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# pla notes

participatory learning and action

## Participatory processes for policy change



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Women from the *Prajateerpu* (citizens' jury) discuss specialist evidence given at the scenario workshop in Andhra Pradesh

## SPECIAL ISSUE: Participatory processes for policy change

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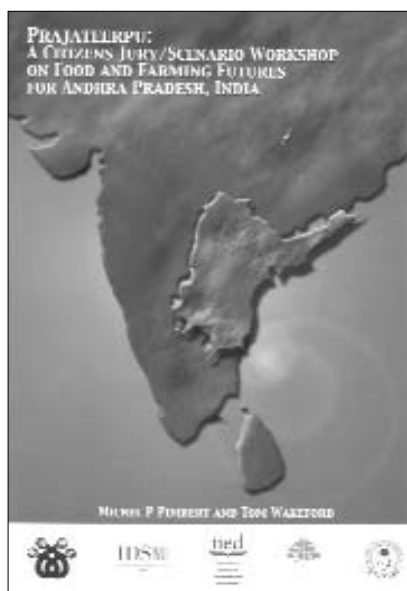
# editorial

## Welcome to issue 46 of *PLA Notes*

### Special theme

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

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



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

important questions about citizen engagement in policy processes.

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

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

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

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

John Thompson, Director of the

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

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

### General section

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Regular features

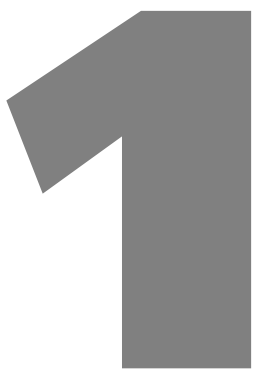
A recent exchange of emails within the UK Community Participation Network was the source of inspiration for this issue's Tips for Trainers. Here we bring you four working examples of a training exercise 'Drawing Shields' by **Perry Walker**, **Ghee Bowman**, **Gwen Vaughan**, and **Rowena Harris**. The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

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

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

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

**Holly Ashley, Acting Editor**



# Learning from experiments in deliberate democracy: an e-forum on participatory processes for policy change

by IAN SCOONES and JOHN THOMPSON

## Deliberative democracy: learning from experiments

In February 2001, our two organisations, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), co-published a special issue of *PLA Notes* on Deliberative Democracy and Citizen Empowerment (*PLA Notes 40*), which focused on innovative ways to actively engage 'the public' in policy formulation.<sup>1</sup> The special issue drew together current thinking on public participation in policy processes and highlighted a range of techniques known collectively as Deliberative and Inclusionary Processes (DIPs), which include consensus conferences, scenario workshops, and citizen juries, among others. As the articles in that issue revealed, however, until recently most practical experiences with these methods were to be found in industrialised countries, although the editors and authors argued that they were equally relevant to policy contexts in the developing world.

Since the publishing of *PLA Notes 40*, DIPs have been adapted and applied in a range of developing country contexts, from South America to South Asia, where they have been used to engage poor people in policy dialogues

about controversial and complex issues ranging from genetically modified organisms to the future of food and agriculture in marginal environments. This special issue features a set of methodological and conceptual reflections and lessons on the use of DIPs, which grew out of a citizen jury and scenario workshop in southern India. Unlike previous *PLA Notes*, the articles in this issue are not the usual collection of case studies and examples of 'methods in action', but a set of conceptual and methodological reflections on that Indian experiment and its implications for citizen engagement in policy processes that were contributed by a diverse group of researchers and practitioners to an Internet-based electronic forum or 'e-forum', which we convened and co-moderated in the latter half of 2002.<sup>2</sup> Because many *PLA Notes* readers do not have reliable access to the internet and therefore were unable to contribute to or read the original online debate, and because we believe the insights generated in the forum are important and deserve a wider audience, we have decided to reproduce the main contributions to that electronic exchange in this special issue.

<sup>1</sup> *PLA Notes 40: Deliberative Democracy and Citizen Empowerment*. The issue can be downloaded free of charge from the *PLA Notes* website at: [www.planotes.org](http://www.planotes.org).

<sup>2</sup> The e-forum may also be viewed online at: [www.iied.org/agri/e\\_forum/summary.html](http://www.iied.org/agri/e_forum/summary.html). Please note that the conference is now closed and no further contributions are being accepted.

**The citizens' jury gather at Alcole village, AP to hear evidence from one of the expert witnesses**



### Raising the debate

It is not often that a single publication sparks such controversy, particularly one that is essentially the proceedings of a one-week workshop. But that is precisely what happened after members of a team from India and the UK published and distributed the report of their scenario workshop and citizen jury experiment – *Prajateerpu* – in Andhra Pradesh, India. The release of that report ignited an international debate over the use of participatory approaches to inform and influence policy from below. Supporters and sceptics lined up to set out their opposing views. Strong opinions were expressed and questions were raised about citizen engagement in policy processes, about the trustworthiness of participatory 'verdicts' and the implications that could be drawn from them, about integrity in the research process, about academic freedom, about the links between research and advocacy, and about ways to increase accountability and transparency in policy making.

Such vigorous and impassioned debate can be constructive, as it can lead to the opening up of new intellectual horizons, an appreciation of alternative points of view, the identification of common ground, and even a shifting of positions. In the case of *Prajateerpu*, the hue and cry was so great and so widespread that there was a serious danger that the important lessons emerging from the experience would be lost altogether. The flames were fanned further by the extensive use of unsolicited email letters, many of them sent anonymously, which only served to reinforce the already polarised positions. As a result, there was a very real possibility that the proverbial 'baby' was about to be tossed out with the 'bathwater'.

As keen supporters and observers of the *Prajateerpu* process, we became alarmed by this turn of events and felt

**'In the case of *Prajateerpu*, the hue and cry was so great and so widespread that there was a serious danger that the important lessons emerging from the experience would be lost altogether'**

compelled to act to shift the deliberations in a more constructive direction. In particular, we sought to draw attention to the important methodological, conceptual, and substantive lessons emerging out of the citizen jury and scenario workshop experiment from which those concerned with environmental and social justice and citizen participation in policy processes could gain fresh insights. This led us to propose a time-bound, electronic forum, which we would moderate, to encourage all interested parties to contribute ideas and opinions on key issues arising from the *Prajateerpu* experience. The result was the e-forum on Participatory Processes for Policy Change.

### An electronic forum

The e-forum ran over 40 days (and nights) during August and the first part of September 2002. All those involved in the debate through informal email and other means were invited to participate at the outset. This included the *Prajateerpu* partners in Andhra Pradesh, the directors and staff of IDS and IIED, NGO and donor personnel, academics, and other interested observers. Many responded and made contributions, others chose not to. In any deliberative forum participation is always voluntary, and one strategy is to disengage and seek other routes through which views are aired. In whatever way and by whatever means individuals choose to express their views, one thing is clear: the debates generated by *Prajateerpu* will continue to run for some time to come, as the report and the subsequent discussions raised a number of critical issues which have yet to be fully explored.

What almost every commentator participating in the e-forum agreed was that the *Prajateerpu* exercise was a noteworthy effort to develop and extend methodologies for participation in policy making. The innovative attempt to combine scenario workshopping with a citizens' jury model was perhaps the first of its kind, certainly in the developing world. The experience highlighted the challenges of ensuring an inclusive debate about controversial and complex issues, as well as the potentials of deliberative fora in enhancing policy design and implementation. That it has

**Members of the jury and the oversight panel on a field visit in Andhra Pradesh**



generated such vigorous debate and intensive scrutiny of conceptual, methodological, and substantive issues is witness to the significance of this experiment. Our aim has been to capitalise on the many positive aspects of deliberative, inclusive, people-centred procedures. Nearly everyone is clear that the future will require more such experiments, particularly those which are embedded more directly into the policy process.

The e-forum debate was convened around a series of four themes: (i) issues of representation; (ii) issues of evidence; (iii) issues of engagement and (iv) issues of accountability. These were chosen as open-ended, but generic themes, to allow those not directly involved in the *Prajateerpu* exercise or in Andhra Pradesh to share their knowledge and insights from experiences in other parts of the world. The themes inevitably overlap and many people's comments cut across several (and occasionally all four) areas. That said, the themes did allow for some level of focus in

the discussion and an opportunity for debate about particular issues that were raised informally in the early exchanges prior to the e-forum.<sup>3</sup>

Clear principles of engagement were also set out at the beginning of the e-forum process. These sought to lay the ground rules of the electronic exchange to assure contributors that we as moderators would not seek to impose our points of view on anyone or edit any submissions in relation to their thematic content or opinion. However, we did reserve the right to edit submissions according to their relevance to the discussion and for language and reject slanderous, obscene, or incomprehensible correspondence. These principles helped ensure that the quality of the debate was maintained at a high standard.

This special issue of *PLA Notes* presents the main contributions to the e-forum, including the full set of thematic debates, commentaries by the *Prajateerpu* authors and the UK Department for International Development, and our summary of the key lessons emerging from the e-conference. In addition, we have invited the lead authors of the original *Prajateerpu* report, Michel Pimbert and Tom Wakeford, to provide an overview of the citizen jury and scenario workshop process, to help set the scene for what follows. Readers will note that the language used by some of the discussants is rather complex as it relates to various traditions in social science theory and practice. Where possible, we have tried to clarify these points and add appropriate references, without altering the main thrust of the arguments.

We believe the full collection of contributions and commentaries offers valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of employing deliberative and inclusive procedures to give citizens, particularly those from the more vulnerable and marginal parts of society, a voice in the policy process.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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<sup>3</sup> In the final format of the website we arranged the material in reverse chronological order of their contribution, with a search facility included to find particular contributors.



## 2

Glossary  
of terms**Accountability**

The state of being accountable; liability to be called on to render an account; the responsibility to someone or for some activity.

**Action research**

Action research can be described as a family of research methodologies, which pursue action (or change) and research (or understanding) at the same time. It is 'learning by doing'.

**Analogue**

That which is analogous to, or corresponds with, some other thing. Words with similar definitions include: counterpart; equivalent; twin; correspondent; parallel.

**Democratic inquiry**

The act of inquiring; a seeking for information by asking questions; interrogation; a question or questioning, conducted in a democratic way.

**Dissensus**

In this instance, it is taken to mean the opposite of consensus, meaning agreement of the majority in sentiment or belief.

**Epistemology**

The theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope. Epistemology is the investigation of what distinguishes justified belief from opinion.

**Facipulate:**

Facilitating which involves manipulating the process so as to achieve a desired outcome.

**Neo-liberal**

Having or showing belief in the need for economic growth in addition to

traditional liberalistic values; a liberal who subscribes to neo-liberalism.

**Normative**

Used in ethics and social sciences to refer to some sort of value judgement over an idealised standard or norm of behaviour. Contrasts with 'descriptive', 'analytic' or 'substantive' approaches, which do not imply a reliance on explicit value judgements.

**Paradigm**

World view underlying the theories and methodology of a particular social science or scientific subject. Researchers sometimes talk about a paradigm shift, by which they mean a fundamental change in world views or underlying assumptions.

**Partisan lobbying**

This refers to the business where special interest groups seek to influence decision making in favour of their own ends through direct representation and lobbying, without much effort going into understanding other interests or perspectives.

**Participatory deliberation**

An approach to making or informing decisions which is participatory (in that it includes all those with an interest, especially often-excluded groups) and deliberative (in that it prioritises effective communication between different perspectives and rests on qualitative judgement rather than quantitative analysis).

**Pathology**

Referring to something negative, like a disease, which warrants a treatment or 'cure'.

**Pluralistic**

This refers to a situation in which

many diverse viewpoints and interests are afforded equal status and attention, without attempts to reduce them to a single 'consensus' or 'majority' view.

**Policy appraisal**

A general term for the business of assessing different policy options in advance of a policy decision and which includes qualitative deliberation as well as quantitative assessment or analysis. Contrasts with 'evaluation', which tends to come after the decision.

**Populist**

A supporter of the rights and power of the people; an advocate of democratic principles.

**Positivist**

A doctrine contending that sense perceptions are the only admissible basis of human knowledge and precise thought; any of several doctrines or viewpoints that stress attention to actual practice over consideration of what is ideal.

**Prajateerpu**

The *Telegu* word for 'people's verdict'; it is used here to refer to the citizens' jury process.

**Praxis**

Practice, as distinguished from theory. Accepted practice or custom.

**Positivist paradigm**

A belief in an objective reality, knowledge of which is only gained from direct, verifiable experience, subject to empirical testing and quantitative measures. It is considered by many to be the antithesis of the principles of action research.

**Reflexive**

Used to refer to a method or theory in social science that takes account of itself or of the effect of the personality or presence of the researcher on what is being investigated.

**Reify**

To make artificially concrete; to treat

something questionable as unproblematic.

**Scientism**

A philosophy that claims that science alone can render truth about the world and reality, adhering only to the empirical, or testable. Scientism disputes almost all metaphysical,

philosophical, and religious claims as unverifiable by scientific methods and argues that science is the only means of access to truth.

**Social audits**

A local public review of the quality of government decision-making.

# An introduction to *Prajateerpu*: a citizens' jury/ scenario workshop on food and farming futures in Andhra Pradesh, India

by MICHEL PIMBERT and TOM WAKEFORD

Philip at the  
*Prajateerpu* process

## Introduction

*Prajateerpu* – a citizens' jury/scenario workshop on food and farming futures in Andhra Pradesh (AP), India<sup>1</sup> – was a six-day exercise in deliberative democracy involving marginal-livelihood citizens from all three regions of the state. It took place at the Government of India's Farmer Liaison Centre (Krishi Vigyan Kendra) in Algole Village, Zaheerabad Taluk, Medak District, Andhra Pradesh, from 25 June to 1 July 2001. *Prajateerpu* was devised as a means of allowing those people most affected by the government's *Vision 2020* for food and farming in AP to shape a vision of their own. Grounded in the tradition of participatory action research (PAR), this deliberative process aimed to link local voices and visions of food and farming futures with national and international policy making (Pimbert and Wakeford, 2002). It also introduced innovative elements such as an oversight panel, video scenario presentations, and witnesses, with the aim of ensuring deliberative competence and balance, given the extreme political sensitivity of many of the topics both in India and internationally.

## Background

The State of Andhra Pradesh in South India is currently rethinking its approach to farming, land use, and rural devel-



opment. The AP Government's *Vision 2020* seeks to transform all areas of social, environmental, and economic life in AP, not just food and farming. The government's strategy for sustainable development and poverty reduction is intimately linked with the delivery of this comprehensive vision. External development agencies support the Government of AP in this endeavour, with the World Bank and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) being the main donors.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> DFID is a major actor in Andhra Pradesh because it provides direct budgetary support to the state government, which receives about 60% of all of DFID's aid to India (DFID, 2000, 2001). Working with the World Bank it supports interrelated and mutually supportive elements of the government's *Vision 2020*. The four main pillars of DFID's budgetary support to the government of AP are identified as: (i) Power Sector Reform and Restructuring, (ii) Fiscal Reform, (iii) Governance Reform and (iv) Rural Development/Agricultural Reform (DFID India, April 2001; DFID, 2001, email communications; [www.andhrapradesh.com](http://www.andhrapradesh.com)). DFID did not fund the *Prajateerpu* process. Its India office was invited to participate in it, but it was unable to send an official delegate to take part.

<sup>1</sup> *Prajateerpu* is the Telugu word for 'people's verdict'.

Oversight panel  
member Justice  
SawantOversight panel  
member Ms  
SavitriAnandamma at  
the Prajateerpu  
process

About three-quarters of the state's population of 80 million people are engaged in agriculture. Over 80% of those involved in agriculture are small and marginal farmers and landless labourers. Fundamental and profound transformations of the food system are proposed in *Vision 2020*, yet to date there has been little direct involvement of small farmers and rural people in shaping this policy scenario. In this context, five organisations<sup>3</sup> designed and facilitated a participatory process to encourage more public debate in policy choices on food futures for AP. *Prajateerpu* ('people's verdict')

has been devised as a means of allowing those people most affected by *Vision 2020* for food and farming in AP to shape a vision of their own (Pimbert and Wakeford, 2002).

### The Prajateerpu process

#### Methods for deliberative democracy and participatory action research

The citizens' jury/scenario workshop did not seek to achieve representation from all social groups; instead it purposefully and positively discriminated in favour of the poor and

#### Box 1: The Prajateerpu approach

**The citizens' jury.** A citizens' jury made up of representatives of small and marginal farmers, small traders and food processors, and consumers. To reflect the reality of rural Andhra Pradesh, most of the members were small and marginal farmers and included indigenous people (known in India as *divas*). Over two thirds of the jury members were women.

**Visions of the future.** Jury members were presented with three different scenarios. Each one was advocated by some key opinion leaders who attempted to show the logic behind the scenario **Vision 1: Vision 2020.** This scenario has been put forward by the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and has been backed by a loan from the World Bank. It proposes to consolidate small farms and rapidly increase mechanisation and modernisation. Production-enhancing technologies such as genetic modification will be introduced in farming and food processing, reducing the number of people on the land from 70% to 40% by 2020.

**Vision 2: An export-based cash crop model of organic production.** This vision of the future is based on proposals within IFOAM and the International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO) for environmentally friendly farming linked to national and international markets. This vision is also increasingly driven by the demand of supermarkets in the North to have a cheap

supply of organic produce and comply with new eco-labelling standards.

