmas holidays.

**Table 1. Seasonal calendar**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rain or sunshine	##	\	\\	\\\	\	#	###	##	\	\\	\\	\
Malaria	mm	o	o	m	o	mmm	mm	o	o	o	o	m
Diarrhoea	d	ddd	d	x	x	d	dd	d	x	x	x	d
HIV	h	h	hh	h	h	hhh	hhhh	hhhhh	h	h	h	hh

Key: #=amount of sunshine  
 \=amount of rainfall  
 m=prevalence of malaria  
 o=absence of malaria  
 h=prevalence of HIV transmission  
 d=prevalence of diarrhoea  
 x=absence of diarrhoea

Community members, and particularly housewives, then realised that there are certain times of the year when they are at greater risk of becoming infected. To counteract this risk, members proposed different solutions. As one women said, *"I have learned that ... during harvest season, people need to safeguard one another."* Another women said, *"Men should take precautions, they are the ones going out."* This finding also has important implications for RAIN's programmes. As said by a staff member at the exercise, *"This is new to me. Now I know we have to intensify educational efforts and distribute more condoms at specific times of the year."*

### Twenty-four hour activity clocks

The final exercise was for women and men to create their own 24 hour activity clocks. The purpose was for participants to identify the differences between the amount of work women and men do and to reveal leisure time which might lead to risky behaviours. Men and women formed separate groups of about 15 people each. Each group discussed what they generally did for each hour of the day and an elected person took notes. Members of the two groups then transferred the notes onto paper and presented them to the group at large for analysis and interpretation.

The clocks revealed that in the morning hours women generally wake up, *"play zigido"* (a reggae-type of dance used as a euphemism for sex), clean the house, prepare tea, cultivate, collect firewood and water, and prepare lunch. In the afternoon, they usually eat lunch, make handicrafts or *"play zigido"*, cultivate, collect firewood and water, and prepare dinner. At night, the women continue preparing dinner, feed their children and husbands, eat, sleep and

*"play zigido"*. In the morning, men generally wake up, *"play zigido"*, take tea and cultivate, trade, fish or repair bicycles. In the afternoon, they bathe, eat lunch, and rest. Some will then resume work, or *"go boozing"*, play board games or *"go looking for sexual partners"*. At night men listen to the radio eat supper sleep and play zigido.

After each group presented their clocks the general question, *"What have we learned?"* was asked. An elderly man stood and said, *"I have learned that women have more activities than me"*. Another said, *"We give them all the work and I only realise that now."* A lively debate then ensued about what constitutes men and women's work. Some men saw the need to better share the work and started to negotiate with the women. One man said, *"If she goes for firewood I will go for water"*. But another man added *"We need to help one another but do not let it lead to conflict. If we get water then don't tell us to also get firewood."* A woman then boldly added, *"Men, we work and work and work and then you ask for sex. We are tired. Men should reduce the time for zigido."* A man then asked, *"Women which should we reduce sex or work?"* Another man said, *"We need to sit together with our wives and decide ... We should schedule the activities including sex."*

By comparing their activity clocks, participants also identified several HIV risk factors. First they saw that men have a lot more leisure time than women some of which is spent drinking alcohol in local bars and having outside sexual partners. The facilitator pointed out that, *"You men leave all the work for the women and then you go out and bring back the virus."* Men also came to realise that because their wives are so tired they sometimes go to other women for sexual satisfaction. As one participant said,



*"The women because of all the work get old soon and look not so nice so we go for other women."* However the group realised that by having partners outside of their marriage they put themselves and their wives at greater risk of HIV infection.

The proposed solution was again for husbands and wives to sit together and decide how to better share activities. That way women would be less tired and the men more occupied.

## • **Conclusions**

PRA methods were useful in getting community members and programme staff to identify, analyse and address sexual practices which put people at risk of HIV infection. Through mapping, participants were able to identify physical locations where they would be at greater risk. By creating a seasonal calendar participants saw that they might be at greater risk at certain times of year. The 24 hour activity clocks revealed that men have a fair amount of leisure time in which they can and do engage in risky behaviours and that women have an unfair burden of work.

These methods enabled community members to identify problems and find solutions themselves. This in turn may lead to more sustained behaviour change than conventional education information campaigns. Staff also learned more about local sexual practices and were then able to make educational and condom distribution programmes more appropriate. Finally PRA provided the means for men and women to discuss and even negotiate the sensitive issues of work and sex.

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## 13

## A participatory approach to promoting AIDS awareness in Thailand

Dusit Duangsa

### • Introduction

An educational war on AIDS has been declared. Sort of. Newspapers, radio stations, and television channels have been bombarding the public daily with frequent slogans and statements on AIDS. It is difficult not to be subjected to such ubiquitous slogans as *"AIDS is incurable; once you have AIDS, you're bound to die"* and *"AIDS can be transmitted in 3 ways: through sexual contacts, sharing needles, and from mother to baby"*. People from all walks of life, including schoolchildren and rural folks, can recite these slogans, correctly and proudly. As in the case of parrots, however, the head is not really registering what the mouth is reciting, and the heart is far from feeling moved.

The problem with the AIDS prevention and control campaign in Thailand, as we see it, is not that people do not know about AIDS. It is that people do not feel personally involved. Yes, AIDS is incurable, and it can be transmitted in three ways. But it is somebody else who is at risk. It is somebody else's problem. So let it be somebody else to do something about it. It is this none-of-my-business attitude that seems to be prevalent, despite the enormous amounts of money already spent on trying to educate the public about AIDS.

### • Critical principles for addressing AIDS

We have learned that in order to have an effective AIDS educational campaign, it is important and necessary to adopt different approaches and techniques, based on different

concepts and principles. Some of the concepts and principles we have found to be critical in addressing the AIDS issue are as follows:

- That AIDS is not a medical problem that can be solved through medical measures complete with medical facts and figures. Rather, it is a social problem that needs to be tackled with a good understanding of its socio-cultural dimensions and implications.
- That AIDS is not only a global or national problem. The important thing is that, in our local community, there are now people who are infected or who are dying of AIDS, and there will be AIDS babies and orphaned children whose parents will have died of AIDS. Therefore, AIDS is a local problem that is very real and that we cannot run away from. And efforts must be made to bring the problem to a local level.
- That AIDS can be contracted by anybody, not just the so-called risk groups such as homosexuals, prostitutes, and intravenous drug users. Hence, it is imperative to personalise the AIDS problem, to convince people that each one of them can be at risk in one way or other.
- That people learn less from listening passively to an expert's lecture, and learn more from being actively involved in their own learning, investigating the problem, searching for alternatives, and planning for action. Therefore, AIDS education must be highly participatory in its approach and process.

- That people learn best in a group situation, where data and information can be discussed and validated, problems and experiences can be shared, solidarity and support can be counted on. A good group process not only promotes intense individual learning but also a powerful group learning that can lead to significant action;
- That people have to know they are not passive victims of the AIDS problem, but there are things that they can do to prevent, control, and live with, AIDS. It is of utmost importance that an AIDS education campaign be an empowering process, with a stress on the positive, and a focus on action.

With these concepts and principles in mind, we have found PRA to be a useful tool for creating AIDS awareness. Using PRA to promote AIDS awareness is still quite new, but it holds considerable promise. During the past few years, in various AIDS-related projects funded by Redd Barna-Thailand, we have tried it with different target groups in different contexts, including rural and urban school children, young people in urban slum communities, migrant construction workers, and housewives in rural villages. It has always worked.

### **Using PRA to promote AIDS awareness: techniques and outcomes**

A PRA AIDS awareness session is usually conducted with a group of between 8 to 12 people. Members of the group may be of the same gender (such as an all-woman group), age bracket (such as youth members), social status (such as community leaders or health volunteers), or marital status (such as housewives or male heads of households); or the group may consist of members of different sub-groups. Members of the group should be familiar and on friendly terms with each other, as well as with the PRA facilitator(s).

PRA sessions are conducted, ideally, with participants sitting in a circle, on the ground or floor, with the facilitator sitting on the same level, to help establish an atmosphere of equality and mutual respect. Materials used consist of various kinds and sizes of seeds and beans, leaves and sticks, stones and pebbles,

paper and markers. In brief, items that are available locally and that participants are familiar with.

Through a process of discussion and validation, the participants divide members of their community into as many groups as possible. These groups, typically identified as housewives, male heads of households, young people, babies, schoolchildren, pre-school children, the elderly, and community leaders, will be further categorised into smaller sub-groups. For example, 'young people' may be divided further into such sub-groups as teenage boys studying in school, young men working as hired hands during the day, young men working night shifts at the local slaughterhouse, young intravenous drug users, young girls commuting to work in town, and so on. Likewise, 'housewives' may be divided into such sub-groups as fun-loving and promiscuous wives, bingo-playing housewives, housewives working in factories, etc., and 'male heads of households' may be divided into such sub-groups as men patronising prostitutes, men working night shifts, long-distance truckers, day labourers, etc. Participants are encouraged to formulate their own definitions and criteria for creating groups and sub-groups based on specific realities of their community contexts.

When all the participants are satisfied with the categories of groups and sub-groups they have created, they are asked to rate and rank these groups and sub-groups in terms of degree of risk for contracting the HIV virus. This usually involves a lively session of discussion and debate on who may be at risk, through what means, who is more at risk than whom, and why. The degree of risk perceived for each sub-group is indicated by the number of seeds (beans, pebbles, or whatever is used) allocated to it. Thus the sub-groups with the most seeds are perceived to be at most risk. All the sub-groups are then ranked by the number of seeds allocated, to see which sub-group is perceived to be at the most risk, and so forth. The participants will look again at the finished rank-order, to make sure that it is acceptable to them. Any objections will be settled through more discussion and debate.

It is interesting to note that, at this point, participants of all PRA AIDS awareness sessions we have conducted have arrived at

typically the same pattern of ranking. Highest on the list, thus perceived to be at highest risk, are always the prostitutes, the young gay men, the intravenous drug users (both young men and male heads of households). These are followed by men who patronise prostitutes, promiscuous housewives and men, long-distance truckers (who are said to drink and frequent brothels en route), young men and young women who go to work in town, and practically all others who are highly mobile (who are said to be more involved in risk situations). Ranked lowest on the list, on the other hand, are always the housewives who stay at home, the babies, the pre-school children, the schoolchildren in early grades of primary schools, and the elderly (who are said to be *"too old for that kind of thing"*). These sub-groups are perceived to be at no risk or at very low risk for contracting the HIV virus, because they do not practise risk behaviours at all.