**Vision 3: Localised food systems.** A future scenario based on increased self-reliance for rural communities, low external input agriculture, the re-localisation of food production, markets, and local economies, with long-distance trade in goods that are surplus to production or not produced locally. Support for this vision in India can be drawn from the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, indigenous peoples' organisations, and some farmers' unions in India and elsewhere.

Each vision was introduced with a 30-minute simulated video news report that sought to highlight key aspects of each possible future scenario and help jury members to visualise their implications.

**Expert witnesses.** Following the video presentations, expert witnesses presented the case for a particular vision of the future. Members of the AP Government, the corporate sector and civil society organisations were given equal amounts of time to present their case to the jury. Jury members were allowed to cross-question expert witnesses after their presentation.

**Jury deliberations.** Jury members considered all three visions, assessing pros and cons on the basis of their own knowledge, priorities, and aspirations. The different contributions of invited

expert witnesses were important for the jury's deliberations. The jury members were not asked to simply choose between vision 1, 2 or 3. Instead, outsider facilitation encouraged them to critically assess the viability and relevance of each scenario for the future. They could choose a particular pre-formed vision OR combine elements of all three futures and derive their own unique vision(s).

**An oversight panel.** A group of external observers oversaw the jury/scenario workshop process. Their role was to ensure that the process was fair, unprejudiced, trustworthy, and not captured by any interest group.

**Video archives.** The entire citizen jury/scenario workshop process along with interviews of various actors was documented on digital video to:

- provide a clear and accurate record of the event, including the location, the jury setting, the participants, the nature and quality of the debates, the process and its outcomes; and,
- allow any party or external agency to learn from this experience or check for shortfalls in balance, fairness or failings in the deliberative process.

**Media.** News and media professionals were invited to the *Prajateerpu* event to relay information about the jury deliberations and outcomes to a wider audience, both nationally and internationally.

<sup>3</sup> The All-India National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), Andhra Pradesh Coalition in Defence of Diversity (APCDD), The University of Hyderabad, AP, and UK-based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS).

Discussions and deliberations following a presentation



marginalised farmers, indigenous peoples, and the landless. The approach used for the participatory assessments of alternative policy futures for food systems, livelihoods, and environment in Andhra Pradesh is described in Box 1. In turn, the *Prajateerpu* process was informed by a commitment to the theory and praxis of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and other forms of inquiry based on the formation of democratic and inclusive spaces.

### Outcomes

The facilitators used a range of methods to give jurors the opportunity to validate their knowledge, and challenge the misunderstandings of decision makers. The jurors' comments were in many ways more diverse than those of specialists because they had looser commitments to subject boundaries and, to a certain extent, a more insightful and open-minded approach to the tensions these boundaries can mask. There was a significant diversity of opinion among the jurors. There was a widespread agreement on the statements in their verdict, however, which included the following:

*'We oppose:*

- the proposed reduction of those making their livelihood from the land from 70% to 40% in Andhra Pradesh;
- land consolidation and displacement of rural people;
- contract farming;
- labour-displacing mechanisation;
- GM Crops – including Vitamin-A rice and Bt-cotton; and,
- loss of control over medicinal plants including their export.

*We desire:*

- food and farming for self reliance and community control over resources; and,
- to maintain healthy soils, diverse crops, trees and livestock, and to build on our indigenous knowledge, practical skills, and local institutions.'

**'The citizens' jury/scenario workshop did not seek to achieve representation from all social groups; instead it purposefully and positively discriminated in favour of the poor and marginalised farmers, indigenous peoples, and the landless'**

### Some key events

To maximise the extent to which excluded voices were allowed the opportunity to be heard by policy makers, the *Prajateerpu* process involved more elements than just the hearings of the citizens' jury/scenario workshop. A brief summary of some of the key events that led up to the e-forum will help put the discussions contained in this special issue in context.

The *Prajateerpu* event took place in June 2001, following ten months of preparatory work, including the search for oversight panel members, jury selection, and identification of specialist witnesses and clarification of the roles, rights and responsibilities of different social actors involved. The jury's verdict was extensively covered in the media, both in India and in the UK. After peer review in India and the UK, the report was produced in March 2002 and was launched in the UK Houses of Parliament in the presence of invited press, MPs, and members of the public. Following a series of press releases, the report received press coverage in the UK and India, and questions were asked by Members of Parliament (MPs) in the UK Parliament about the role of British aid in Andhra Pradesh, to which the Secretary of State for International Development, the Rt. Hon. Clare Short, responded.<sup>4</sup> Specific complaints were also raised by the DFID office in India about certain aspects of the report. This, in turn, resulted in an extensive, sometimes heated, debate internally between IIED, IDS, and DFID. In August of 2002, the e-forum on Participatory Processes for Policy Change was launched to encourage a wider discussion of the important methodological issues raised by the *Prajateerpu* work. In the latter part of 2002, a *Prajateerpu* training workshop was held in India, and plans were developed to hold more *Prajateerpu*-like events in AP.

<sup>4</sup> See: Hansard Joan Ruddock Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for International Development 20 Jul 2001: Column: 477W; Hansard Alan Simpson Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for International Development 20 July 2001: Column: 475W; Letter from Keith Vaz MP to Secretary of State for International Development 11 April 2002; Hansard Dr Carole Tongue Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for International Development 26 March 2002: Column: 876W.

Justice Sawant, Michel Pimbert and Sudha Goparaju



Expert witness Michael Hart, and oversight panel member Paul ter Weel on a field trip in the Medak District, AP



A Telegu version of the *Prajateerpu* report was also launched in Andhra Pradesh in February 2003.

The launch of the English version of the *Prajateerpu* report in the UK Houses of Parliament on 18 March 2002 was particularly successful in amplifying the voices of small and marginalised farmers in the global arena. One of the jury's requests in its verdict was that 'aid from white people' both reached and actually benefited them. The *Prajateerpu* organisers paid for one of the members of the citizens' jury (Mrs Anjamma) to travel from her village in AP in order to present the jury's verdict to MPs, the media and others, in London, although the opportunity to debate with DFID officials never arose. The launch of the *Prajateerpu* report in such a visible way was consistent with the design of a deliberative process that linked local voices on the future of food, farming, and rural development with national and

international policy making. An attempt was made to go beyond the idea of advocating on behalf of the marginalised to the practice of enabling the marginalised to speak for themselves.

Since the launch of the *Prajateerpu* report in the UK Houses of Parliament, a wide community of interest has emerged. Intermediary individuals and channels have begun to form to act between the jury and those with the power to create change.

This, then, was some of the context that subsequently led to a vigorous re-examination of the validity and quality of the *Prajateerpu* process and outcomes. This debate continues. The e-forum primarily facilitated a re-examination of the conceptual and methodological aspects of the *Prajateerpu* process and the challenges of applying deliberative and inclusive procedures in other controversial policy settings.

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# Contributions on issues of representation in citizen juries and similar participatory approaches

How can we ensure that citizen juries are representative of the wider populations from which they are drawn? How can we extrapolate lessons from specific citizen jury deliberations on key issues to wider policy debates? How can we use citizen jury-type procedures to ensure that the voices of poor people are represented in policy decisions that impinge on their lives?

Contributions to this area of the discussion were received from the registrants listed below:

- **Andy Stirling**, SPRU – Science and Technology Policy Research, University of Sussex, UK
- **John Gaventa**, Professor, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **Vinita Suryanarayanan**, MAYA, India
- **Dominic Glover**, Research Officer, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **L. David Brown**, Director of International Programs, Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organisations, Harvard University, USA
- **Priya Deshingkar**, AP Research Director Livelihood Options Project, Overseas Development Institute, and **Craig Johnson**, Overseas Development Institute, UK and India
- **Biksham Gujja**, Coordinator, Freshwater Programme, WWF International, Switzerland
- **Jules Pretty**, Professor, Department of Biological and Chemical Sciences, John Tabor Laboratories, University of Essex, UK
- **Francisco Sagasti**, Director, Agenda, Peru
- **Keith Bezanson**, Director, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **Nigel Cross**, Director, International Institute for Environment and Development, UK
- **Paul Richards**, Professor, Wageningen Agricultural University, The Netherlands

The independent observers, coordinators, and jury members in a question and answer session



### A contribution from Andy Stirling

Notions of 'representativeness' in recruitment, 'transparency' of process, 'authenticity' in findings and 'independence' in engagement are all intrinsically ambiguous. They can therefore be quite problematic in the context of highly charged discussions over the validity or quality of any given exercise. In this forum, for instance, John Gaventa addresses particular difficulties with 'representativeness' (p.15) and Brian Wynne raises several issues bearing on 'independence' (p.25). I believe that the implications span several of the discussion headings and are best addressed together. Neither set of points relate exclusively to the particular Indian – let alone the *Prajateerpu* – context. It is generally the case, for instance, that notions of 'representativeness' and 'independence' depend on the subjective selection, definition, and partitioning of populations, issues, interests, and institutions. Any one concept of 'representativeness' or 'independence' will embody only a subset of possible relevant factors, be open to equally valid (but discordant) interpretations, and remain subject to important contingencies in the unfolding of a particular process or its context.

Against this background, it is important to reflect on persistent attempts to reify concepts like 'representativeness' and 'independence' in this field. Here, I believe that there is an important distinction to be made between alternative roles for participatory deliberation. It can be undertaken either to contribute to the 'opening up', or to the 'closing down', of policy discourses. In this episode, as elsewhere, much discussion seems to imply that key interests (on all sides) lie in 'closing down' socio-political conflict. If so, the outcomes of any participatory deliberation remain as vulnerable as other approaches to policy appraisal (like risk assessment or cost-benefit analysis) to the potentially volatile effects of internal or external contingencies, or to inadvertent or deliberate framing to justify particular policy prescriptions. Where the purpose (explicit or implicit) is to assist in 'closing

down' a policy discourse, it becomes correspondingly important to deny or marginalise the unavoidable role of subjectivity, agency, and contingency. Resulting claims and counterclaims over reified notions of 'representativeness' or 'independence' provide one important way in which this dynamic plays out.

Where, on the other hand, appraisal in general – and participatory deliberation in particular – is oriented towards the 'opening up' of policy discourses, the need to invoke the authority of reified principles like representativeness or independence diminishes. If the purpose is to illuminate the implications of different framing assumptions, reveal the diversity of perspectives or give voice to otherwise marginalised constituencies, then there is less pressure to resort to this kind of language. The manner of engagement with policy debates is also very different in 'opening up' mode. The purpose becomes one of informing and stimulating more active and plural discourse rather than prescribing and justifying particular options for closure.

Active political contention becomes visible not as a pathology to be denied or subverted in appraisal, but as an important element in assuring the substantive quality and robustness of policy making and the effectiveness of social learning.

Indeed, addressing another discussion heading in the present forum, it is arguably only by undertaking participatory deliberation in 'opening up' mode, that principles of transparency and accountability can best be addressed. Transparency is better fulfilled by documenting the implications of different views and leaving these open-ended than by orienting activities exclusively towards consensus or common ground. Likewise, accountability is better achieved in political decision making as a whole, if the full variety of issues, options, and perspectives are effectively revealed in policy appraisal (like participatory deliberation), rather than artifi-



cially closed down. This distinction between 'opening up' and 'closing down' therefore applies as much in the criticism, interpretation, and evaluation of participatory deliberation as in the conduct of any given exercise. The difference is as much analytic as it is normative. It certainly transcends any superficial or rhetorical distinction between 'disinterested research' and 'partisan lobbying'.

It appears to me that the *Prajateerpu* exercise can be seen very much in this latter and entirely legitimate tradition of action-oriented research. As such, issues of representativeness and independence remain to be critically scrutinised alongside other factors, but they are more open, plural, and context-specific than has sometimes been conceded in this episode. Although I do not have the relevant experience to make definitive judgements over these questions in the present case, it seems clear to me that the *Prajateerpu* exercise presents no particular issues that are not raised equally in many acknowledged high-quality exercises in participatory deliberation. In any event, such considerations certainly do not provide a sufficient basis for qualifying those findings, which are elicited, nor for blanket rejection of the validity of the exercise taken as a whole. It is for this reason that the key theme for me in this episode transcends the four specific aspects headlined in the present forum. The crucial issue seems rather to concern the need to be reflexive over the role of power in academic discussions over issues of 'representation', 'evidence', 'engagement', and 'accountability'. Of course, such reflexivity should be an explicit feature of any particular exercise – and *Prajateerpu* (along with many others, including some that I have been associated with) may be subject to criticism on this count. But this same consideration also highlights a particularly challenging responsibility of leadership in academic institutions. Reified concepts like 'representativeness' or 'independence' are not credible in themselves and cannot be invoked uncritically to support blanket repudiation of individual bodies of work, let alone the associated researchers.<sup>1</sup> The aims of rigorous, disinterested enquiry are best served by pluralistic, critical engagement and not the direct exercise of institutional authority. Those responsible at IIED and IDS deserve full credit for striving towards the former in the present forum.

### **A contribution from John Gaventa**

In a project such as this one, and in a country as complex as India, obtaining a truly 'representative' citizens' jury would have been impossible, as it would have been to obtain a truly

**'In a project such as this one... obtaining a truly "representative" citizens' jury would have been impossible... The action researcher needs to do two things: first, not to hide behind the mythology of neutrality; secondly, to be clear about how issues of representation are being dealt with'**

'representative' sample using any other method. Given this reality, the action researcher needs to do two things: first, not to hide behind the mythology of neutrality; secondly, to be clear about how issues of representation are being dealt with. The *Prajateerpu* report seems to have done both. Several pages are devoted to explaining the criteria of jury selection, and making very clear that jurors were selected, in part, on the basis of membership in an existing group, which might strengthen the capacity of the jurors to engage in using the results of the research process if they chose to do so.

Such selective sampling, as long as it is clear and transparent, is entirely legitimate, and, arguably far more valid than the random representation process, which ignores the social agency of the person from whom knowledge is being elicited, and which fails to involve the 'respondents' as active 'proponents' in using research findings. If the concern of action research is not only knowledge generation, but also the generation of action and public awareness, then explicitly biasing the research towards those poor farmers who are more socially positioned to act is consistent with the methodology. Otherwise, such research is likely to be yet another extractive exercise which, in the name of 'neutrality' or 'objectivity', fails to benefit the poor.

To judge a report such as *Prajateerpu* using criteria of 'rigour' and 'validity' that have emerged from within a positivist paradigm, as many of those who have questioned it seem to have done, is to miss the point. The origins of participatory action research itself are predicated on going beyond a notion of scientism which, through reducing the 'subjects of knowledge' to the passive 'objects' of someone else's research often served to reify and re-enforce existing power relations within the status quo.

This is not to say that issues of rigour and validity are not important in action research exercises. Of course they are. But why not focus on criteria that are evolving in the action research field rather than using criteria for assessment of

<sup>1</sup> Guest editors' note: a 'reified concept' is an abstract idea that has been treated as a material or concrete thing.

Independent  
oversight panel  
member Paul ter  
Weel



Indian partners  
planning at the  
University of  
Hyderabad



quality research drawn from an entirely different paradigm? One could look for instance at the essay by Bradbury and Reason (2001) 'Broadening the bandwidth of validity: issues and choice-points for improving the quality of action research' in the authoritative *Handbook of Action Research*, recently published by Sage. This essay usefully summarises thinking which has helped to 'shift the dialogue about validity from a concern with idealist questions in search of 'Truth' to concern for engagement, dialogue, pragmatic outcomes, and an emergent, reflexive sense of what is important' (447). Assessing *Prajateerpu* on the basis of these latter criteria, would, I suspect, lead to very different conclusions than those reached by its critics who use more traditional measures.

Ultimately, of course, what is considered 'rigorous' or 'valid' research is linked to the question of who has the power and influence to determine what is acceptable and what is not. Concerns with methodology have historically been used by those with power to discredit those who challenge dominant discourse, as the body of knowledge on power and knowledge has shown. In this day and time, when a great deal of rhetorical service is paid to 'participation' by powerful development institutions, it is not unusual for those same institutions to question the message or the messengers when the results of participatory processes do not support the status quo.

If the jurors in this case had reached a differing conclusion, more favourable to the dominant development plans and processes of the state and international donors, would the concerns we have heard about rigour and evidence still have been raised? Or, if those representing the marginal farmers had done so, would these concerns have drawn such international attention? One wonders.

If there is a significant flaw in this report, it is that the researchers arguably used the final chapter to discuss points not clearly supported in the 'evidence' of the jury process. However, the authors do very clearly say that this final chapter

offers 'critical reflections on the wider significance of *Prajateerpu*'. They do not assert that these reflections are drawn from the jury process alone, and they clearly state on the back cover of the report that the views and opinions of the report do not reflect those of their sponsoring agency, their partners or their donors.

However, where the authors assert in the final chapter that 'there is little evidence' that the donor agencies involved have used 'appropriate methodologies to bring the voices of the poor into the planning and design of their aid programmes in Andhra Pradesh', it would have been valuable for them to give us more information to support their claim. (To do so, based on what I have seen separately from the authors, would likely have strengthened their case.)

If participatory processes are to be held accountable, claims to inclusion of the 'voices of the poor' need to be publicly monitored, challenged, and questioned, based on informed views. And, if the Andhra Pradesh example is such an important case of large-scale public participation, as the donors argue, then please let it be held up for more – not less – public research, scrutiny, and debate. The opportunity for valuable learning on how to scale up and improve the quality of participatory processes in poverty programmes and policies would be great. Unfortunately, that opportunity may have been missed by the diversion of the public debate to the important – but ultimately less significant – question of the validity of the report itself, rather than of the authenticity of voice and participation in the multimillion pound development strategies which the report questions.