This pattern typically changes, however, in the next exercise, when participants are encouraged to take another look at the sub-groups and try to make connections between and among them. Lines are drawn to denote relationships between the various sub-groups. As participants start to see more and more lines connecting different high-risk sub-groups of men with 'housewives who stay at home' and young women, and then on to babies and pre-school children, it gradually dawns on them that even the sub-groups who are not engaged in any risk behaviours at all are not risk-free. The housewives/young women are likely to contract the HIV virus from their roaming husbands/boyfriends and probably pass it on to their babies. Even the pre-school children and schoolchildren who do not contract the virus will most likely become orphans if both their parents have AIDS. The exercise typically ends with the startled realisation that practically everybody is at risk, and that actually everybody will be affected by the AIDS problem. Including himself or herself.

## • Conclusion

Such is a basic PRA AIDS awareness session. Other variations and improvisations have also been tried on various occasions. We have tried shifting the focus to assessing risk situations and risk behaviours in the local community, or assessing the potentials of different groups and

sub-groups in managing the community's AIDS prevention, control, and/or living-with-AIDS campaigns. We have also tried to combine using PRA with other media and activities, thus turning the basic awareness session into a complete learning process, by adding the use of flipcharts to provide more knowledge and information on AIDS, showing a selected AIDS video-drama to induce more emotional response, demonstrating how to use condoms properly and having the participants take turn practising, and distributing easy-to-read and simple-to-understand leaflets on AIDS for future reference. We have also combined PRA with other participatory techniques, to involve the participants in prioritising and planning the action to be taken in their own community regarding the AIDS problem. It is believed that there are countless possibilities for using PRA in AIDS education.

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## 14

# Participatory educational theatre for HIV/AIDS awareness in Kenya

Roger Chamberlain, Mindy Chillery, Lenin Ogolla and Ochieng Wandera

### • Introduction

CARE Kenya's CRUSH project on HIV/AIDS works in Kisumu District in Nyanza Province, Western Kenya. CRUSH stands for Communication Resources for Under 18s on STDs and HIV. It is a programme for out-of-school youths which aims to prevent and control STDs and HIV. The programme also seeks to enlist adult support from communities for youth education programmes for AIDS prevention and control. I was approached by CRUSH to collaborate with them on developing the drama and theatre component of their project.

Drama, being one of Kenya's most popular and accessible communication mediums, has great potential as a more effective, interactive approach to HIV/AIDS. Being the most social of the art forms, drama uses the tools of myth and metaphor, which are common to all societies but are a particularly familiar and real part of the society and cultures of Kenya. However, many of the dramas previously produced in Kenya for HIV/AIDS work have consistently assumed a non-participatory, lecturing approach which has been unsuccessful at attracting and sustaining audience and participant interest.

### Participatory educational theatre

CRUSH and I proposed that one way to strengthen Kenya's present HIV/AIDS efforts would be through Participatory Educational Theatre (PET). PET is an educational theatre methodology which uses a participatory approach to allow the audience to probe, reflect on and respond to issues which concern them.

This approach poses questions and problems, rather than supplying answers and solutions. The aim is to bring about change in the target community's perception of the world and themselves as individuals within it. By changing perceptions we do not simply mean raising awareness, but allowing the community to examine their attitudes towards the unresolved dilemmas and contradictions presented in the drama which reflects their lives.

A PET project aims to communicate first to people through their emotions and to then allow the participants to reflect on and examine these feelings objectively. The PET projects thus form two main stages:

- The scene is set by the actors/educators through short episodes of scripted theatre; and,
- Through the role of the facilitator, the audience is invited to participate to help solve the dilemmas presented in the initial scenes.

This participatory approach provides opportunities for:

- community members to interrogate both characters and situations within the drama;
- empowerment, by allowing the participants to intervene and determine the narrative sequence of the drama;
- involvement of the participants in the contradictions and paradoxes raised by the drama; and,
- improvisational role-playing to allow participants to put themselves in the position of the characters in the drama.

## • PET in Kisumu

My collaboration with CRUSH involved working with two groups - the Kama Kazi youth group in urban Kisumu and the Apondo youth group near rural Ahero. My brief was to direct an educational theatre piece for each group to perform in the 14 sub-locations of Kisumu District where CRUSH works. Both projects had to be in the local language and would be performed outdoors during the day. The target group was to be young people between the ages of 12 and 18. However, this changed once we began touring as we found it impossible to separate the rural youth from the village as a whole.

An initial month was spent talking to the two groups about the impact of HIV and AIDS on their communities. During this time I also met artists and educators working locally from whom I recruited two local counterparts and an expatriate volunteer<sup>1</sup>. Following these discussions, we started the two PET projects. The aim of each project was to address the issues relating to HIV and AIDS which CRUSH had identified as priorities for the under 18s. These issues included child and youth sexuality; modes of transmission and prevention; and barriers to the adoption of preventative measures such as peer pressure, traditional customs, religious objections and other personal and social dilemmas.

The starting point for both projects was the imaginative ideas about HIV/AIDS that the two groups of young unemployed school leavers created. From the material they generated, we structured a series of improvisations and other drama tasks. The important aim in developing the material was that it always remained the groups' own. Whilst we provided the structure, they provided the content. After working on the material we would always take it back to them to discuss and to develop further.

## Red ribbons for you? Sigand Tom - Ngimani gi Thoni?

The above *Dhuluo* title for Kama Kazi's PET project means "*Tom's Story - Your Life and Death?*". The narrative traces the life of a young man, Tom Omondi, through infancy, puberty, adolescence and young manhood up to and immediately following his death at the age of 23. He contracts the HIV virus whilst studying at university. Some other members of his immediate family and friends, whose stories are interwoven with Tom's, also contract the virus at other points during his life. In fact it is Tom's father, Samuel, who is inadvertently infected, who triggers off the chain of infections in this particular group of people.

### The creative process: participatory decisions and discoveries

A storyboard provided the central educational, aesthetic and visual stimulus for Tom's story. The storyboard is neither a conventional theatre set nor a conventional teaching blackboard but a three-dimensional resource which combines both. For *Red Ribbons For You?* the storyboard consisted of three joined sheets of plywood which were painted with an overall design, onto which the central questions relating to each of the nine scenes were hung separately using hooks (see below). A storyboard is intended to invite informal interest, provide a focus, and ensure a common theme runs through that day's participation. Rather than perform the project on a raised stage with distance between the audience and the drama, it is better to present the project outside, perhaps under a tree with audience on three sides and the storyboard making up the fourth side.

<sup>1</sup> The other authors of this article.

## The storyboard questions

<b>THE FUNERAL</b>	<b>CHILDHOOD GAMES</b>	<b>TEENAGE ANXIETY</b>
Why is everyone fighting at Tom's funeral?	Are children aware of sexuality when playing "Mothers and Fathers"?	How did Tom and his friends first learn about sex when they were young teenagers?
<b>PEER PRESSURE</b>	<b>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>THE TRIANGLE</b>
What were the pressures on Tom to make love for the first time?	What went wrong for Tom after he'd made love for the first time?	What is Tom suffering from? Is it demons? Is it AIDS? Is it <i>chiraa</i> *?
<b>THE MEDICINE MAN</b>	<b>REJECTION</b>	<b>DELIRIUM</b>
Can the Medicine Man, or religion, cure Tom of AIDS?	Why did Tom's younger brother, Mike, kick him in the teeth when he was down?	Why did Tom attempt to commit suicide?

\*Chiraa is a traditional Luo illness resulting from the breaking of a cultural taboo. If it is not dealt with in time by the performing of certain culturally prescribed rituals, then death will be the certain outcome. Naturally, the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Western Kenya is complicated by such customary beliefs, together with others such as wife inheritance by one brother on the death of another; and Ke, the obligatory performance of sexual intercourse by all immediate members of the family before dispersal following a funeral.

Tom's story was broken into nine separate free-standing sections, each of which would make sense in their own right, but when linked together would equally make sense as a whole, rather in the same way a jigsaw does. This element of puzzle-solving is a very important element in encouraging participation. Each section of scripted theatre varies in length between 7 and 15 minutes. The duration of the participatory drama which follows each section is entirely in the hands of the community and facilitator. It usually lasts between 15 and 75 minutes. There is no reason why the project has to be confined to a single day. It could be phased over a week or even two months. This is especially so if you want to integrate the project as a specific educational resource within a broader pattern of PRA activities.

Allowing the community to choose the sequence of the nine sections themselves gives them control over the process. We select the first and last section for structural clarity and they determine the seven sections between. They choose a section they want to watch by selecting a question they want to answer. When a question has been selected that particular question board is unhooked by the

facilitator to reveal a symbolic design<sup>2</sup>, visually summarising the question, and the actor/teachers act the chosen section.

The nine central questions are carefully selected and phrased to penetrate the heart of the specific strands of CRUSH's HIV/AIDS aims and objectives. The questions are designed to be provocative and alluring, thereby engendering informal discussion amongst the community and with us from the moment of our arrival when the storyboard is put up.

### The role of the facilitator and the actor/teacher

A facilitator acts as a bridge between the actor/teachers and the community to assist with their understanding and eventual participation. The facilitator's role is crucial in the steady development of the community's active involvement. After each of the nine scenes is acted, the facilitator encourages the community to participate in the drama themselves. By putting themselves into the

<sup>2</sup>The symbols were designed and painted by a local artist who is a primary school teacher, and therefore in touch with the community.

shoes of one or more of the characters' predicaments community members can try to stop them contracting the HIV virus (see Box 1).

This allows the participants to view themselves from the safety of an 'other'. Instead of feeling exposed and vulnerable, as often is the case when we are being ourselves, under the guise and protection of a role we can express and explore our attitudes and emotions without fear of being laughed at. The facilitator's style must genuinely indicate at all times an openness, a humour, an egalitarianism and an unselfconscious lack of authoritarian status if he/she is to establish and then sustain a meaningful rapport with the community.

In the case of these two PET projects the two local language speakers in our team of four initially acted as facilitators. Over time they

trained the volunteer members of the youth groups to take over this role. In subsequent PET projects, facilitators have been drawn from volunteer community health workers recruited from local villages.

The actor/teachers must be able to interact with any new character the community deem as being necessary in their attempts to resolve the particular dilemma, for example a neighbour, relative, elder, chief, counsellor, doctor, medicine man, peer, etc. They must also be open to partially or wholly changing either their attitude and/or behaviour, but only when the community has provided persuasive enough arguments. When this happens it invariably results in a moment of spontaneous applause and celebration. Those are the moments to cherish, when you really know what PET is about and what can be achieved with any community (Boxes 1 and 2).