#### A contribution from Vinita Suryanarayanan

**How can we ensure that citizen juries are representative of the wider populations from which they are drawn?**

First, I think we need to clarify who the 'we' refers to. If it refers to practitioners/NGOs then there is a need to pay atten-

tion to the processes and enable the participants to begin identifying this as an issue; however if it refers to the participants (which it should ideally) then there would be a need for them to gain the necessary experience before identifying this as an issue. While it is true that a process ensuring the full representation of all individuals/members is not feasible or even necessary at all times, it is important to aim towards a process that is open and inclusive for all individuals who may wish to participate. Further, rather than pre-determining who represents the group, the mechanism has to be such that every individual feels valued, that it ensures functional democracy, that even if there is a representative, s/he is chosen to do a function as defined by the people not the other way around. Thus, the problem has to be defined by the larger community as an expression of needs by the 'collective self'. This might ensure that citizen jury processes become more representative of the wider population and serve as one mechanism for accountability of the individual to the larger group.

#### **How can we extrapolate lessons from specific citizen jury deliberations on key issues to wider policy debates?**

If one were to look at the nature of specific jury deliberations in terms of participation, representation, quality of the discussion (not necessarily consensus), and other such process-related aspects rather than the issue being deliberated, it would certainly be useful to apply to wider policy debates.

#### **How can we use citizen jury-type procedures to ensure that the voices of poor people are represented in policy decisions that impinge on their lives?**

In order that such participatory processes become an integral part of policy decisions, there is a need to work towards evolving mechanisms that necessitate such participatory processes as pre-requisites for policy formulation and subsequent reviewing.

#### **A contribution from Dominic Glover**

In the *Prajateerpu* report, the authors argue that the citizens' jury represents an alternative and distinctive 'tradition of representation' that contrasts with commonly accepted strands of representation like opinion polls. I agree that the value of the citizens' jury derives from its nature as a deliberative forum and that conventional 'scientific' assessments of validity and reliability, such as statistical representativeness, may be inappropriate ways of evaluating the legitimacy of the jury process or its outcome.

However, it is worth qualifying the *Prajateerpu* authors' rather extravagant praise of the (judicial) jury. It is important

**A subsistence farmer talks to jury members on a field visit**



not to exaggerate the emancipatory significance of the jury system's roots in the *Magna Carta* of 1215.<sup>2</sup> Essentially, the *Magna Carta* represented a victory for the English barons in their political struggle with the king. The mechanism of the jury provided an institutional power base to protect 'free men' from the arbitrary exercise of the king's powers over their property and personal security. The *Magna Carta* was certainly not intended to emancipate the vast mass of English subjects. But, of course, this pedantic critique of the jury system's roots doesn't help us to discuss the value of the jury in contemporary judicial systems.

Research into the ways in which modern legal juries hear, understand, evaluate, and make decisions on the evidence presented to them in court leads to highly equivocal conclusions about the alertness, engagement, consideration, and responsibility with which jurors carry out their tasks, both individually and, much less, collectively. Besides these considerations, legal juries are charged only with 'finding facts' and reaching a simple Yes/No conclusion on the evidence before them. Therefore it is important not to place too much weight on the usefulness of the judicial jury as an analogue, much less an exemplary model, for 'citizens' juries' that are to deliberate on complex and controversial socio-economic and ethical questions and choices.

The value of the 'citizens' jury' should be seen in its nature as an inclusive, participatory, deliberative forum and not

<sup>2</sup> Guest editors' note: *Magna Carta* was signed in June 1215 between the barons of medieval England and King John. *Magna Carta* is Latin and means 'Great Charter'. *Magna Carta* was one of the most important documents in English legal history. The document was a series of written promises between the king and his subjects that he, the king, would govern England and deal with its people according to the customs of feudal law. *Magna Carta* is often thought of as the cornerstone of liberty and the chief defence against arbitrary and unjust rule in England. In fact it contains few sweeping statements of principle, but is a series of concessions wrung from the unwilling King John by his rebellious barons. However, *Magna Carta* established for the first time a very significant constitutional principle, namely that the power of the king could be limited by a written grant.

necessarily as a 'fact-finding' or decision-making body. The citizens' jury lacks the capacity, and is an inappropriate body, to make decisions on behalf of others (as a legal jury is supposed to).

I suggest that two recommendations follow from these brief points. Firstly, the analogy with juries needs to be downplayed, both rhetorically and in practice, because it is unhelpful and misleading. Therefore it would have been helpful if the *Prajateerpu* report had placed less emphasis on the collective 'verdict' of the jury and more on the other outcomes of the process, especially so as to draw out the complexities and subtleties of the deliberations as well as the knowledge, opinions, and preferences of the jury members. Secondly we should recognise that, ideally, participatory and inclusive deliberative processes need to be integrated with, and complementary to, other mechanisms of representation, transparency, and accountability. These may include representative democratic bodies, accountable bureaucracies, an accessible judicial system, free mass media, and so on. This ideal should not detract from recognition that, even in contexts where such complements are missing, the citizens' jury plays a critically important role in providing a forum for the expression of excluded voices in the policy process.

### A contribution from L. David Brown

It is quite striking how much energy and discussion the *Prajateerpu* report has generated. I agree that the description of results of participatory processes need to be couched with care, given that fully representative samples and unbiased processes are difficult or impossible to achieve within reasonable cost constraints. Earlier comments suggest that the *Prajateerpu* juries may have been less than representative and the scenarios may have been flawed. But if our goal is to listen to the voices of the poor and disenfranchised, it may be that we want to hear from relatively outspoken ('biased?') 'opinion leaders' who have already begun to think about the issues. A representative sample of the electorate may not be much help in predicting election outcomes if less than half the electorate bothers to vote. Seeking fully representative juries may be an inappropriate goal. It may also be that the *Prajateerpu* scenarios were unbalanced in their description of negatives and positives associated with the alternatives. But I am not very surprised that small farmers were not attracted to scenarios that threatened their tenure on the land. 'Balanced' scenarios that obscure fundamental consequences can produce distorted verdicts as well. More generally, I am concerned about what seems to be an implicit assumption that if the juries had been fully representative and the process perfectly

designed, the results would be 'scientifically true' and less subject to challenge. It seems to me that the juries' inputs should be treated as one more flawed input to the discussion, from sources with a relatively large stake and relatively small voice in the decision. Those voices can be treated with some scepticism, if there are reasons to believe that their views have been overstated. I understand the UK Department for International Development's annoyance with what they see as distorted descriptions and conclusions. But using the *Prajateerpu* report to press for full implementation of discipline-based standards of rigorous research – at a time when we are increasingly recognising the special value of modes of research that emphasise multi-disciplinary, problem-centred engagements between researchers and practitioners that are tailored to particular contexts – would be a serious step backward. Truth in labelling results by recognising ambiguities or shortcomings in the research makes a lot of sense. But commitment to fully representative sampling, wholly balanced scenarios, and other standards of research rigour that may not fit the situation can greatly increase the costs of citizen juries – and so undermine the goal of hearing otherwise inaudible voices in policy making.

### A contribution from Priya Deshingkar and Craig Johnson

Having not been participants at *Prajateerpu* we can only comment on the fallout of the event. The point has already been made in this forum that the selection of the jurors leaves some doubts about their representativeness as they were chosen by an NGO with a strong position on the subject. The point that we wish to make is that the reporting of the jury verdict by the press and other NGOs magnified this underlying bias, and fuelled myths regarding the state of the rural economy and the role of intensive agriculture and markets. In fact the debate has focused on a few pet issues of national and international NGOs but has left out issues related to debt, corruption, and the need for access to markets that were raised by the jury. In addition to the potential for organising NGOs to 'facipulate' the process, the information filtering and distorting role of organisations that are several steps removed from the actual event needs to be recognised.

We will address three of the dangerous myths that have been propagated and which rigorous empirical work in AP challenges.

### Myth one: people want to remain in subsistence agriculture

The very high proportion of people in agriculture in India and many developing countries may not be an indication that their preferred livelihood choice is to remain peasant farmers,

it may actually indicate that they have no other choice. Our year-long fieldwork in Andhra Pradesh has shown that the aspirations of many poor people are not to stay tied to the land but to look for alternative means of livelihood. But it is not easy because they lack the skills and capital to engage in more lucrative activities and therefore switch from one low-paid activity to another. Combined with this is the increased need for cash in rural households – for health care, irrigation, marriages, and education. Creating more paid opportunities outside agriculture could be a more effective way of addressing poverty rather than promoting a subsistence model.

#### **Myth two: the poor do not need to engage with markets**

The poor are already intertwined with markets – for pesticides, seeds, fertiliser, water, produce, labour, and supplies. But the terms are often highly exploitative. Buying and selling of agricultural inputs and outputs is through agents and middlemen who do not work under competitive market rules. The poor buy expensively and sell cheaply. Distress commerce is widespread. Very few people get a legal minimum wage for their labour, especially women and the so-called untouchable castes. Most poor people are locked into debt and the stranglehold of moneylenders. Fair terms of exchange would help small producers and more access to markets could be one way to achieve that.

#### **Myth three: new is bad and traditional is good**

There are several traditional institutions and processes that are keeping poor people poor. Among these are agrarian relations, caste and sexual discrimination, political powerlessness, physical remoteness, and last but not least, corruption. Is it not possible that modern contractual arrangements could suit the poor better than traditional arrangements with patrons and landlords?

The poor need new options and we need more public debate on how to create them. We cannot jump to conclusions about complex and uncertain scenarios on the basis of one citizens' jury. Only a sustained process of engagement – an ongoing and broad-ranging dialogue – with poor people will give us a true understanding of their aspirations, priorities, and opinions.

#### **A contribution from Biksham Gujja**

The issue of representation in any process will be questioned when the outcome is not liked by one side. If that side happens to wield power – the jury, the representation, and process will be questioned. There will not be any process that will get a perfect representation. This is not unique to participatory approaches. What is important is not aiming for

### **'We should recognise that, ideally, participatory and inclusive deliberative processes need to be integrated with, and complementary to, other mechanisms of representation, transparency, and accountability'**

perfect representation, but the transparency, inclusiveness, and openness of the process. As long as the process is open for anyone to participate, it should be okay. But issues of representation by anyone should be raised before, not after the deliberation.

#### **How can we ensure that citizen juries are representative of the wider populations from which they are drawn?**

In my view, it depends on who this 'WE' is? As long as the 'jury' is comprised of representatives of the people, who do not have a direct interest in the outcome – except sympathy and compassion with the poor – those individuals are fine. In any case, the jury selection process should also be as open as possible.

#### **How can we extrapolate lessons from specific citizen jury deliberations on key issues to wider policy debates?**

It is not easy, but generally if such extrapolations are addressing totally different issues, regions, and contexts, they will have to be taken with caution. If they are directly related to the same issue (e.g. food, water, etc.), then, yes, they should be taken into consideration.

#### **A contribution from Jules Pretty**

Recently, my colleagues Hugh Ward, Aletta Norval, Todd Landman, and I wrote an article for *Political Studies* (in press) entitled 'Open citizens' juries and the politics of sustainability'. In that article we made the following observations, which seem to have a direct bearing on this debate.

#### **General points from the literature**

- Citizens may take a longer-term, more socially oriented point of view when they are encouraged to deliberate on environmental issues.
- As a result, they may be less prone to 'free ride', [or] be driven by narrow self-interest.
- They are more likely to see decisions they have participated in making as legitimate, so their lifestyles are more likely to be altered and associated policies more likely to be implemented.

An example of deliberative planning, Jaywick, Essex, UK. Courtesy of Jules Pretty



A community exhibition, Northern Areas, Pakistan. Courtesy of Jules Pretty



- Local knowledge of environmental conditions, institutions, and social capital can be drawn upon to encourage better deals that stick over time. There are good practical and theoretical reasons for supporting citizens' juries as an innovation for deepening democratic participation. It is generally accepted that citizens' juries can address many of the problems associated with obtaining quality participation – even though they are expensive.

But there remain three areas of particular concern:

- the need to make space for deliberation and to address the problem of inducing people to participate;
- the question of social balance and representativeness; and,
- the extent to which changes from individual interests to larger social concerns are facilitated by democratic practices. Even among those who do participate in participatory forums, some will not become well-informed.

As a result, the quality of deliberation will suffer. Citizens' juries provide opportunities for learning and gathering information. Unlike opinion polls where individuals express their own opinions, members of a citizens' jury normally express a collective viewpoint. This may orientate jurors towards wider social concerns. Despite many positive features, citizens' juries, especially in the form in which they are commonly run in the UK and US, still face many problems, in particular:

- The over-emphasis on a restrictive conception of rationality and deliberation and its effects on the problem of 'voice' – in most CJs, a premium is placed on expert testimony, with expertise being construed in a rationalistic way – with such emphases leading to a restriction on acceptable forms of argumentation as well as on topics for deliberation.
- The drive to consensus, which may lead to the papering over of deep antagonisms by superficial compromises. Even those who acknowledge that deliberation may not lead to convergence of viewpoint still regard consensus as the ideal. There simply may not be an ideal solution that

everyone can agree upon. A truly democratic jury will have to make room for 'dissensus' and disagreement.

- The problem of agenda control by those who commission and run the jury. While sponsors and organisers set the agenda, juries can sometimes modify the charge, but rarely criticise structures, institutions, and resource-inequalities framing the issues.

An open citizens' jury model would encourage deeper democratic participation by addressing the limitations identified above. First, juries should be conceived of as part of a potentially open and open-ended political process where they contribute to a broader debate. Second, the jury should be accessible to all those who wish to express a viewpoint. Third, juries should be open to various forms of argumentation and rhetoric.

### A contribution from Francisco Sagasti

I found this debate over the lessons emerging from the *Prajateerpu* process and report most interesting, primarily because it covers three long-standing concerns of mine. First, I have been working for quite some time with participatory processes, insisting that development work should look beyond the experts and actively engage citizens (the most recent example of this is what we did in Agenda: PERU for nearly a decade). Second, since the mid-1970s I have argued for the recovery and selective upgrading of traditional technologies and for acknowledging the importance of traditional knowledge in the development process. Third, much of my work during the last three decades has focused on the role that external agents play in the process of development, and how to make them more responsive to the needs and wishes of the poor in developing regions.

While I enjoyed reading the *Prajateerpu* report, at the same time I was disappointed and disturbed by its content and by the way the results of the research were presented. I

fully share the concerns and commitment of the researchers, which emerges clearly throughout the report, but I find deep flaws in the methodology, the arguments, and the processes that were followed in the study.

One major flaw I observed in the *Prajateerpu* process is the way in which jurors were selected and the way in which the meetings were conducted. The authors of the study identified and selected jurors on the basis of information provided by community groups associated with NGOs, and advocacy organisations. From my experience with similar groups in other parts of the world, I would be most surprised if these community groups, NGOs and organisations were not opposed to the modernisation of traditional agricultural practices, and biased against 'neo-liberal' market-oriented policies in general. This is perfectly legitimate and I have great respect for their views – and sometimes find myself in agreement with them – but in order to conform to good practices in social science and action research we must acknowledge such biases, make them explicit and do our best to prevent them from tainting the results of our research.

The three criteria used to select jurors (small or marginal farmers living near or below the poverty line; open-minded, with no close connection to NGOs or political parties; likely to be articulate in discussions) appear sensible, but sometimes the third one contradicts the first two: articulate farmers usually have had interactions with organisations such as NGOs and political parties! Moreover, one of the things I have learned from small group behaviour is that there is an inherent bias towards 'groupthink' and a desire to avoid conflict. This usually leads to 'pseudo-consensus' as group members avoid contradicting each other; to the groups agreeing on what they imagine the organisers of the event want to hear; and to the most vocal and assertive members carrying the day. The ice-breaking and rapport-building sessions the group participated in during the first half-day all but guaranteed a situation in which the 'groupthink' biases would be quite strong.

### **A contribution from Keith Bezanson and Nigel Cross**

We find aspects of the citizens' jury methodology used in the *Prajateerpu* study problematic and, even if it may be asserted that this did not lead to bias in the report, a very strong appearance of this remains. This conclusion relates especially to the manner in which the jury was selected and especially to the nature of the three scenarios.

The list of potential jurors for the *Prajateerpu* event was provided by local NGOs. There is nothing inherently wrong with this. Indeed, we have urged and supported participa-

**'There will not be any process that will get a perfect representation. This is not unique to participatory approaches. What is important is not aiming for perfect representation, but the transparency, inclusiveness, and openness of the process.'**

tory research precisely on the basis of this type of selection (the result of which is classified in social science statistics as selective but not representative) and we have argued that this is important as a counter-weight to the traditional imbalance that derives from groups of 'experts' who are selected by 'officials' and who have acted as judges and juries in making choices for poor people. But, it would be surprising if the NGOs and community groups were not as a matter of principle critical of the modernisation of traditional agriculture and to non-local markets. In other words, the sampling technique may have created a bias towards a particular result in the research. Let us emphasise that we have no problem with this and would argue that it is entirely legitimate – even necessary – to seek out the voices of those who are opposed to the modernisation of traditional agriculture, but the bias needs to be made explicit and clearly acknowledged, and the results of enquiry based on this sampling need to be presented and interpreted in that light. This is fundamental to the best practice of social science research. The problem is that this has not been done in the *Prajateerpu* report. Indeed, the report specifically dismisses the techniques of statistical sampling.