#### BOX 1 PET IN ACTION

At one point the community watches a scene where one partner has the HIV virus (in this case a nurse, Joan, Tom's sister) while her husband does not. In the drama the husband's dilemma is whether to keep Joan as his wife or insist that she should leave the home. After the scene, the community felt strongly that she should not stay with her husband, especially as they did not yet have any children. However a small number of people felt that her husband should keep her. One member of the audience suggested that a friend should talk to him. The facilitator asked him to come and help by stepping into the shoes of the friend. The friend spoke to the husband for approximately 20 minutes, during which time the audience remained acutely attentive. Gradually the husband began to reconsider and, finally agreed that he may be able to keep his wife and use condoms. There was a spontaneous round of applause from the audience. In the discussion that followed the facilitator asked the audience what had changed their minds and they repeated some of the arguments the friend had used such as marriage is not just about having children, he had not married her just for sex, if he was sick he would want her to care for him and so on.

On another occasion Samuel, Tom's father, a middle-aged conventional man and perhaps the most difficult character for the community to move from his position, was persuaded by a member of the community who stepped into the shoes of an AIDS counsellor, that Tom was not suffering from *chiraa* but from AIDS and should receive proper treatment in hospital. The detailed arguments, sensitive ideas and persuasive truth that the community member had brought to the drama had been so convincing that the actor/teacher was able, while remaining true to character, to change his position.



## BOX 2

**A SCENE FROM *POSITIVE PEOPLE*: THE APONDO YOUTH GROUP'S PET PROJECT**

The 12 positive people are at an HIV/AIDS counselling centre. Members of the community are then given the role of their counsellors. The project allows people to choose whose story they want to hear first and whom they want to counsel first.

A sceptical old man, who does not believe in the existence of AIDS, suddenly clears his throat. He can neither read nor write but is attracted to the story of the village carpenter who on his elder brother's death is forced by the elders to inherit the widow. He has been attracted to this character by the symbolic graphic design that illustrates the carpenter's dilemma. A sudden hush falls on the 400 members of the community. Here is a village sage, whose word on custom and tradition is faultless. He explains the philosophy behind wife inheritance slowly but firmly, citing a wealth of ageless ancestral wisdom. The old man sits down after 20 minutes and there is no doubt in the minds of the people that wife inheritance is blameless, as far as AIDS is concerned.

The carpenter begins to tell his story to a keen and curious community. There is nothing unusual in his life. His story is the community's story until he tells how he discovered that his elder brother, whose wife the elders forced him to inherit, committed suicide after he was diagnosed to have AIDS. Without pathos, he declared that he himself has since tested positive, together with his first wife, their last born baby and the second wife he inherited from his late brother. Nobody speaks for a long time, until a teenage schoolboy begins to point out the contradictions of wife inheritance. For the next half hour a discussion ensues between the youth and the elders. What was accepted before the drama as sagacity is slowly reconstructed in the light of HIV/AIDS. There seems to be an impasse until a woman steps forward. The facilitator is quick to notice her, for women rarely stand to give their opinions in such weighty matters in this village. She brings a different angle to the stand-off between youth and elders, challenging the assumptions of tradition and custom about the place of a woman in marriage and society. AIDS is for a moment put on one side as the spotlight is turned full glare onto the rights of women to inherit property, including land. People listen, people argue, people venture into the performing area to wear the cap of the carpenter at the crossroads of his life. Attempts are made at changing the outcome of events. This culminates in instantaneous applause when the elder who started the argument declares he has been convinced by a doctor (played by another member of the community) that AIDS does exist.

As always, the actor/educator has to determine how far to push the boundaries of what is culturally acceptable in any given place, whilst not compromising the integrity, truth and principles of the theme. This has a direct bearing on drama's usefulness in this field of community education as it is through doing this that real social change can be achieved. In this Luo community people do not often talk openly about sex and sexuality, yet during the PET they were able to talk very freely about it in a community gathering of both sexes, all ages, and most classes (Box 2). These projects have demonstrated the power of participatory drama for cutting through the cultural barriers to communication.

### • **Conclusion**

We didn't know how this PET initiative was going to be received by the communities. There were large elements of risk involved for us all but, in the event, it has proved highly

successful, both with large community audiences (up to 400 people) as well as with the same numbers in secondary schools. In six months no single performance has been like another. The audience is always bringing into the dramatic situations new and exciting possibilities encouraging a feeling of strength and success where they previously felt powerless and confused.

Our aim now is for PET projects to become more integrated into the work of NGOs and other organisations actively involved in using PRA, not only in the HIV/AIDS field but also in any area of development that involves people and their interactions. However we remain unsure about the extent that behavioural change can be brought about through any short-term project. It is a highly difficult matter and there are many questions which need to be explored further. By undertaking more preparation and follow-up work, we hope to establish an

effective monitoring and evaluation system to determine this.

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NOTE

Roger Chamberlain is an Educational Theatre and Community Drama Specialist sponsored by the British Council.

## 15

# Community mobilisation against HIV infection in Kenya

Tilly Sellers and AJ Oloo

### Introduction

There are few successful models of rural HIV counselling and testing in Africa. Work in Uganda has shown the difficulties of setting up rural access to counselling and testing without the villagers themselves participating in decision making and planning (Seeley et al., 1991). When, in 1993 villagers in 15 villages in Siaya District, Kenya asked CDC/KEMRI to provide access to HIV-antibody testing, a participatory methodology was sought that would involve the villagers and which would be culturally sensitive. Furthermore, subsequent meetings established that the needs of these villages in relation to HIV and AIDS went beyond a simple request for access to HIV testing.

An initial survey of knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs (KAPB) about AIDS revealed that villagers felt the responsibility for HIV prevention lay with the government or with health officials, and that communities and individuals felt powerless in the face of the threat of HIV infection. We wanted the participatory activities to empower these communities to do something for themselves. We realised that there is only so much a community can do in a situation where they may, for instance, not have access to condoms or safe blood. However, we hoped that participatory mobilisation would reveal gaps in knowledge, attitudes, risky practices and beliefs, which the villagers have the potential to change without a huge resource input.

### Developing the methodology

We knew of only a few examples of the use of participatory approaches for mobilising communities against HIV infection (Barnett, 1994; Duangsa, this issue). We thus decided to use a modified form of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to which we added selected SARAR<sup>1</sup> techniques and our own activities. To emphasise that it is the villagers themselves who collect and analyse data and make decisions based on what they find, we called the new methodology Participatory Rural Research on AIDS (PRRA - yet another acronym).

Appendix 1 summarises the range of PRRA activities involved, also described in a handbook (Sellers, 1994). The approach is used to assist villagers in finding out what it is that stops them from protecting themselves and others from becoming infected with the AIDS virus. Once they know this, it helps them to look at solutions and actually make a plan against the spread of AIDS within the community.

PRRA is not designed to change behaviour. It hopes instead to allow communities to make informed decisions about future interventions against HIV infection, although we do expect to see some change in behaviour as a result of PRRA.

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<sup>1</sup> From PROWESS, developed by UNDP for water and sanitation.

## • Implementing the methodology

From the beginning it was made clear by village leaders that to discuss sensitive topics such as sex and cultural practices involving sex, all the participants should be from the same ethnic background. Thus we decided that all project team members should come from the target villages themselves. In other words, we would train 'insiders' and eliminate the need for foreign 'experts'. However, since we realised that poverty, development issues and lack of resources would all be identified as contributing to the spread of HIV infection, representatives from other organisations were invited to participate (with agreement from the village concerned) as long as they came from the same ethnic background.

Six local men and women were selected for the project team by the villagers. The method of selection was left to them (usually it was done through the clans and sub-clans), but the criteria included a minimum educational level, being respected by the villagers, a certain maturity regardless of age and an interest in helping to prevent the spread of HIV infection. HIV counsellor training was given to project team members over a period of six months, part of which involved the trainees taking placements with local HIV/AIDS support organisations and in the District and Provincial hospitals.

The PRRA process took place over five days in each village. Appendix 1 summarises the main activities carried out during the process. Examples of the findings of some of the activities are discussed below.

### KAPB pocket charts

Kaminogedo is one of the villages which participated in the PRRA. On the second day project workers dispersed in pairs throughout the village to facilitate activities with different informal and formal groups. One pair met with a group of men and women of mixed ages to facilitate an activity called KAPB Pocket Charts. As with all the KAPB activities (activities which explore the Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Beliefs about AIDS), the discussion is the most important part. While the outcomes of these activities provide

villagers with baseline information, the discussions pave the way for them to identify the barriers to prevention and finally to look for solutions to these barriers.

The project workers displayed two pocket charts written in the local language. One has pictures of people across the top, the other lists places and events (see Table 1). The project workers explained the activity carefully and six people were chosen to vote. The pocket charts were hung in such a way that voting was confidential. Each person voted once for each question in the two charts by placing a small disc in the pocket corresponding to their belief. When they had finished, the votes were quickly counted by the participants and a chart of the results was made (Table 1).

The important part of the activity began as the facilitators asked whether the group agreed that the results accurately reflected the situation in Kaminogedo. First discussion was carried out in age/sex groups, then the whole group came together and agreed on the following points:

- Old people don't have the strength to play sex so they can't contract AIDS or other STDs;
- Old people should be responsible for AIDS prevention, especially the adults;
- Mothers can help prevent the virus from spreading by educating husbands and children;
- Alcohol and drugs speed up the sexual urge in men;
- Men shy away from family health matters and show their denial of AIDS by remarrying;
- Drinking and dancing places promote sexual immorality which leads to getting STD/AIDS;
- In a polygamous family it is only the first wife who is responsible for sex related cultural practices like having sex at the time of sowing, planting etc.;
- Condoms cannot be used during wife inheritance practices for fear of breaking a taboo and contracting *chiraa*<sup>2</sup> (but the

<sup>2</sup> *Chiraa* is a traditional wasting disease caused by breaking taboos. AIDS and *Chiraa* are often thought of as one and the same in this culture (see also page 71 of this issue).

- women felt it would be better if condoms could be used);
- Traditional stools and tobacco could be used instead of sexual wife inheritance (see page 73 of this issue);
  - AIDS education can only be got from health centres outside Kaminogedo;
  - Men are most responsible for transmitting STD since they have more partners than their wives;
  - Women take a long time to discover they have an STD and therefore risk re-infecting their partners; and,
  - Everybody would like counselling/education on AIDS.