We are aware that the question of sampling and representativeness raises large issues that relate to the basic underpinnings of social science and that these are also embedded in larger debates around what constitutes sound social science, what is meant by verification, and what the requirements are for validity and validation. These are not entirely new issues – indeed, for at least 30 years they have been central to debates in the field of operational research. They are, however, issues that are assuming a renewed prominence – a direct consequence of new experiments in participatory and policy-oriented research. It is these new efforts that make the entire area of action-directed research a challenging, frontier area methodologically and conceptually. It is also what makes it exciting and it is why we should continue to intensify our efforts in this area. But because it is frontier and highly disputed, it is all the more important that

bias be declared and claims be prudent until its utilitarian boundaries are adequately established.

### A contribution from Paul Richards

How representative are 'participatory' meetings? The way to find out is to do proper baseline social research. This (alas) was always the Achilles' heel of PRA – donors were keen to find 'quick and dirty' ways of doing what an anthropologist might take several years to accomplish. We must now recognise this weakness and try and correct it. Agencies doing post-war rural recovery support work in Sierra Leone are fond of creating Village Development Committees to oversee

distribution of humanitarian inputs on a 'participatory' basis. But properly designed social survey instruments soon reveal the lack of representativeness of such institutions. In one case – where only 6% of the population speak any English – social survey revealed that an English-speaker was three times more likely to be able to access humanitarian inputs than villagers who only spoke the local language. In other words 'participation' was biased – in this case – to those able to 'do the discourse'. Consensus conference organisers work hard, I know, to ensure 'typicality' and 'representativeness', but we need high-quality background data sets to find out what words like 'typicality' and 'representativeness' mean.

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# Contributions on issues of evidence, legitimacy, and authenticity

How can we ensure that citizen jury processes are fair and unbiased so that their 'verdicts' are accepted as trustworthy by all relevant actors?

Contributions to this area of the discussion were received from the registrants listed below:

- **Robert Chambers**, Research Associate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **Brian Wynne**, Centre for the Study of Environmental Change and Chair of the Centre for Science Studies, Lancaster University, UK

- **Biksham Gujja**, Coordinator, Freshwater Programme, WWF International, Switzerland
- **Francisco Sagasti**, Director, Agenda, Peru
- **Keith Bezanson**, Director, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **Nigel Cross**, Director, International Institute for Environment and Development, UK

## A contribution from Robert Chambers

I agree with John Gaventa's points (see p.15, 'Issues of representativeness') and will not repeat them. My comments concern commitment, power, presentation, self-critical reflection, costs, and potential.

Some of the fallout from the *Prajateerpu* process has diverted attention from the commitment shared by all those who have become involved. All those I know, in different positions, and in different organisations, are committed to giving voice to those who are poor and excluded. All recognise the contribution that can be made by empowering participatory approaches and methods like citizens' juries, and the need to further develop and use such approaches and methods. The opportunity now is to recognise and build on this common ground.

As in development generally, power is a central issue. It is

a pervasive problem that those with power are told what they are believed to want to hear and are vulnerable to rejecting bad news. 'All power deceives.' This can apply in government organisations, aid agencies, NGOs, and research organisations alike. Wherever we work, none of us is immune. If the voices of poor and marginalised people are to be heard, those with power have to restrain their reactions to unwelcome information or views, even when they believe these to be flawed. Defending oneself or one's organisation may be natural and necessary, but unless done with moderation and self-critical reflection, it can mean missing opportunities to learn and do better. And there is the danger of inhibiting future feedback and learning.

Presentation affects impact. Honest and fearless presentation is a bedrock. At the same time, there are many styles and strategies. Who has not written and rewritten (as I have

The jury deliberate upon evidence presented by expert witnesses



done with this note) reflecting on who will read what is said, how they will react to it, cutting out a sentence here, adding another there, in the hope of achieving net good effects? Those who criticise or reject a report sometimes seize on one or two sentences or statements that could have been handled with small editorial changes and little or no loss. How best to present findings demands honesty, sensitivity, courage, and versatility. Far from inhibiting expression, the *Prajateerpu* experience will reinforce the passionate commitments of colleagues to integrity, independence of expression, pluralism, open debate, and amplifying the voices of those who are poor and excluded. Anything less would be a betrayal of our principles and a betrayal of the poor people for whom ultimately we work.

Underlying and informing these values is the rigour of self-critical reflection. Much of the rigour of participatory research is based on this. (This should also apply in positivist research but is rarer there). Self-critical reflection entails striving to be critically aware of oneself, one's interests and predispositions, how one's perceptions and knowledge are formed and sustained, monitoring oneself to guard against the hubris of self-righteousness (and who am I to talk?), and recognising that we are all wrong sometimes. This is much of the basis for validity, trustworthiness, and credibility in participatory research. It is then a test of such research to ask how aware, critical, and even-handed it is. The authors of the *Prajateerpu* report go to considerable and unusual pains to explain the process. To the extent that they identify flaws in their work, they add, not detract, from its validity and credibility. And these practices of self-critical reflection are needed too by all actors in development, not least those with more power.

The costs of the *Prajateerpu* process have been high.

**'For a scenario exercise to be valid and useful, the alternative scenarios should be equally appealing to participants, for example, in terms of the impact they would have on their lives. This is the way in which values and aspirations can be brought out into the light and made explicit, but without introducing biases that could invalidate the exercise'**

Tremendous efforts in India went into preparing and conducting the jury, not least those of the convenors, jurors, witnesses, facilitators, and oversight panel, and then into writing up and disseminating the results. On top of that, the costs of the subsequent controversies have been exceptionally high. These are easily overlooked as costs. My own reluctance to engage could be attributed variously to cowardice, prudence, lack of commitment, laziness, wanting a quiet life, having friends on different sides of the debate, or (and of course my ego prefers this self-righteous and oh-so-dubious excuse) wishing to use in other ways whatever time and energy remain to me. It has been sad to see so many good people sucked in and stressed. The opportunity cost of their time and energy has been huge. Given their personal commitments, this has brought indirect, but no less real because unseen, costs to poor people. This must apply in NGOs in India, in DFID, in IIED and in IDS, and for the researchers and others. There has been pain, distress and anger, sleepless nights, and even sickness. There is a lot for all, not least the main actors, to reflect on, and a lot for the development community at large to learn about how to minimise costs like these without sacrificing, and in indeed while enhancing, benefits to poor people.

That said, the potential benefits remain enormous. There are the substantive findings. Many others might want to join me in an appeal to policy makers and others to listen, reflect, and act on what the jurors concluded. There is so much there that otherwise would have been so little heard. Further, there is the pioneering of the methodology and the prominent recognition it has received. May many others be inspired to conduct and take part in consultations of this sort. May these increasingly level the playing fields of power, and inform and improve policy and practice. And may they enable many more of those who are poor and excluded to gain for themselves the better lives, which are their right.

**Expert witness  
Dr Ramdas,  
Director of  
Anthrax**



**Expert witness  
Partha Dasgupta,  
from Syngenta Seeds  
Asia-Pacific**



### **A contribution from Brian Wynne** **Interpretive responsibilities**

Public consultation, participation, or deliberative processes always pose the question of how to interpret what 'public voice' means for whatever context and actors are salient in a given case (and even these may be open to different definitions). It is rarely likely to be so clear, direct, explicit and focused as to require little or no such work and responsibility. In this sense the *Prajateerpu* work is part of a much larger diverse body that is attempting to understand and represent those people referred to, and often quoted at length. This is simultaneously, and legitimately, both intellectual and political – and it should be part of a continuing process of publication, alternative attempted representations and interpretations, criticism and development of positions and understandings, including self-understandings... Whatever the rights and wrongs of their account of the public voices, which can be openly criticised and developed, the [*Prajateerpu* team] seem to have done just this, whilst their critics appear to be operating with the assumption that social science research can be done free of any such interpretive work. This is not true, including for quantitative social survey methods which often conceal their interpretive commitments in the standard meanings necessarily assumed in the closed questions (e.g. about 'risk', or 'science', or 'uncertainty') which they formulate and use. I may have misunderstood some of the criticism, but some of it appears to me to reflect this mistaken (and sadly not by any means unusual) positivist epistemic frame.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guest editors' note: Wynne is referring to 'positivism', the theory that theology and metaphysics are earlier imperfect modes of knowledge and that positive knowledge is based on natural phenomena and their properties and relations as verified by the empirical sciences. A 'positivist epistemic frame' relates to 'logical positivism', a 20th century philosophical movement that holds characteristically that all meaningful statements are either analytic or conclusively verifiable or at least confirmable by observation and experiment and that metaphysical theories are therefore strictly meaningless. This is also called 'logical empiricism'.

[T]he ostensibly clear negative verdict given by the jurors to GM crops should surely be read as a resounding NO under existing conditions, which is not necessarily a NO forever, under any circumstances. As a general matter, I would like to have seen much more focus in the citizens' jury deliberations and in the post-jury analysis by the authors, on the possible conditions under which new food technologies such as these, would be regarded as consistent with the other livelihood needs of the jurors and their marginal farmer ilk. There is ample evidence of this sort scattered throughout the findings ...but it is not organised in such a way as to allow this kind of question the policy prominence it deserves. In this sense it falls inadvertently into the wider tendency ...of the automatic polarisation of the global GM crops-foods issue into the rigid options of either swallow it whole, as given, or reject it totally... Why can we not take seriously alternative models of modernisation, including ones which narrow-minded dogmatic proponents of particular visions might not even recognise as such because they involve different relations of power, political culture, and control-accountability of science and technology? Unfortunately, and maybe inevitably given the power-relations involved, the *Prajateerpu* process and report ended up vulnerable to being seen as just a negative condemnation of one such vision, and not as also a positive articulation of alternatives grounded in more effective democratic inputs...

...Here, I would have liked to see a more systematic attempt to elicit the conditions [for these alternatives]... and then to have seen them analysed for their implications. This would offer one possible escape from the rather immature dominant assumptions that the only answers are 'Yes' or 'No', leaving a gaping hole which should be central in public discourse and research and policy, about what conditions would be needed (including changed technologies and changed ownership-forms) to make the technologies

Jury member Deevanamma debating evidence presented by expert witness K Akbal Rao



Expert witness K Akbal Rao, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh



more socially acceptable. At least this might offer a new collective learning trajectory to escape from the simplistic binary polarisations, which have defined many such issues thus far.

### A contribution from Biksham Gujja

Jury processes can be fair and unbiased as much as possible, but all the relevant actors may not accept their verdicts. If those actors happen to have the power to override the views of the vast majority of people then they can ignore the outcome, irrespective of quality of evidence, fairness of the jury etc. Legitimacy and authenticity are related to power. They also depend on resources. Most often, poor people do not have the resources to collect, present, and authenticate the evidence and facts.

### A contribution from Francisco Sagasti

One problem I noted with the *Prajateerpu* process was the way the jury was used to deal with anticipated events. As the report points out, citizens' juries, people's courts and similar schemes have been used to address a variety of issues in a participatory manner, both in developed and developing countries. However, by and large, most of those issues refer to specific and clearly delimited questions in which judgements of fact and value have to be made by informed representatives of the general public – who must decide, for example, whether an accused person is guilty or not, whether public policies (health, environment, zoning) serve the interests of citizens, or whether local governments' programmes have been adequately designed and put in practice. In these cases, the issues dealt with are usually empirically grounded, adequate data is available and evidence can be presented to the jurors. This is not the situation when dealing with scenarios and hypothetical events that may (or may not) take place with a twenty-year time horizon. Hard data, facts, and

evidence, which constitute the foundation on which jurors weave their judgements of fact and value, do not exist when dealing with hypothetical futures and scenarios.

The second problem I have with this study is the way in which the scenarios were prepared and presented to the jury members. I have worked with scenarios for a long time, and one of the first lessons I learnt is that, for a scenario exercise to be valid and useful, the alternative scenarios should be equally appealing to participants, for example, in terms of the impact they would have on their lives. This is the way in which values and aspirations can be brought out into the light and made explicit, but without introducing biases that could invalidate the exercise. Otherwise, when the descriptions of future situations contained in alternative scenarios are not equally desirable, participants' choices tend to focus on the 'most desirable' scenario constructed by the organisers of the exercise and thus confirm their views. As a consequence, the process by which the scenarios are constructed requires a great deal of rigour and self-restraint. Preparing three equally attractive but qualitatively different scenarios is a rather difficult task, and it does not appear that the researchers in this project did that. Biases show clearly in the descriptions contained in the appendix, and even without a citizens' jury process, it is clear that the third scenario would appeal to the jurors – especially considering the jury selection procedures.

These two considerations lead me to the conclusion that it would have been almost impossible for the results to be different. Using a metaphor, one could say that the dice were loaded right from the beginning of the project. In addition, when reading the document I also noticed several instances in which the authors use language that would be more at home in a political statement, rather than in a research report. This is why I consider this to be an advocacy, not a research exercise.

### **A contribution from Keith Bezanson and Nigel Cross**

We regard citizen jury approaches as an innovative and promising avenue of participatory research. It is precisely because this involves novel and experimental methodologies that we argue that considerable prudence and caution are required in claims made for the validity and reliability of results. This position is neither new nor unique. Our Institutes apply precisely the same reasoning to new and innovative microbiological research in genetic modification where we continue to argue forcefully that results need to be presented with much greater tentativeness and prudence than is generally the case. More specifically, we have argued that responsible research in genetically modified products requires considerable independent replication before claims of scientific generalisability should be made and that the 'precautionary principle' should be followed not only as a matter of social and political policy but also as a matter of responsible scientific practice. Our conclusion is that the presentation of the *Prajateerpu* report does not reflect a sufficiently 'precautionary' approach, that the results should have been presented as promising but requiring replication, further verification, and additional independent validation.

The key to the validity of a scenario exercise is that the scenarios should, at a minimum, always aim at a fully balanced presentation of pluses and minuses. This is the central, defining principle of social enquiry predicated on the construction of scenarios. If scenarios are presented in a way that makes one of them inherently far more appealing than others, they produce a self-fulfilling prophecy. The description of the scenarios in the *Prajateerpu* report demonstrates not only that they fall far short of meeting a criterion of being equally appealing, they do not comprise a balanced presentation of pluses and minuses. Indeed, they appear to have created a strong probability that only the third scenario would be viewed by the jury as holding any merit at all in terms of bringing benefits into their lives and the lives of poor and marginal farmers in Andhra Pradesh. These scenarios are critically central to the credibility of the report. Yet any benefits indicated for Scenario One are quickly offset by an extensive range of negative factors. The same applies to Scenario Two. But not a single negative or even risk of a negative has been included in the third scenario.

In sum, any actual or potential benefits from the first two scenarios are quickly offset by a substantial number of serious negatives, including greater insecurity, loss of jobs (livelihoods), and political disempowerment. By contrast, Scenario Three is a portrait of rural harmony, social harmony, livelihoods, empowerment, environmental sustainability, personal

economic and financial gain, and so on.

Now, it is entirely possible that the negatives listed for the first two scenarios could represent an entirely realistic assessment of what could/would actually result from those scenarios. Whether we would agree or otherwise with what is presented in those scenarios is not something that we intend to argue here. Our concern has been and is over the scientific validity of the scenarios methodology that has been used. Whatever one's personal value preferences, a balanced presentation of scenarios would require the stipulation of several obvious high risks of negative consequences within the third scenario. There is, for example, no shortage of evidence of diminishing returns to agricultural intensification by small-holder farmers. The three scenarios comprised the main reference points for the deliberative tasks assigned to the jury, but the scenarios are seriously imbalanced. Far from meeting the criterion of 'equally appealing', they create the strong impression of bias and of having established a self-fulfilling prophecy.

### **Postscript from Nigel Cross**

Since the close of the e-forum, I have had the opportunity of visiting Andhra Pradesh and meeting with jury members and farmers who were not jurors, members of the Andhra Pradesh Coalition in Defence of Diversity and DFID AP. I have also re-reviewed some of the video material. My original comments (together with those of Keith Bezanson) were based on a careful reading of the *Prajateerpu* report. This is by way of reflecting further on some of the e-forum issues in the light of my visit.

Both the jurors and non-jurors I talked with (both groups working with the Deccan Development Society) indicated that they had a firm preference for Scenario Three – localised food systems – and in the case of the jurors this was their strongly held view before their exposure to *Prajateerpu*. Indeed the organisers agree the jury selection was biased in favour of women and other marginal farmers. As many contributors to the e-forum have stated this is both unsurprising and, in many ways, the whole point of the exercise, and does not invalidate the *Prajateerpu* findings. I agree, but it does suggest that the term 'citizens' jury' is (as noted by Glover, p.17) both unhelpful and misleading.

It was noticeable, and again unsurprising, that the expert witnesses in favour of localised food systems, coming from civil society and activist backgrounds, were articulate in the 'language' of the poor, and were much more effective and sympathetic advocates than the technocrats and the government representatives, who were unused to such dialogues and spoke the top-down language of the scientific and

administrative elite. The representative of the AP government laboured under the kind of handicap facing an inexperienced attorney defending an alleged murderer in the state of Texas. For me, the great potential for *Prajateerpu* is not in constructing a perfect deliberative jury system, carefully weighing the pros and cons of well-presented evidence. Rather it offers an effective platform for the forceful and dynamic expression of the views and opinions of otherwise marginalised groups, and creates media interest (admittedly often motivated by party politics) and public debate that is hard for governments and donors to ignore.