**Table 1. KAPB pocket charts**

WHO (pictures)	Man	Old man	Young girl	Young boy	Woman	Old woman	All of them	None of them
Is least likely to get STD?	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0
Is responsible for AIDS prevention?	0	0	1	1	0	1	3	0
Is responsible for family planning?	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	0
Is responsible for health in the family?	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0
Would like AIDS counselling & education?	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	0

WHERE (pictures)	Church	Farm	Clinic	Beer party	Disc o	Homestead	Lake shore	Barber	All	None
Is one most likely to get AIDS?	0	0	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	0
Can one get an HIV test?	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Is one least likely to get AIDS?	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Can one get AIDS counselling & information?	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Can one get general STD information?	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

## Barriers to prevention

On day three of the PRRA, after sharing information about modes of transmission and prevention of HIV infection, a specific activity is facilitated in sex/age groups which aims to elicit barriers to prevention from villagers themselves. This activity follows on from the previous exercises with the question *"given that villagers clearly know how to protect themselves from infection, what actually stops them from doing so?"*.

In Kaminogedo, Damarice and Eudiah (project workers and both married women themselves from nearby villages) sat with a group of ten other married women to discuss what they felt to be major barriers to prevention/protection for them. Sitting in a circle, a picture of a cart (a

traditional hand cart known as a *cocoteni*) was placed in the middle of the group. A pile of blank coloured paper circles of different sizes was used to represent barriers/rocks. Eudiah told the group to think of all possible things (attitudes, resources etc.) that would stop them from using those methods of prevention that were mentioned in the previous activity. Each statement was recorded on a 'rock' of a size selected by the group and then placed into the back of the cart. The resulting barriers were finally discussed and verified (they could also be ranked). The barriers this group came up with are shown in Table 3.

The women strongly believed that their main barrier to protecting themselves and their families from HIV infection was poverty or lack of money to buy syringes, needles, condoms, safe blood, medicines and so on.

**Table 3. Barriers to prevention**

Problems sticking to one sex partner	Problems with condom use	Problems getting safe blood	Problems not sharing toothbrushes and razors	Problems keeping wounds covered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of money</li> <li>• Desire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave you with a lot of sexual desire</li> <li>• Can enter womb</li> <li>• Not available in village</li> <li>• Difficult to discuss with partners</li> <li>• Can burst</li> <li>• Brings scratches to private parts</li> <li>• Are slippery</li> <li>• No money to buy them</li> <li>• Prevents pregnancy</li> <li>• Men don't like them</li> <li>• Men think you are prostitute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No money</li> <li>• Lack of places which screen</li> <li>• Timing, if patient is critical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No money to buy for each member of family</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge, people don't know they shouldn't share or should sterilise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bandages not available</li> <li>• No money to travel and buy them</li> <li>• General lack of medicines</li> </ul>

## Finding solutions

The day after barriers to prevention have been identified, all the barriers recorded throughout the week are presented at a full village meeting by the village volunteers to be verified by the villagers. Once they have a list of barriers which they feel apply to their situation, activities to find and categorise solutions are facilitated. Finally, these categories are ranked according to their impact on the spread of HIV infection and according to how easily the villagers themselves can do something about it.

Obadiah and Richard looked for solutions to barriers with a group of nine married men in Kaminogedo. The barriers had been posted across the top of a sheet of newsprint and the group were asked to split into two and to brainstorm solutions to each barrier. Whereas married women in Kaminogedo had stressed poverty as a barrier to prevention, married men had also included "*too much money*" as a barrier (Table 4).

**Table 4. Solutions to barriers**

Barriers	Solutions
Lack of money	Hard work, giving condoms at a fair price, free syringes and needles, bringing health facility within reach of community
Lack of knowledge	Workshops, <i>barazas</i> , radio, training through women's groups etc
Lack of HIV testing places	Bringing HIV testing and counselling to the village, training counsellors from Kaminogedo, avoiding blood transfusion by eating well and treating malaria promptly
Commercial sex work	Go for zero grazing, always live with your wife, don't work away from home
Too much alcohol	Getting saved, not drinking too much
Too much money	Becoming calm over your wealth, be loyal to God
Living far from wife	Stop working away, creating real love and trust atmosphere in the family
Lack of children	Adding another wife, taking HIV test
Traditional practices	Use condoms, both parties to have HIV test before wife inheritance
Problems with condom use	Mass education, demonstrating them, make them free, make them more accessible, make people understand the need for them

## Selection of village AIDS forum members (VAF)

Originally, the PRRA week ended with the village selecting a Village AIDS Forum. Village AIDS Forum members are charged by the village to plan and implement the solutions to barriers identified during PRRA, and to report back to the village. They are not organised, supported or funded by CDC/KEMRI, but are welcome to negotiate access to training. The first VAF requested training to give them more facts about HIV/AIDS and to help them to use their PRRA outcomes to plan solutions to barriers identified by the village.

However, after the first three PRRAs, it was clear that the villagers regarded the VAF as an extension of the project. This had not been the intention. Consequently, this part of the project has been handed over to members of one very active VAF and is no longer part of PRRA. Now, existing VAF members visit villages where PRRA has been carried out and talk about their own AIDS Forum, how it was set up, the training it has received and the work it is doing.