Several of the witnesses and advocates expressed their surprise at the knowledge of the farmers and their commitment to their existing farming practices. They confessed to being very impressed and admitted that they had not been exposed to such encounters before. A note of caution, however. Their remarks were made on-camera. Off-camera they may be some way from conversion or renunciation. Only

if the 'verdict' obliges the state government to provide official information, and account for its decision making (which, as Goetz notes on p.40 is not the case), does the quasi-legal vocabulary of *Prajateerpu* stand up.

Goetz asks '[are] there any examples of policy-makers actually changing policies as a result of these exercises?'. There is both solidarity and optimism among jury participants and others associated with the *Prajateerpu* process. Is that optimism justified? By delivering a 'verdict' participants might reasonably expect an informed and responsive judgement. In the case of *Prajateerpu* such expectations were heightened by the supposition that the presentation of the report by farmers in a committee room in the UK parliament would itself influence policy. More *Prajateerpus* are planned for Andhra Pradesh, and perhaps this will lead to a popular movement that has a real impact. But there is also a danger that many will be disappointed if the western notions of democracy and justice promoted by *Prajateerpu* fail to deliver.

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# Contributions on issues of engagement with the policy process

How can citizen juries and related approaches help create spaces for constructive exchanges between key stakeholders? How can they be used to foster effective links between research and advocacy? How can donors engage effectively with democratically elected governments and civil society organisations through the use of participatory approaches, such as citizen juries?

Contributions to this area of the discussion were received from the registrants listed below:

- **Carine Pinotti**, University of Orleans, France
- **Peter Reason**, Professor of Action Research/Practice at the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice, School of Management, University of Bath, UK

- **Vinita Suryanarayanan**, MAYA, India
- **Brian Wynne**, Centre for the Study of Environmental Change and Chair of the Centre for Science Studies, Lancaster University, UK
- **Biksham Gujja**, Coordinator, Freshwater Programme, WWF International, Switzerland
- **Francisco Sagasti**, Director, Agenda, Peru
- **Lindsey Colbourne**, Director, InterAct, UK

## A contribution from Carine Pinotti

Understanding *Prajateerpu* through the politics of autonomy

Having had the privilege of being a silent observer of the *Prajateerpu*, I propose to look into four dimensions that set this event apart from other citizens' juries.

### 1. A majority of women on the jury

A clear and well thought-out decision was made by the organisers of *Prajateerpu*, from the onset, to form a jury with

a majority of women. The rationale for such a decision is at least three-fold:

- well over half of the agricultural work in India is undertaken by women;
- there are stark differences between men's and women's perceptions about farming; and,
- creating a context where rural women feel comfortable enough to voice their concerns, without any interference by men, is essential to the sincere expression of their concerns.

This is precisely what was achieved during the *Prajateerpu*

**Expert witness TN Prakash,  
Professor of Agriculture and  
Coordinator, Agro  
Biodiversity Group of  
National Strategy and  
Action Plan (NBSAP), India**



**Jury members  
Ganeshra (left)  
and Paparao  
(right)**



process. Because the jurors' panel was composed of a 'critical number' of women, most of them from low castes, there was no obstacle to any of the jury members speaking up with confidence. There is little doubt, in my view, that the deliberations and the verdict would have taken quite a different course had women not been empowered – as they were – to energetically present their views and concerns throughout this entire process.

This high level of sensitivity to gender concerns on the part of the people who designed *Prajateerpu* and those who worked towards making it a concrete event is highly commendable. It reflects a rare political will to enable rural women to develop a vision tailored to their preoccupations and aspirations.

## 2. A real space for examining critical livelihood issues

Another strength of this particular citizens' jury lies in the very choice of the subject matter under scrutiny. What we have here is not a narrowly framed question of approval or rejection of a given technology, but a debate around a political, social, and economic model of development for food and farming in a State.

Every step in the elaboration of this citizens' jury concurred towards ensuring that this broad debate could take place: from the selection of Jury members amongst small and marginal farmers from the State, to the careful choice of special witnesses representing a wide range of sectors and interest groups, to the composition of the oversight panel. An innovative methodology was crafted with the same aim in mind of enabling all participants to review the proposed visions in their totality.

I would argue that these efforts were not in vain. Indeed,

as the days unfolded, the panel of jurors acquired a fuller grasp of their role in this process, and the confidence to address a vast array of issues. Gradually departing from questions pertaining to their individual situations, the jury members found more and more effective ways of questioning the special witnesses on the impact of new technologies on their lives, on the differential treatment between farmers of different socio-economic categories, and on the stakes of control and access by producers like them to productive resources.

There was a very strong will, on their part, to connect happenings in their daily life to the larger policies defended or contested by the special witnesses. A juror from Warangal District spoke about the plight of farmers in his region, who are for the great majority of them 'heavily in debt'.

Jurors managed to steer the debate around central livelihood issues, without letting the witnesses stray away for too long into statistical or theoretical considerations. Other core economic or ecological problems addressed by the jurors included low market prices, overproduction, soil fertility depletion, diminishing cattle population, repeated rain failures and health concerns linked to the use of chemicals.

There was no real scope for any of the special witnesses to 'hijack' the process by cornering farmers on the jury into a purely technical or scientific debate, as is so often the case in encounters of this sort. This is not to say that no one attempted the trick. Partha Dasgupta from Syngenta (a leading agro-chemical company) did for instance attempt to conjecture on the alleged interconnectedness between world population, hunger, and genetic engineering, but he was soon brought back into the fold by incisive questions from the jury members, pertaining to their own reality. Thus, *Praja-*



*teerpu* gave small farmers an opportunity to question practitioners of science, technology, law, and policy from their own standpoint. This is no small achievement.

### 3. Demystifying the practice of policy making

This event provided a unique forum for a collective and grounded critical analysis of the way in which particular technologies or policies can not only fail to meet their goals, but also actually inhibit the use of local resources and knowledge of people at the grassroots level.

These testimonies show that, more often than is generally admitted, the choice of a particular political and technological course does close off other options, including options that have been used sustainably by people for generations. In weighing the various options presented to them with respect to production, distribution, and marketing of agricultural produce, the jury members essentially tried to assess whether and how each of these could enter into synergy with the practices and modes of organisation they had found to be reliable in their own life experience. Options that appeared to condemn their own means of accessing, managing, and sharing resources were generally rejected; those that did not came under further scrutiny, and adjustments were sometimes proposed.

Clearly, the criteria taken into consideration by farmers in this discerning exercise go far beyond norms of efficiency and progress on which technocrats base their projections. Some technologies were rejected not on account of their inadequacy, but because their nature was found untrustworthy and unappealing. On several occasions, women jurors emphatically referred to their own perceptions about the natural world and their place in it to stake a claim about the unwanted nature of a technology (like gene transfers between species). In other words, they did not hesitate to act on inner feelings and impressions to dismiss some of the proposed options.

It is quite uncommon for such intuitive insights to have a place in debates around scientific, technical, or policy matters. That women jurors would feel sufficiently at ease to express such concerns, and to base policy recommendations on them is, in my view, a sign that the *Prajateerpu* really offered them a space where all meaningful matters could be raised.

### 4. The politics of autonomy and contentment

Much of the jury's verdict speaks to a quest for autonomy. In fact, it tells us that the aspiration to build up self-reliance is not just a marginal concern, but quite a central one to small and marginal farmers. That the entire verdict would be lined with this fundamental concern came to me as a surprise. In my view, this outcome has much to do with the ample space

**'There is little doubt, in my view, that the deliberations and the verdict would have taken quite a different course had women not been empowered – as they were – to energetically present their views and concerns throughout this entire process.'**

given to women farmers, from the onset and over the entire process, to express their own set of convictions and concerns. This is undeniably one of the greatest merits of *Prajateerpu*.

The question one is left with, then, is whether strands of independent thought and action at the grassroots level are compatible with a 'development' approach, insofar as development, however participatory it is made out to be, entails the growth of the organised sector, market expansion, and the promotion of lending institutions (including micro-credit). If the corpus of improved technologies, management schemes and regulatory agencies that governments and donors seek to implement – as illustrated by *Vision 2020* – is shown to effectively inhibit communities from acting on their own terms, then should the very foundations of policy-making and aid not be reconsidered?

Testimonies by farmers on the jury suggest no number of development schemes elaborated by external agents can replace the multitude of ideas that germinate in the mind of people when they are empowered to look out for their own solutions. The verdict calls for a shift in policy-making processes, whereby policies are crafted in such a way as to strengthen the practices that ensure self-sustaining livelihoods for rural communities, instead of undermining them.

All things considered, maybe it is not such a bewildering turn of events that DFID-India felt inclined to reject the *Prajateerpu* report. When a pioneering approach stirs the ground beneath the feet of those at the top of the political and economic ladder, how else can we expect them to react, initially, but by attempting to consolidate their position? But as time passes, an alternative course – that of recognising the legitimacy of a constructive critique addressed to them and engaging in dialogue – may well emerge.

Over and above these speculations about the willingness of the people without any attachment to the land to give due consideration to the concerns of people from the land, I would like to acclaim the Andhra Pradesh *Prajateerpu* as a very sensible, balanced, and mature exercise in the nascent movement of participatory democracy.

Day two: the jury watch  
one of the three video  
scenario presentations



### A contribution from Peter Reason

While not in any way involved in the *Prajateerpu* project, I would like to add some comments to the debate from the perspective of participatory research methodology. Participatory forms of inquiry are not simply alternative social science methods to be added to the toolkit of social scientists, for they represent a fundamentally different orientation to the nature of inquiry and what we take as knowledge, as both John Gaventa and Brian Wynne have already pointed out in this exchange: Gaventa points out that knowledge can no longer be seen as neutral in a positivist sense, Wynne to the unavoidable relationships between knowledge, power, and politics. So we need to extend and amplify our understanding of the nature of quality or validity in action research. One important criterion of quality in action research is that it opens new communicative spaces in which democratic inquiry can take place, a point well made by Stephen Kemmis exploring the contribution of Habermas' critical theory in his contribution to the *Handbook of Action Research*. Bjørn Gustavsen, at the Work Research Institute in Norway, argues that we can only base social inquiry on the institutions of democracy, however ambiguous and many sided this concept may be. Democracy can never be perfect, but is the only starting point.

Democratic inquiry is never final, but rather emergent. So a second important criterion of quality is whether the work has contributed to the emergence of a wide community of inquiry amongst divergent stakeholders? Do all those involved increase their ability to inquire and learn together? Does it provide ways in which silenced voices may increasingly be heard? Do formal scientific and policy voices find ways to communicate with informal and local voices? A citizens' jury may be seen as flawed when taken in isolation, but

as part of an emerging process of democratic debate it may be seen in a much more positive light. So I suggest in judging the quality of participative action research we must stop looking for final answers and concern ourselves more with the processes of emerging democratic engagement. To argue about whether we have got the representation, the evidence, the conclusions 'right' in this case is in some ways to miss the point: of course these issues are important, but in a large, complex, and immensely controversial issue such as this one there will be never be one best way. What is much more important is whether we have contributed to a widening of informed and inquiring dialogue.

### A contribution from Vinita Suryanarayanan

Citizens' juries/any other similar participatory approaches need to become part of ongoing processes at the local level rather than be 'set up' or 'called for' only when organisations or donors feel the need. This does not imply merely setting up a mechanism but calls for a re-haul of the dominant thinking, to believe that policy decisions need to evolve from people's own needs, interests, and aspirations.

To ensure a constructive exchange, the process should facilitate the representative individuals to articulate their needs in an empowering manner rather than voice their demands and needs as a petition alone.

Two issues remain unresolved:

- looking at the 'self' as a collective-self rather than restrict it to individual needs and interests alone; and,
- designing the stakeholder engagement exercise so that it does not stop with the issue at hand, but instead empowers the participants and the people they represent and sets in play an ongoing process of discussion, action, and reflection.

### A contribution from Vinita Suryanarayanan

Developing any effective policy requires a long-term vision of developmental planning. At the heart of the process of policy formulation is the articulation of people in the State – whether they are elected representatives, members of local collectives, communities across the various strata of society in villages and urban areas – citizens, at large. The process of collective articulation would lead to the crystallisation of a collective vision, which would then form the policy. A policy directive cannot only be a statement of intent. The institutional mechanisms that would translate the policy into reality and the clear fixing of accountability on relevant agencies has to be an inherent part of the policy itself. In addition, an institutional structure that would ensure citizens' participation that will work at monitoring and supporting the implementation of the policy needs to be set up.

At present the tendency of many organisations is to try to influence a particular Government's development agenda that does not necessarily contain policies and exists so long as the Government exists. This agenda reflects a limited perspective towards addressing certain issues – be it education, health, technology – that is manifest in corresponding schemes and programmes, which are often populist measures. Influencing policy does not imply making cosmetic changes in archaic authoritative guidelines of schemes that have assumed the form of Government policies. It is about mobilising community demand, action, and self-organisation towards the vision. The existing structure assumes that there is a policy that will translate into schemes and have a trickle-down effect. How can this 'policy' – devoid of a vision – translate into something useful?

### **A contribution from Brian Wynne** **Escaping the hegemony of (singular) modernisation**

That hitherto largely unheard voices of poor Indian farmers and their messengers (in this case Pimbert-Wakeford and the team involved) provided a vision of 'development' which on the face of it looks like 'non-development', also needs serious and public reflection and debate. [T]his situation is not that different in fundamentals from the situation which prevails with respect to 'development', 'further modernisation', and the global knowledge-economy etc., in otherwise hugely different developed-world societies. Faced with various expert schemes – for example to 'modernise' food production and distribution – a typical European public response (see for example: [www.pabe.net](http://www.pabe.net)) is not usually decisively pro- or anti. Instead it looks for honest debate about: 'Who needs this? Why is it being done?' This is not at all an anti-technology worldview; many such respondents indicate their gratitude that modern convenience food (and food-technologies like microwaves for example) has been made available...

...To see the alternative scientific opportunities requires commitment, imagination, and reflection by scientific and technical experts helped by those public voices... A striking aspect of the process which the *Prajateerpu* report describes for eliciting the farmers' meanings is that nowhere do the facilitators challenge the farmers, as a 'Devil's Advocate' move in eliciting responses. This is often used in similar research situations to challenge them to elaborate their reasons for defending a particular stance, which provides more fieldwork data and insight, including more clues to tacit culturally embedded assumptions, habits of thought etc., which would not otherwise emerge. Perhaps the sensitivities described concerning the need to break down the farmers'

**Kavitha Kuruganti, one of the facilitators who helped in briefing the jury and preparing the verdict**



extreme inhibitions and insecurities about these processes justify the avoidance of any forms of challenge – but on the other hand the respondents are described as pretty robust, especially after the initial phases, so it is worth asking whether this 'challenge' strategy should have been used at appropriate times in the deliberations which were conducted. Maybe it was used – but if so, it escaped description.

### **Research engagements**

I do think that the *Prajateerpu* methodological strategy as described in section 4.2 of the report (p. 38–39, 'Balance between Research and Emancipation') is flawed in at least one respect. To my mind this section draws an artificially sharp dichotomy between 'mere social research' and 'qualitative research' of a participatory kind like *Prajateerpu*. The distinction based on the notion that the former 'takes information, experiences, and knowledge from their subjects without giving anything back' (p.38) seems to reflect a very narrow notion of what 'giving something back' may involve. Many 'mere' social research projects which are participatory only to the extent of using interviews, focus groups, surveys, or whatever else from the conventional methodological toolbox (thus not 'participatory' in Pimbert and Wakeford's terms) nevertheless give much back in the ways in which they communicate to policy actors amongst others, the complexities, hidden exploitations, perverse unintended effects of policies, etc., imposed on ordinary citizens by institutional behaviours.

In this sense they represent powerless citizens to the powerful, in ways that those citizens alone may never have the chance to do. Just because they may not thereby give anything much back directly to their respondents does not mean they do not give anything back on their behalf. Of

course the authors' criticism is often true that research into public attitudes, opinions, or preferences can be used cynically by policy makers to make it appear that policy is based on democratic public inputs; but this does not make the attempt by conventional social researchers accurately and validly to represent otherwise silent publics to policy actors an intrinsically 'take only' research method.

The vision which they put forward – borrowing from the social theorist Pierre Bourdieu – of 'helping citizens to make sense of their reality, then working towards creating opportunities to change it', has already been extensively attempted in social research, but without any presumption that this necessarily involves a direct assault on supposedly deliberate political repression and neglect.<sup>1</sup> It may involve trying to enlighten policy makers and advisers about public meanings, for example that concerns about GM crops may not be based on exaggerated risk-concerns, but upon the public experience of hubris and ethical irresponsibility of the institutions promoting and governing the technology. This social research – 'take-only' in Pimbert-Wakeford definitions – can help change dominant public meanings assumed by powerful institutions, by eliciting and giving respect to autonomous public meanings of the issues which scientifically cultured policy-making assumes to be scientific only (safety, for example). This empirically grounded cross-examination and contradiction of power's self-serving 'natural' narratives and imposed public meanings can help empower more democratic forces in society. This of course involves extravagant doses of faith and hope – but given the state of the world, so does any other approach!

Maybe there are important differences between the aim of empowerment of particular voiceless and vulnerable sectors of society, like the poorest most insecure farmers of Andhra Pradesh, and that of attempting more simply to make democracy, including what power-hierarchies exist, to be more humane, reflexive, intelligent, and modest. I cannot see them as other than differences of degree and particular context. If one were to exercise the fully dichotomised strategic methodological assumptions that Pimbert-Wakeford express, this would risk gratuitously limiting the possible insights into the complexities and maybe the potentialities of the situations of interest to us.

<sup>1</sup> Guest editors' note: Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French sociologist, anthropologist, philosopher, and champion of the anti-globalisation movement, whose work spanned a broad range of subjects from ethnography to art, literature, education, language, cultural tastes, and television. His most famous book is *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984), which was named one of the 20th Century's ten most important works of sociology by the International Sociological Association.

Expert witness, Alexander Daniels, General Secretary, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), Asia



### A contribution from Biksham Gujja

This [question of engagement], for me, is the key issue. The debate surrounding *Prajateerpu* should be looked at in this context. People in many countries – including less developed countries (LDCs) – do not have space or scope to engage in larger policy processes that affect them and their families. Take the State of Andhra Pradesh as an example. Everyone knows the State is taking questionable loans from many sources, some of which are being used to benefit certain interest groups and not the majority. This is not a secret and many people are airing their concerns about it, but powerful groups continue to do what they like.

In the same way, articulating critical opinions of governments and donors is fine as long as one does not challenge their policies directly. Many NGOs have raised this as a major issue. Rarely have people, particularly poor people, been engaged in larger policy debates. So far, donors have used participatory approaches whenever it has suited them. Sometimes this has led to positive outcomes, and sometimes, it must be said, this has contributed to undermining and short-circuiting democratically elected governments – which in effect are an expression of the 'will of the people'. Now some 'elected governments' too have learned how to employ 'participatory techniques' to legitimise their actions – generally more for the benefit of donors than for the people. *Prajateerpu* should be looked in this context. For the first time a citizens' jury, with all its imperfections and limitations, has debated an important policy issue. The outcome may or may not be to everyone's satisfaction, including the donors. For the donors, the participatory approaches (e.g. involvement of women etc.) are very handy in cornering governments. But when the same approaches are used to question their 'pro-poor' credentials, they reply by raising 'procedural issues'.

**Baayakka, jury member**

### **A contribution from Francisco Sagasti**

On the basis of the research results presented in the *Prajateerpu* report, I would be rather hesitant to derive any wider implications from the study, even for future development assistance in Andhra Pradesh. For example, although the report rightly criticises the insensitivity of many external interventions in promoting the modernisation of traditional agriculture, it appears to be unaware that – despite the researchers' attempts to introduce checks and balances into the research design (such as the use of an oversight panel) – their work could be also seen as being insensitive to the views of the rural poor. They may prefer a more modern lifestyle and alternative employment opportunities, and enjoy the benefits that technological advances and markets can bring. The research design all but assured that these views would not find an expression in the project. While trying to correct for the biases of external interventions by institutions like the World Bank, and the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the authors seem to have inadvertently introduced their own biases into the study.

This report has reinforced my view that, when dealing with contentious issues such as the ones in this report, it is necessary for policy- and action-oriented research to consider and include the views of all the agents that may be affected by the results. For example, I would have liked to see statements from representatives of the government of Andhra Pradesh, the World Bank and DFID reacting to the conclusions reached by the researchers (possibly in the form of an appendix to the report). Perhaps this should become standard practice in the future.

### **A contribution from Lindsey Colbourne**

As a designer and facilitator of participatory processes

**'This question of engagement for me is the key issue. The debate surrounding *Prajateerpu* should be looked at in this context. People in many countries – including less developed countries – do not have space or scope to engage in larger policy processes that affect them and their families'**

(outside the academic world, and mostly focused on the UK) I am intrigued by this very effective use of a traditional consultation technique used by decision-making bodies as a lobbying/scrutiny tool by a set of organisations outside government – using consultation to bridge the gap between research and advocacy. Who would have thought that hearing people's views could be so powerful? This use of a consultation method as a lobbying/scrutiny tool raises a number of issues for me, not least:

- The possibility that consultation done by others to inform a decision-making body could be more powerful (as well as obviously more independent) than when the decision-making body does the consultation themselves. Should we always ensure externally managed processes?
- This leads me to the importance of an independent 'convenor' in the process, whose integrity cannot be challenged because they have no agenda of their own, other than to have as constructive a consultation as possible (i.e. their only focus is the process). The use of 'consultation' as a lobbying/advocacy tool is clearly difficult as the commissioning organisation would not be able to determine the outcome – it might be that the outcome would be counter to its own interests/views. It might be more useful to consider the consultation as part of a scrutiny function – holding the decision maker to account – and carried out by an independent process manager.
- In the *Prajateerpu* process it seems that the commissioners of the 'consultation' have become embroiled in debate – their independence/integrity has been challenged, perhaps because they put too much 'spin' on the report. So a key decision-making organisation is ...able to discount the results. It might be more powerful therefore to separate the roles of an independent convenor (who runs the process, produces the report), and interested parties commissioning the process who can use the results as they wish.
- This then leads to the importance of being clear with partic-

**'In judging the quality of participative action research we must stop looking for final answers and concern ourselves more with the processes of emerging democratic engagement. To argue about whether we have got the representation, the evidence, the conclusions "right" in this case is in some ways to miss the point.'**

ipants about how the results will be used to influence the decision makers. In a classic consultation/dialogue situation the decision maker says they will listen to the results (admittedly a process that it is very hard to hold them account-

able to, except in situations of very strong consensus reactions) and/or participants are able to decide themselves how they will use the results and are empowered to act on them. In neither of these situations (in theory at least) is there a need to turn the result into any kind of lobbying process. So new 'rules of engagement' may need to be written which set out in agreement with participants how the results may be used. (I guess in some situations it might even become dangerous for participants to be associated with the lobbying that is done on the back of their given opinion...)

- All this points to the fact that, as participation increases, and both 'sides' (the consulted, the decision makers) get more canny about how they can use/manipulate the outcomes, then more formal and careful use of techniques such as stakeholder analysis, independent reporting/monitoring, evaluation etc will be essential.

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# Contributions on issues of accountability and transparency

Who decides to whom and for whom citizen jury processes are accountable? How can such participatory processes be used to hold government departments, donor agencies, and other actors more accountable, and make policies and policy processes more responsive to the needs and priorities of poor people?

The jury deliberating during an evening question and answer session

Contributions to this area of the discussion were received from the registrants listed below:

- **Peter Newell**, Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **Chengal Reddy Peddireddy**, Honorary Chairman, Federation of Farmers' Association, India
- **Anne Marie Goetz**, Fellow, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK
- **Brian Wynne**, Centre for the Study of Environmental Change and Chair of the Centre for Science Studies, Lancaster University, UK
- **Biksham Gujja**, Coordinator, Freshwater Programme, WWF International, Switzerland
- **Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend**, Chair IUCN CEESP Collaborative Management Working Group, Co-chair CEESP/WCPA Theme on Communities, Equity, and Protected Areas, Switzerland



## A contribution from Peter Newell

Before making my contribution, I should say at the outset I am neither a specialist in participation nor someone who has followed the controversy surrounding the *Prajateerpu* report in sufficient detail to comment directly on this particular exercise. It is my sense nevertheless, and this is confirmed by talking to participation practitioners, that the whole area of

**Matrix ranking of trees for community plans, Trans Nzoia, Kenya. Courtesy of Jules Pretty**



quality control of such exercises is both contested and under-developed. My aim, therefore, is to raise questions about how the credibility of such exercises can be defended against attack by those seeking to suppress dissident voices and avoid the uncomfortable conclusions that juries and other processes reach about the impact of development programmes. Is there for instance a role for some form of accreditation of facilitators, rather like that which exists for social development certifiers in areas such as forest certification? In this case people have to attend regular training on how to conduct assessments of community involvement in forest management in a sensitive, ethical, and participatory fashion. Questions have of course been asked about how adequate the training is and the nature of the certification process that then takes place. But there is scope, in these arrangements, for accrediting organisations to drop in on evaluation exercises to check that agreed practice is being followed. Such monitoring and the requirement for regular re-training may prevent a situation in which someone becomes a qualified participation facilitator and is not expected to keep learning and refining facilitation techniques. One-off accreditations would of course be inadequate.

The question is: would this sort of approach help to protect, from accusations of lack of professionalism and lack of legitimacy, the important role of juries and other processes aimed at involving social groups that are often deliberately left out of formal policy processes? It may be an overly bureaucratic and resource-intensive solution. It may also play into the hands of the powerful whose agendas such processes are meant to challenge, as issues of who determines best practice immediately arise. But it may also, if managed carefully, help to establish guidelines for best practice, which would have to be adapted to the different situations in which they are to be applied and tailored to the

overall aim of an exercise. If this were to happen, such an approach might help to advance our understanding of the conditions in which, and the purposes for which, juries are appropriate participatory and deliberative mechanisms and thereby serve to show that they can play an important complementary role to state-organised 'consultations'.

### **A contribution from Chengal Reddy Peddireddy**

I wish to contribute to the debate emerging from the *Prajateerpu* report and process on behalf of the Federation of Farmers' Association (FFA), a non-profit, independent organisation representing some two million members from 500 farmers' organisations in the State of Andhra Pradesh, India. Farmers in India and many other nations have, for many years, been exploited by unscrupulous elements, including corrupt government officials, lazy extension officers, crooked businessmen, and untrustworthy local elites. The actions of these self-serving and deceitful characters have hindered progress in rural development in many places. In recent years, we farmers have been confronted by a new threat: unelected and unaccountable local and foreign NGOs who, despite claiming to promote agricultural innovation and rural development, actually hold it back by advocating their own agendas under the guise of 'environmental protection' or 'sustainable development'. All too often, these self-appointed 'guardians' of the public interest work against the real interests of farmers and rural communities by asking us to forego the very benefits that they themselves enjoy, including the fruits of modern science and technology.

I write this message as a plea to developed nations, international development agencies, and others who are seeking to provide the financial assistance to involve farmers' organisations and other grassroots groups in the preparation and implementation of agriculture and rural development schemes. Over the past few decades, international organisations, such as the World Bank, the IMF, DFID, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and large numbers of European and North American countries and Japan, have come forward to provide funding to developing nations for various agriculture and rural development programmes. Many of these development programmes have benefited poor people in urban and particularly rural areas. Furthermore, most of the programmes pertaining to agriculture, irrigation, rural development, health, and education have helped enormously by increasing agricultural productivity, creating rural employment, and providing health and education services.

No doubt, there are cases where local stakeholders, such as farmers, were not actively involved in the preparation, implementation, or management of the programmes. Our



federation has observed that this defect is frequently due to the unwillingness of corrupt or authoritarian local government officials to involve local stakeholders to the full extent. However, the biggest problem confronting most rural people, including farmers, is the hue and cry of many NGOs who totally oppose many of these development schemes. All too often they set themselves in opposition to modernisation, mechanisation, and the latest technologies, such as providing new irrigation facilities. These NGOs, who claim to be the saviours of poor, small, and marginal farmers, want no change in India's development. They don't take into consideration the practical needs and aspirations of many rural people, especially in terms of having access to quality education and health facilities, and improving the productivity of their agricultural systems through the use of hybrid seeds, fertilisers, and mechanisation. They don't answer the question as to how social integration and poverty reduction can be achieved without scientific education, modernisation of agriculture, excellent infrastructure, or economic development. In the name of sustainable development, they are advocating usage of native seeds whose productivity levels are not even sufficient to meet the food requirements of the farmers who use them. They oppose farmers' access to modernisation, whereas they themselves use modern technologies and facilities in their day-to-day personal living, as well as in their organisations.

One such case is that of *Prajateerpu* (citizens' jury), which was supposed to be a 'farmers' jury' deciding on the methods to be adopted by Indian agriculture in the State of Andhra Pradesh in the future. The final decision emerging from that event is so perverse that it actually advocated leaving 70% of rural people dependent on subsistence agriculture. It also expressed strong opposition to agricultural modernisation and mechanisation and recommended the banning of modern sciences from rural people's houses. This is a verdict that members of the Federation of Farmers' Associations find incomprehensible, as we seek to embrace modern science and technology and wish to apply them in our own homes, fields, and communities.

As one of the participants in the *Prajateerpu*, I feel sorry for the ignorance and innocence displayed by the organisers of that event. They failed to realise the harsh realities of Indian farming systems, where more than 70% of the farmers depend on erratic and insufficient rainfall and the majority have no access to quality inputs, credit, extension services, crop insurance, or social security. However, every one of these 700 million rural people has basic needs that must be met, such as adequate food and nutrition, appropriate personal hygiene facilities, proper shelter, and gainful

**'As long as people, particularly poor people, are not raising objections to the process and outcome then it should be okay... Frequently, participatory approaches are put in boxes to legitimise, regularise, properly orient the projects already conceived and designed elsewhere by governments and/or donors'**

employment, if they are to prosper. In addition, they want their children to receive a modern, science-based education in order to make a better living and become competitive in agriculture. Without science and technology, rich countries could never have achieved the economic growth and prosperity they enjoy today. Their failure to invest in science and technology research and development in developing countries is undermining our efforts to fight poverty, disease, and environmental degradation. Yet today's debate on sustainable development, put forward by many NGOs, focuses overwhelmingly on politics. They attribute extreme poverty in India and elsewhere almost entirely to poor policies and corruption, rather than the lack of appropriate technologies for the tropical ecologies of the impoverished countries. Poor countries are poor, in their view, because the poor do not behave like them. The battle against poverty thus becomes a battle against corruption, wrong ideas, and incompetence, and little more. Yet serious analysis reveals starkly and powerfully that poor governance is just one of many factors that trap millions of people in India in extreme poverty.

The great bulk of economic growth in developed countries over the past 50 years was the result of technological progress rather than the accumulation of capital. Modern economic growth has depended, to a large extent, on science-based technologies that have enabled the rich countries to enjoy bountiful food harvests, an escape from early deaths from infectious diseases, and dramatic increases in the mobilisation of energy. Markets, to be sure, played a hand in this, but so too did huge investments in public education and infrastructure, and in the diffusion of technologies. By underestimating the role of public investments in science and technology in their own development, many NGOs and donor countries have neglected the importance of supporting science and technology in poor countries to address distinctive problems such as tropical agriculture and tropical disease.

We are sending this note to you, with a request that it will be read by all those concerned with agriculture and rural development programmes in developing countries. We appeal to donor nations and organisations to actively involve grassroots farmers' organisations in the preparation, implementation, and management of those programmes. We also ask that they invest much more in research and development that will bring new technologies and ecologically appropriate solutions, based on sound science, to the complex and persistent agricultural problems faced by our farmers.

### **A contribution from Anne Marie Goetz**

My comments relate to issues of engagement and accountability. 'Consultations' with people affected by policy have become increasingly popular within the development 'establishment' (both donors and domestic policy makers) because of the aura of authenticity and legitimacy that they impart to public decision making. When conducted by policy makers (and the *Prajateerpu* case does not fall into this category) they are even presented as an accountability mechanism – as proof that 'ordinary people' have articulated their concerns, needs, and interests and have seen them reflected in new policy. I wonder, though, if there are any examples of policy makers actually changing policies as a result of these exercises. My impression is that there are few cases of policy makers changing their actions in response to citizens' juries, social audits (a local public review of the quality of government decision making), or forums for direct interactions between bureaucrats and people.

*Janmabhoomi* in Andhra Pradesh is an example of this – this campaign of meetings between service-delivery bureaucrats and people does not come with 'hard' accountability rights.<sup>1</sup> By this I mean that these meetings do not give participants concrete rights to pursue their concerns and to seek redress for poor-quality decision making. Do social audits come with 'hard' powers to demand formal investigations by authorities? Do citizens' juries come with opportunities to demand official information about the basis upon which decisions were made (for instance sensitive research or polling information) or information about how public money was actually spent? Do any of these forums come with the right to issue a dissenting report to the legislature? Or even with the right to pursue grievances in the courts and litigate against officials or government departments?

I would be interested in hearing of any cases in which

<sup>1</sup> *Janmabhoomi* is a people-centred development process launched in the State of Andhra Pradesh in January 1997, aimed at establishing an ideal society, which embodies the principles of people's participation, equality, transparency, and accountability leading to sustained economic development and enhanced quality of life.

**A woman from a rural village. In what way is her government made accountable to her?**  
Courtesy of M. Taghi Farvar



forums for 'consultation' designed to elicit the 'voices of the poor' actually led to the prosecution of grievances expressed by participants. My concern about the proliferation of opportunities for 'participation' in decision making is that these are, at best, means for improving the awareness, and ideally, the receptivity, of officials towards the clients of public services. Probably *Janmabhoomi* at its best does this. But eliciting voice without accountability is surely a recipe for disenchantment.

### **A contribution from Brian Wynne** **Social science and politics**

There are lots of important issues raised by this case, for social scientists and agencies working not only in developing countries but also in developed countries, to help make policies involving scientific and technical inputs, more democratically responsive, ethically sound, and ultimately more socially (and

**The jury, observers, and coordinators gather following a press conference**



**For members of this jury, *Prajateerpu* was a unique opportunity to engage in debate with government officials**



probably also technically) robust. I deal with only a few of these – mainly addressing what are the roles of social science and politics here, and how do we make both dimensions properly accountable. I take for granted that all social scientists operating in contexts like those involved here, recognise that they are operating in a strongly (and multiply) political context, and that their work will therefore have inevitable political implications even if they themselves as authors have no relevant political views whatever. In the [*Prajateerpu* report], for example, the [authors] clearly stated that, consistent with many official policy statements, their aim was to find ways of eliciting the voices of marginal farmers on the future of AP farming and food, and that as a population usually excluded from such public processes, these people deserved to be heard and taken account of in making policy and constructing visions of the future (which I take to mean something different from that having sovereignty over other voices and views, though the authors seem to differ from me on this).