### • Conclusion

There seems to be enormous enthusiasm for this approach to HIV prevention from the villages concerned. Although it is still too early to tell, our personal feeling, based on feedback

from the PRRAs to date is that 'learned helplessness' (ie. villagers feeling powerless in the face of this potentially enormous threat to themselves and their families) is giving way to a feeling that they can take on the responsibility and actually do something to change the situation. Only monitoring behaviour change will prove whether this is really the case. What has become clear, however, is that access to HIV counselling and testing is a priority for the majority of villages and that they see it as a way of promoting behaviour change.

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## Appendix 1. PRRA objectives and activities

Objective	Activities
1. Giving villagers enough information to decide whether to be involved in the project	Distribution of field work schedules to groups and village leaders and visiting a variety of groups and individuals culminating in a meeting where questions are answered and at which a decision is made Inclusion of villagers in PRRA training course
2. Establishing that AIDS is a problem and that the community want to do something about it	Disease ranking by sex/age groups Presentation and verification of findings Finding and ranking solutions to barriers to prevention
3. Sharing expectations of the PRRA period and of the project as a whole	Eliciting expectations from sex/age groups and addressing these expectations on the spot
4. Establishing links and ensuring representation of the different formal and informal groups that make up the community	Pre-mobilisation activity Inclusion of villagers in PRRA training course Community walk/ self-selection of volunteers Identifying formal and informal groups through mapping Migration calendar (identifies when migrant workers and students return home so that interventions can be planned to include them) Homestead semi-structured interviews (usually 10)
5. Personalising the risk of HIV infection; sharing information on modes of transmission and on the ways in which different individuals can protect themselves, their partners and families from HIV infection	Expectation sharing TAPWAK personal experience (a member of The Association of People with AIDS in Kenya gives a personal experience of HIV infection) Family Story transmission exercise (looks at how each member of a typical family could become infected by HIV, and how they could infect each other) Pasting for prevention (uses the individuals from the same family to determine the best ways of protecting each one from HIV infection) Discussions
6. Sharing information about counselling and testing (C and T) and about attitudes to confidentiality	C and T open-ended story Confidentiality focus group discussions Homestead semi-structured interviews KAPB pocket charts (see Table 2)
7. Understanding cultural beliefs and practices, gender issues relating to negotiating safer sex and gaps in community resources (ie. STD services, condom availability) which may create barriers to prevention or protection	KAPB pocket charts Odindo's Activity (examines cultural/ social factors which promote sex) Three-pile attitude sort (looks at practices and beliefs) Mapping Services activity (looks at where villagers go for STD diagnosis and treatment, access to safe blood transfusion, condoms and clean needles and costs involved) Homestead semi-structured interviews Community walk (verifies map) Rocks and Cart - Barriers to Prevention (see Table 3)
8. Verifying barriers to the prevention of HIV - do they really apply to these villagers?	Presentation and verification of findings
9. Identifying and prioritising solutions for the removal of these barriers	Finding solutions (sex/age group brainstorming of barriers) Categorising solutions (eg. general HIV education). Categories are ranked according to the number of times a solution is allocated to each one Ranking categories according to their impact on the spread of HIV infection and according to how easily the village can do something about it Mapping (maps can show where condoms, needles and syringes are available in the village; meeting places of sex/age groups; location of artists and musicians; homesteads with deaths between 15 and 40 years in the past year; child or grandparent headed households etc.)
10. Choosing one or more solutions and making a detailed plan for its implementation, monitoring and evaluation	Choosing a starting point by discussing the highest ranking category to see if it falls into the high impact/easily achievable part of the matrix Village selection of Village AIDS Forum (VAF) members Training the VAF to use PRRA outcomes for planning Training the VAF in participatory monitoring and evaluation
11. Implementing the plan	Supporting VAF where requested with training Providing access to HIV counselling and testing where requested, along with relevant support for those affected by AIDS

## 16

### Tips for trainers: leadership circles

**Adrian Jackson**

- **Objective**

To generate discussion about what leadership is, can be, and should be; to identify positive and negative aspects of leadership; and to establish group norms about leadership.

- **Time**

20 - 30 minutes

- **Procedure**

1. Ask the group to form circles of about 6 - 8 people, looking inwards and holding hands (if culturally acceptable).
2. Tell them that when they close their eyes, you will walk around the circles and tap someone in each circle on his or her shoulder. They are not to tell each other whether they have been tapped or not. After they open their eyes, the person who was tapped on the shoulder acts out the role of leader, and the rest act as followers. At the same time they should try to guess who the leader is by observing each other's behaviour.
3. In round one, after walking around the circles several times, you should have tapped everyone on his or her shoulder (ie. everyone should be trying to act as a leader).
4. Allow them to act out their roles for about 5 minutes, ensuring that no-one starts guessing out loud who the leader is.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 a second time. This time, do not tap anybody on the shoulder (ie. no-one should be acting as a leader).
6. After both rounds have been played ask them to sit down in their circle. Explain that when you count to three you want them to point to the person in the circle who they think was the leader in the first round.
7. Count to three. Most people should be pointing to someone. Go around each circle and ask them what it was about the person's behaviour that made them a leader. If you have enough time, write down different aspects of leadership on a flipchart.
8. Repeat step 7, but this time asking them to point to the person who they think was the leader in the second round.
9. Debrief thoroughly about aspects of leadership, and also how it felt to be a leader with no followers, or a follower.

- **Comments**

It is important that people don't start guessing out loud and that they really don't know who you have or have not been tapping.

*Source: Adrian Jackson, pers. comm.*