The first important point which may be useful to remember therefore, is that all the parties involved in the *Prajateerpu* debate appear to agree on the key starting point: that this kind of work, attempting to understand and give a place to the previously ignored and excluded voices of marginal peoples suffering serious poverty and insecurity in development situations like that of Andhra Pradesh, is a valuable and necessary project. That hearing these voices with due respect and commitment, and responding to them (which is not the same as giving them unqualified sovereignty, since other legitimate voices and visions also exist) may produce more serious challenges to existing ways of thinking and visions of progress than we may have expected, should not itself come as a total shock. Given the surprisingly strong tendency of powerless and largely resourceless people tacitly to assume

no agency and no influence over the forces shaping their own lives and futures, it was a very positive aspect of the *Prajateerpu* report to find how active and articulate those marginal farmers and farm-workers were in expressing their own visions and needs in the face of no-doubt sincere alternative visions like *Vision 2020* which is under disputed interpretation here. For social scientists experienced in qualitative social research on public experiences of expert discourses and interventions, it is easy to understand how well-intentioned and in context laudably innovative attempts to 'consult' the public in order to 'validate' policy scenarios like *Vision 2020*, can result in quite misleading 'feedback' from the public.

Unless deliberate methodological instruments are used to overcome what are usually deeply entrenched but typically unspoken public senses of lack of agency, alienation, and neglect by powerful institutions, people often take a 'path of least resistance' in responding. They tend to bottle up discomforts with the very framing of the issues and questions on which they are invited to respond. They often also feel quite alone, with no peer group to create a sense of collective identity and solidarity which begins to create the conditions for articulation of more authentically grounded and autonomous views of their own. All this is familiar enough to academics and to many policy users too. I cannot comment on the methods of public involvement which were used in creating the *Vision 2020*; but I would just underline how all such methods require as a basic element of social science quality-assurance, to ensure that respondents are given the proper conditions to be able, if they feel it appropriate, to challenge the assumptions embedded within the framing of the 'consultation' or deliberation process being used. This usually requires, as a minimum necessary but not sufficient condition, adequate time for people to get familiar with each other as well as the issues being posed, and to work out how those

## **'It was a very positive aspect of the *Prajateerpu* report to find how active and articulate those marginal farmers and farm-workers were in expressing their own visions and needs in the face of no-doubt sincere alternative visions like *Vision 2020*'**

framings relate to their own experiences, meanings, needs, and hopes. Experienced and culturally familiar facilitation is clearly another condition. Many official processes, sincerely pursued, do not meet these basic quality requirements. Whatever other failings it may have had (see comments under other sections of the e-forum contribution), the *Prajateerpu* process seems to have fulfilled these conditions.

### **When is 'not-policy' policy?**

[T]here is one important issue where the complaints about *Prajateerpu* seem to expose something verging on the dishonest... This syndrome is not uncommon in government responses to critical appraisal of official policies and commitments.

[Some critics] assert that the [*Prajateerpu* report authors] have set up a straw man in the form of the so-called 'policy' for the future of food farming and governance in Andhra Pradesh in *Vision 2020*. [They deny] that this vision is anything like a policy commitment, and thus try to argue that the criticisms offered – not by the authors we should recall, but by the Indian farmers as citizen jurors – in the *Prajateerpu* report are utterly misconceived, since they are they say, focused on a fiction... [This] reflects a long and entirely dishonourable tradition of British (and probably wider) government, wherein commitments and aims which the government expects and intends to be fulfilled, if they become controversial, are explicitly denied to be official commitments, but every single act, nuance, and orientation of institutional body language is straining to make sure the 'non-commitment' is actually put in place... Of course, there are proper diplomatic protocols to be respected vis-à-vis another democratic government's autonomous policies, but to claim that this non-responsibility (of course) for the Andhra Pradesh *Vision 2020* 'policy statement' is the same as neutrality towards it, flies in the face of common sense...

I want to propose some debate about this particular element of this episode, because the syndrome of government insinuation of intentions and favoured commitments –

visions of the future – is so widespread, and maybe especially so where scientific and technological developments are concerned. The denials are a powerful form of protection of those commitments from debate and accountability, even whilst we are witnessing a plethora of government prescriptions, promises, and claims supposedly ensuring that, after the fiascos of Brent Spar, BSE, GM crops and foods, and radioactive waste disposal, to name but a few, policy procurement and use of scientific advice in policy making is properly transparent and accountable.

### **A contribution from Biksham Gujja**

As long as people, particularly poor people, are not raising objections to the process and outcome then it should be okay... Frequently, participatory approaches are put in boxes to legitimise, regularise, properly orient the projects already conceived and designed elsewhere by governments and/or donors. The projects, and the policies underpinning them, are rarely open to truly deliberative and inclusive discussion and debate. *Prajateerpu* seems to have crossed that line – questioning the donors and the government. We need to ask different questions, some of which are:

- can donors, before deciding on what is good for the poor and who is the best government to work with, engage in some sort of deliberative and participatory process, such as citizens' juries (with proper representation, proper methodology, authenticated evidence, etc.) and see how that informs and influences their policies and programme?
- can governments and donors provide enough resources to citizen-jury type processes to allow broad and representative participation in an open debate on key policy issues? and,
- can governments and donors participate in citizens' juries, provide evidence, agree to be cross-examined, and accept the verdict of the people?

### **A contribution from Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend**

This is the kind of initiative that I was expecting from IIED and IDS... I have, however, a problem with the questions you listed, and I would ask you please to list this as part of your initial round of debates. The problem I have is that once again all the burden of the proof is put on the shoulders of the ones who are working for participatory, empowering processes. Other, much more relevant and ominous questions should be added to yours, such as:

- how to make sure that the powerful do not always come up on top by using their phenomenal capacity to 'create' public opinions through all sort of direct and subliminal means?

- how to make sure that opinions are indeed informed and 'intelligent' – coming from the full comprehension of the choices, alternatives, and consequences?
- what have we learned from the historical experience of populist movements all over the globe?
- what are we learning from the current fight for the domination of the media by political forces?
- if indeed the less privileged in society have the least capacity to receive information and make their voices heard, how can a movement of solidarity help them? and, last but not least,
- what should we think of government agencies that attempt to silence criticism from the very poor they are supposed to serve?

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# 8

## Reflections on the e-forum and *Prajateerpu* report by the UK Department for International Development, India

by ROBERT GRAHAM-HARRISON

### Tackling rural poverty

The e-forum debate has been interesting, and we are grateful to the moderators for running it. The discussion was perhaps a bit academic and learned for some practitioners in Andhra Pradesh to engage with, especially when English is not one of their strengths. But it has been helpful for us at the India Office of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to think about these themes and issues again, and benefit from the experiences of others who have long worked in this area.

We are looking at ways in which a debate around the future of agriculture and tackling rural poverty can be generated and moved forward in Andhra Pradesh (AP). We and many others have long recognised that this is critical, and the jury event and the fallout has made us focus on this and give it more priority. We have had some preliminary meetings, in Hyderabad and in a few villages in various parts of the State of Andhra Pradesh. The Government has committed itself to looking at how the poverty impact of its policies and programmes can be improved, and there is more analysis coming out that helps to inform the discussion. We hope that civil society can be encouraged and enabled to participate positively.

### DFID comment on the *Prajateerpu* report

We wish to comment on the statements and implications

about the actions and programmes of DFID contained in the *Prajateerpu* report, published by IIED and IDS. This note describes DFID's approach to tackling rural poverty and agricultural development and reviews the UK Government's broad programme in Andhra Pradesh. In setting out these points, we seek to dispel the misplaced notion that DFID has actively and callously sought to displace large numbers of poor farmers from their lands or to impose policies and programmes on them that would adversely affect their livelihoods.

DFID fully endorses efforts to develop and employ participative approaches to foster citizen engagement, such as citizens' juries. For this reason, we welcome experiments such as the one documented in the *Prajateerpu* report, which can lead to new methodological insights and innovations. However, we take strong exception to the text in the report relating to DFID's motives and actions in India. For this reason, we have decided to set out our points in writing and ask that they be taken into consideration when reviewing the *Prajateerpu* document.

### DFID's approach to tackling rural poverty and agricultural development

Readers of the report may gain the impression that DFID believes that agricultural development in Andhra Pradesh is

Seventy percent of  
Andhra Pradesh's 70  
million citizens work  
in agriculture



best pursued by adopting a highly industrialised approach, with large farms, contract farming, wide-scale mechanisation, and the latest technologies, including genetically modified (GM) crops. Recent press reports and newspaper headlines, such as 'UK funds scheme to throw 20 million farmers off the land', reinforce this impression. DFID does not hold these views.

DFID recognises that tackling deep rural poverty is complex and difficult, and will require actions and programmes in a number of areas. In broad terms, agriculture needs to be more productive and yield better returns, especially for small and marginal farmers. In parallel, more opportunities need to be created for poor people to earn income, and, as *Vision 2020* notes, these are likely to be in services and manufacturing, leading to a reduction in the proportion of people gaining their livelihood primarily from agriculture. DFID does not find any references in *Vision 2020* that suggest that this shift in employment will be coerced, as implied by some.

The Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project (APRLP), which DFID is supporting, aims to address both objectives – improving agriculture and creating other income-earning opportunities. It works in five of the poorest districts in Andhra Pradesh – Mahbubnagar, Anantapur, Nalgonda, Prakasam, and Kurnool – and is based on an extremely thorough analysis of the problems and priorities of the rural poor, not just in Andhra Pradesh, but across India. This analysis draws on work done by many agencies, research institutes, and NGOs and includes a great deal of participatory research. Its implementation follows a highly consultative process that includes all stakeholders. It started in October 2000, and its first 18 months of operation have been almost entirely taken up with understanding people's perceptions and priorities for tackling poverty. It works with both NGOs and government departments, and through self-help groups and other

**'DFID makes a judgement whether a government is committed to poverty reduction, and whether we can effectively contribute to their programmes and dialogue on policy options. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, we have taken the view that they are and we can'**

community-based organisations. A key objective of the project is to enable government to become more responsive to the needs of poor communities.<sup>1</sup>

A recent report, entitled *Breaking New Ground*, published by the APRLP, presents details of this consultative exercise. That document describes the main aims, activities, and progress to date of the AP Rural Livelihoods Programme. It also outlines the plans and priorities that have emerged out of this intensive stakeholder dialogue process.<sup>2</sup>

On a more general point, we wish to make clear that providing assistance to the Andhra Pradesh government – or any other organisation with whom DFID is working – should not be seen as a signal that DFID agrees with that government or organisation on every detail of every point, as implied by some. Applying such stringent criteria would be counterproductive and unnecessarily hinder us from helping governments and others address poverty. DFID makes a judgement whether a government is committed to poverty reduction, and whether we can effectively contribute to their programmes and dialogue on policy options. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, we have taken the view that they are and we can. Dialogue and discussion are central to our approach, but ownership is critical and must be respected. DFID cannot dictate the policies of another government, nor do we seek to do so.

### DFID's programme strategy and approach

The *Prajateerpu* document states that '...there is little or no evidence that ... DFID have used appropriate methodologies to bring the "voices of the poor" into the planning and design of their aid programmes in Andhra Pradesh.' DFID

<sup>1</sup> More information on the Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project can be obtained from: DFID India - Andhra Pradesh, Sarovar Centre, Secretariat Road, Hyderabad, 500 004, India. Tel: (+91) (40) 3242519/ 3210943; Fax: (+91) (40) 323 0421; Website: [www.aplivelihoods.org](http://www.aplivelihoods.org)

<sup>2</sup> Copies of this report can be obtained from: Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project, A. Madhavareddy Academy of Rural Development (AMARD), Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030, Andhra Pradesh, India. Tel: (+91) (40) 400 1953/400 1954; Email: [info@aplivelihoods.org](mailto:info@aplivelihoods.org)

**'DFID does not claim to be contributing to the design or implementation of a flawless process of people-centred development in Andhra Pradesh. We do believe, however, that the Government and its many public and private partners are genuinely working to find ways to reduce poverty and improve the livelihoods of poor people across the state'**

disputes this claim.

The overall shape of DFID's programme in Andhra Pradesh was reviewed and discussed in the formulation of our strategy, which was started in 2000 and finalised in 2001. The strategy drew on a number of sources of information available, and included discussions and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society groups working in poor communities.

We recognise the value of participation and consultation, especially in projects aiming to benefit poor people directly, and that this is true not just in the design phase but during implementation. The section above outlines the participative approach taken in the Rural Livelihoods Project. In the Urban Services for the Poor project, which is DFID's largest investment in Andhra Pradesh with a budget of £94 million, the approach has been to get all stakeholders in the municipalities together and build consensus that funds should be targeted on slum areas and respond to the priorities of the people living in them. Assistance is being provided to civil society groups to enable the poor to articulate their priorities and to hold the municipalities accountable for the services they provide. In both these cases, DFID does not manage the projects directly nor have we set up separate systems to run in parallel to the existing frameworks. These, and other DFID-supported projects, work through existing government and NGO systems and programmes in order to create a sustainable improvement in the quality of services and programmes provided, and to demonstrate how the approach can be replicated elsewhere.

Other DFID-supported interventions in Andhra Pradesh which poor people benefit from directly include:

- The District Primary Education Project; this is a centrally driven programme, run by Government of India and receiving funds from a number of donors. Andhra Pradesh has

established village education committees to involve local communities in the running of schools.

- The ILO-managed child labour elimination project (ILO-IPEC); the project works with parents, employers, and NGOs to raise awareness and build support for children to go to school, rather than earn income.
- CASHE, which is a microcredit project, working in three states. It is run by the international NGO CARE, which works very closely with grassroots NGOs to provide financial services to poor women in self-help groups.
- The National Revised Tuberculosis Control Programme, which is a centrally designed programme, tackling one of the major poverty diseases.

DFID's programme in Andhra Pradesh also focuses on supporting the government in taking forward key policy changes and programmes that will address constraints to poverty reduction and development in the state. Some of the issues on which we provide technical assistance are complex and highly technical; e.g. the introduction of VAT, reform of state owned enterprises, fiscal stabilisation, and power reform. While DFID has not consulted poor people on these issues directly, they are much debated in the State Assembly and the media, and the government has been clear about its objectives. Also, the Government of India supports some policies, e.g. VAT, which is being introduced across India. We note that some progress has been made in developing consultative processes on these issues; for example, on power reform, there are public hearings on the level of tariffs each year, and the draft budgetary allocations for the forthcoming year were published for consultation prior to the presentation to the Assembly.

The £65 million grant that has been mentioned in press reports and elsewhere was provided to support the state government's broad economic and public sector reform programme. It was not provided to implement agricultural reforms. Relevant papers produced by the Government of Andhra Pradesh include the Governance Reform Strategy, the Fiscal Reform Strategy, Budget and Medium-Term Fiscal Framework, papers on e-governance, power sector documents, and Citizens' Charters.<sup>3</sup> As well as the grant, DFID provides technical assistance to support this programme and the World Bank-funded Economic Restructuring Project, including work on anti-corruption, improving the effectiveness of public expenditure, and setting up a poverty monitoring and analysis unit. Governance reforms are supported by a separate project with the newly established Centre for

<sup>3</sup> These documents are available on the official website of the Government of Andhra Pradesh: [www.andhrapradesh.com](http://www.andhrapradesh.com)



Good Governance, whose Board includes representatives from the public and private sectors.

DFID does not claim to be contributing to the design or implementation of a flawless process of people-centred development in Andhra Pradesh. We do believe, however, that the Government of Andhra Pradesh and its many public and private partners are genuinely working to find ways to reduce poverty and improve the livelihoods of poor people across the state. For this reason, DFID remains committed to

supporting their efforts, including the APRLP, by providing long-term financial, institutional, and technical advice and assistance.

In closing, we would like to state that DFID supports the free and open exchange of ideas on matters of substance, such as the key discussion points to be addressed in this e-forum. We look forward to hearing the views of all interested individuals and groups who wish to contribute their ideas and opinions to this important debate.

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## 9

# Reflections on the e-forum on participatory processes for policy change by the authors of the *Prajateerpu* report

by MICHEL PIMBERT and TOM WAKEFORD

We thank all contributors to this e-forum for their engagement with the *Prajateerpu* debate and their often insightful comments. We are humbled and re-invigorated by the expressions of support and solidarity from so many people, many of whom we have never met. We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute some brief reflections on our experience of the *Prajateerpu* process. However, readers should be clear that we are no more than two members of a wide network of those who constructed *Prajateerpu* – most of whom are in Andhra Pradesh. Many of these Indian individuals and organisations are also keen to share their perspectives over a more extended timescale – both in their native languages such as Telegu, Urdu, and Hindi – and in English, where possible. The following remarks are made in our personal capacity, not in the name of the *Prajateerpu* organising team.

Having been trained as natural scientists, both of us were schooled in the rigorous disciplines of exact science and positivist forms of rationality. Like many others we have both found that such an approach to learning and action can often obscure as much as enlighten. To us it is clear that attempts to democratically construct a pluralistic set of truths and subjectivities are far more likely to produce robust knowledge than the positivist's search for a singularly objective standpoint or observer-independent truth. As individuals, and more recently in collaboration with each other and Indian partners, we have been exploring

more holistic, inclusive, and democratic ways of knowing and acting in the world. In helping design the *Prajateerpu* process, we have drawn on the evolving paradigm of participatory action research. The accusation made by some of our critics that our report lacks 'objectivity' and 'independence' misunderstands the participatory action research process. *Prajateerpu's* methodology has been an attempt to allow the democratic scrutiny of both facts and values, bringing together critical analysis and an empathic, receptive eye that seeks to understand as much as possible from within. We believe that has succeeded in producing new knowledge and the opening up of the possibility of transformative action through research. This participatory research paradigm draws on the emancipatory traditions of Freire, Habermas, and others.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guest editors' note: Paulo Freire (1921–1997), the Brazilian educationalist, has left a significant mark on thinking about progressive practice. His *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (30th Anniversary edition, 2000, Continuum: London) is currently one of the most quoted educational texts (especially in the developing world). Freire was able to draw upon, and weave together, a number of strands of thinking about educational practice and liberation. Jürgen Habermas (1922–) is a German philosopher, social theorist, and a leading representative of the 'Frankfurt School'. This school of thought developed at the Institute for Social Research, in Frankfurt, Germany, and introduced a style of analysis known as Critical Theory. In his recent work Habermas has turned his influential *Theory of Communicative Action* (Vol. 1 (1984) Beacon Press: Boston; Vol. 2 (1987) Policy Press: Cambridge; translated by Thomas McCarthy) to the domains of politics and law. He has become an advocate of 'deliberative democracy', in which a government's laws and institutions would be a reflection of free and open public discussion. In the democracy he envisions, men and women, aware of their interest in autonomy (self-governance) and responsibility, would agree to adhere only to the better-reasoned argument.

Jury field visit

Tom Wakeford, *Prajateerpu* report co-author

For them, knowledge and the process of coming to know should also serve democracy and the practical goals of social and ecological justice. By existing at the cutting edge of this new mode of enquiry *Prajateerpu* has become part of a series of controversies that we believe will strengthen action-research processes in the long term.

In designing *Prajateerpu* as a deliberative and participatory process, our strategy was aimed at overcoming the partial and incomplete nature of different methodologies (e.g. scenario workshops, participatory video, citizens' juries, stakeholder panels) by combining them in a particular sequence so that the internal rigour and credibility of the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Overall, we think that robust and practically useful lessons have emerged out of the complex and dynamic interactions between the methods, arguments, actors, and extended peer community that, together, formed the *Prajateerpu* process.

None of the organisers of *Prajateerpu* claim to have designed and facilitated a perfect and flawless deliberative process. Our report describes mistakes, limitations, and omissions. As Robert Chambers says [in the 'Issues of Evidence' section, p.23] we have been very open in describing the shortcomings of *Prajateerpu*, encouraging criticism from our partners and colleagues as a pre-condition for open learning and constructive dialogue. In two instances we made a statement or implied a motive without providing all the evidence we had assembled. This was largely because those of whom we were critical might consider the evidence private. We regret that – for the sake of brevity – we did not always make the reasons for such absences clear. Correspondence that followed the publication of the *Prajateerpu* report allowed us to clarify or further a number of important matters of fact, those disputed

by UK Department for International Development (DFID)-India in particular. Nowhere in our report do we say that DFID does not use participatory methods. Our comments on the lack of 'use of appropriate methodologies to bring the voices of the poor into the planning and design of aid programmes' refer to questions of scale, quality of participation, and independent oversight of participatory processes.

With hindsight we realise how important it was to involve a panel of independent observers to check for bias and misrepresentation, quality of deliberation and pluralism, and vouch for the credibility and trustworthiness of the *Prajateerpu* methodology. This extended peer community, which included representatives of marginalised communities and more powerful actors, had the power to decide which methods and processes (representativeness of jury, video scenarios, balance of witnesses, quality of facilitation) were appropriate and what constitutes valid knowledge in that context. Through this innovation we sought to decentralise and democratise the knowledge validation process, as well as ensure that the *Prajateerpu*'s outputs were as legitimate and representative as possible.

A second level of peer review took place prior to publishing the *Prajateerpu* report, and involved a diverse range of colleagues in India and the UK. However, we are not claiming that this makes this *Prajateerpu* report uniquely 'objective'. In positivist science, what is called 'objectivity' is actually consensus between different people who rely on their own subjectivity and value-laden theories to decide what is (or what is not) trustworthy and universally valid knowledge.

When judging participatory action research, the use of positivist notions of validity and objectivity are, at best, intelligent looks in the wrong direction. At worst, they can become

**'The small and marginal farmers involved in *Prajateerpu* have offered a broad vision of a very different future than the one planned for them from above. Equally remarkable was their wish that more *Prajateerpu* exercises be done all over Andhra Pradesh'**

destructive and ill-informed attempts to 'shoot the messenger and the methods' in order to silence findings that risk causing discomfort to those in power in high places. The need to widen the criteria used to assess the validity and quality of participatory action research is clear. Contributors to this e-forum eloquently argue for such an epistemological broadening, and make specific suggestions (cf. Peter Reason, John Gaventa, Carine Pionetti, and Andy Stirling). In our ongoing analysis of participatory action research processes, we are looking forward to combining these suggested approaches with the criteria we used to evaluate the quality and validity of *Prajateerpu* (see section four of the report) and its enduring impacts. For example, has the launch of the *Prajateerpu* report in the UK Houses of Parliament [in 2002] in the pres-

ence of one of the jury members contributed to the emergence of a wide community of cooperative inquiry over the nature of British aid to the Government of Andhra Pradesh? How is the authenticity of the jury's voices and verdict influencing an emerging democratic debate on food, farming and rural futures in Andhra Pradesh?

We need to ask why the richness, vibrancy, and plain talking of the jury members on the need for a politics of autonomy have been largely ignored in discussions on the validity of *Prajateerpu* and its policy implications? (cf. Carine Pionetti, Biksham Gujja, and Robert Chambers). With Grazia Borrini and Brian Wynne, we ask what can be done in future to ensure that 'the powerful do not always come up on top by using their phenomenal capacity to "create" public opinions through all sort of direct and subliminal means?'

The small and marginal farmers involved in *Prajateerpu* have offered a broad vision of a very different future from the one planned for them from above. Equally remarkable was their wish that more *Prajateerpu* exercises be done all over Andhra Pradesh. They, and the facilitators, were conscious that whatever had been done and said was partial and incomplete. One of the key challenges ahead is to facilitate similar democratic processes in each district of Andhra Pradesh, including diverse people and places in the choice of policies, technologies, and institutions that shape social life and relationships with nature.

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# Participatory processes for policy change: reflections on the *Prajateerpu* e-forum

by IAN SCOONES and JOHN THOMPSON

## Lessons from the e-forum

This final article is an attempt to provide an overview of the commentaries received during the e-forum on Participatory Processes for Policy Change, which we moderated for IIED and IDS in August and September 2002. It is by no means exhaustive, and we therefore recommend that people read the full set of contributions that have been reproduced in this special issue of *PLA Notes*. These are very rich in insights and reflections and serve to advance the debate in a number of important ways. This was certainly our hope for the e-forum when it was set up.

## Issues of evidence

There is much talk today of 'evidence-based' policy research. But what does this mean? What evidence, and whose evidence counts? The *Prajateerpu* exercise raised important questions about this issue. Some commentators were firmly wedded to a conventional positivist view of knowledge and truth, using words like validity, rigour, and independence (including the directors of our respective institutes, see Bezanon/Cross). The majority of commentators, however, took a more reflective view of issues of knowledge in policy making, arguing that all knowledge is necessarily situated and constructed, and that no simple truth can come out of, especially, highly contested, complex, and uncertain deliberations

about future scenarios. This complexity presents, as Sagasti points out, particular challenges for the design of such exercises where the empirical base for statements about the future necessarily remains conjectural.

Drawing on a long tradition of participatory action research, Gaventa makes a case for an alternative set of criteria for evaluating participatory events of this sort, stating that those immersed in the positivist paradigm are 'missing the point'. He argues against the 'mythology of neutrality' and calls for a redirecting of the discussion away from a concern with idealist questions about truth and validity claims and towards a concern for pluralistic dialogue, pragmatic outcomes, and a reflexive sense of what is important.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guest editors' note: Gaventa is presenting what may be described as a 'phenomenological critique of positivism', which refutes the principle of verification. The phenomenological approach to science is to relax the verification principle, but still rule out metaphysical justification (phenomenology retains the requirement of empirical falsification of statements about reality). This approach entails a big concession (i.e., that truth cannot be verified) and therefore requires the establishment of some criteria for deciding what constitutes a meaningful statement. The phenomenological approach to evaluating science is to rely on the consensus (or 'intersubjective') opinion of the community of scholars regarding the 'acceptability' – or trustworthiness – of statements about reality. What is theory? What is science? What is good science? According to the phenomenological position, the answers to these questions rest with the community of scholars and in the case of participatory processes, the community of practitioners. It is this community that decides if a set of statements qualifies as a theory. It is this community that decides when work meets the criteria of science and qualifies as 'good science'. And it is this community that decides not the truthfulness of statements, but their acceptance as the best statements possible until something better comes along.

Who are 'the poor'?  
And are their 'voices'  
really being heard?



To interrogate issues from all sides, Stirling, for example, argues for an approach that emphasises 'opening up' – to conflict, contention, dissent, and dispute – in the true spirit of deliberation. The potential of a challenging 'devil's advocate' approach is suggested by Wynne, to help probe often tacit, culturally embedded assumptions. Such an approach contrasts with ones which potentially 'close down' debate. As Pretty et al. comment, citizen juries, with their reliance on a 'drive to consensus', 'agenda control', 'rationalist discourse', and 'expert' testimony, potentially can fall into this trap, just like conventional research methods.

A number of commentators expressed their disappointment that the *Prajateerpu* exercise (or at least the report) did not seem to capture the range of dispute, debate, and nuances of deliberation among the participants. As Stirling points out, the exercise was very much in the position of 'partisan lobbying' rather than open deliberation. Others remarked that the sometimes-loaded commentary and editorialising of the authors – particularly at the end of the report – added another layer of interpretation – or 'spin' – to the commentaries of the participants. 'Presentation', as Chambers points out, 'affects impact'. The rigour of participatory research is based, as he notes, on self-critical reflection that 'entails striving to be critically aware of ourselves, [our] interests and predispositions'. Interpretive work, as Wynne observes, is part of a 'continuing process of publication, alternative attempted representations and interpretations, criticism, and development of positions, including self-understanding'.

Wynne goes on to note the importance of 'interpretive responsibility' of convenors of participatory events. There are inevitably issues of translation and interpretation involved in the presentation of any set of 'data', be they the results of a quantitative sample survey or the discussions of

participants in a citizens' jury. Do those who are intermediaries – increasingly a key role – act on behalf of marginalised people, interpreting their comments in ways that they think are for their own good (the activist, organic intellectual) or do they report simply what is said and maintain a stance of independence and neutrality (in the classic tradition of supposedly impartial research)?

As Colbourne points out, issues of credibility come to the fore, particularly when contentious results emerge. How can the independence of the process be guaranteed? How can the facilitators and authors avoid accusations of partiality and manipulation of results? As these sort of exercises become more and more used – by governments, by aid donors, by NGOs, by farmers' organisations, unions, and others – to complement other routes to policy influence, it will be important to address these issues head on lest the opportunities for more deliberative and inclusive engagement are discredited by those who perhaps don't like what they are hearing. 'Legitimacy and authority' are, as Gujja notes, related to access to power and resources, and those who don't agree can often override the deliberations of those without such access.

An underlying theme of the many of the contributions has been the related question of the politics of methodology. As Gaventa observes, 'Concerns with methodology have historically been used by those in power to discredit those who challenge a dominant discourse'. Many commentators agreed that this was certainly evident in the controversy over *Prajateerpu*. With a focus of the debate on issues of 'quality' defined in narrow, positivist terms, those who objected to the results were able to reframe the discussion and divert attention from more pertinent issues.<sup>2</sup> The contributors to this e-forum have, by and large, rejected this stance, arguing for a more plural, open, and less censorial approach, with a wider view about acceptable criteria for evaluating 'evidence' and assessing results.

Many contributors have emphasised the importance of plural perspectives, open debate, and diversity of views. This is the essence of a deliberative ideal, where all views can be aired and new ones developed. Such deliberations, almost

<sup>2</sup> Guest editors' note: 'positivist' philosophy attempts to establish a set of rules for science that can verify the truthfulness of statements about reality. Positivist scientists view the scientific method as universal and equally applicable to all areas of inquiry. Positivists within the discipline of policy science attempt to apply the procedures of the natural sciences to fit research that falls into the realm of social science. Moreover, traditional policy researchers would also have us believe that policy research is objective and unbiased, and able to produce universal laws. However, many social scientists dispute these claims to objectivity and argue that, inasmuch as policy science and policy research deals with human conduct and reactionary behaviour, it is neither a true positivist science nor an objective one.

**How can the facilitators and authors avoid accusations of partiality and manipulation of results?**



by their very nature, rarely result in neat consensus, let alone a jury style verdict. Thus, many argue for more open-ended outcomes than allowed for in the *Prajateerpu* exercise. Wynne notes, for instance, that the yes/no formulation leaves a 'gaping hole' which actually should be at the centre of public discourse and policy debate, but may go unaddressed by an unnecessary polarisation of views and positions.

### Issues of representation

Everyone it seems these days needs 'the poor' to speak in support of their policy positions in order to gain legitimacy and credibility. Examples abound, from the World Bank eliciting the 'voices of the poor' in support of their new poverty policies, to Monsanto with their 'demonstration' farmers speaking for the benefits of biotechnology, to NGOs and activists speaking on behalf of poor people's needs. In the current policy environment, where participation is all, poor people become important actors in the policy process, either as disembodied voices in the sound-bite quote approach of the World Bank or as real people standing up passionately at public meetings. But who are 'the poor'? And are their 'voices' really being heard? Such questions often remain unanswered, and for this reason issues of representation become key. Such issues, as pointed out in the e-forum, are simultaneously intellectual, methodological, and political.

Much commentary in the e-forum dwelt on the representativeness of the jurors and the scenarios used as a focus for the deliberations. But representativeness is a contested and loaded term, as many of the contributions both implicitly and explicitly acknowledge. As Stirling observes, 'Any one concept of "representation" or "independence" will embody only one subset of possible relevant factors [and]

be open to equally valid (but discordant) observations'.

Several contributors (Glover, Deshingkar, and Johnson) make the point that the *Prajateerpu* 'citizens' jury' was not strictly a jury. The jurors were not selected randomly, but purposively. They were not intended to 'represent' society at large, but a particular marginalised group, with a particular set of interests and livelihood constraints. With the strange exception of one juror added on to 'represent' urban consumer interests (a slightly incongruous slip by the organisers into a standard approach), the jurors were made up of poor people, mostly women, reliant predominantly on a farming livelihood and largely from a *Dalit* caste background. Having 'explicit biases towards the poor' is, as Gaventa, Suryanarayanan, Gujja, and others point out, a perfectly justifiable strategy and one wholly consonant with an activist, policy-influencing stance. Bezanson and Cross argue that, while such purposeful selection of jurors is entirely legitimate – and even necessary – to seek out the voices of those who are opposed to the modernisation of traditional agriculture, the bias needs to be made explicit and clearly acknowledged, and the results of enquiry based on this sampling need to be presented and interpreted in that light. Perhaps a better description of the exercise, then, was not a 'jury' but a 'panel', dropping the problematic legal association of trials, juries, and verdicts. But semantics aside, there remain important questions about participant selection. For example, Sagasti remarks that the approach taken in Andhra Pradesh appears to have been clear and transparent, according to a series of well laid out criteria. His only objection was potentially to the question of bias and 'group think' introduced through participants association with particular groups and NGOs. Perhaps this is an inevitable trade-off between involving representatives of marginalised groups without the networks and connections to carry the results of the process beyond the event, and having people who, although from the poorest communities and in many ways disenfranchised, do have the opportunity to engage with follow up activities and interact with policy processes at least at local levels (see below on issues engagement).

Richards raises a related question about the representativeness of 'participatory' meetings in general. This, in his view, is the 'Achilles' heel' of participatory approaches. To avoid biases entering into the participant selection process towards 'those who do the discourse' (including representatives of poor groups), he suggests the need for detailed, baseline, social science research prior to the participatory exercise. In the *Prajateerpu* instance, this was not done, nor was the very substantial body of existing work on livelihood

The jury were not intended to 'represent' society at large, but a particular marginalised group



and technology issues in rural Andhra Pradesh drawn upon to any great extent. Whether it is conceivable that such in-depth social research could be undertaken in advance of all deliberative and participatory procedures requires a wider discussion.

Much e-forum commentary also dwelt on the issue of the 'representativeness' of the scenarios used to inform the jury's deliberations in the *Prajateerpu* process. Some viewed these as biased, creating a 'self-fulfilling prophesy', whereby only one could have been chosen (Bezanson and Cross). As Sagasti points out, conventionally scenario options should be 'equally appealing', but quite how this could be so in this instance given the socio-economic position of the jurors is unclear.

Furthermore, as Brown suggests, there seems to be an implicit assumption that if the jury had been fully representative and the process perfectly designed, the results would be 'scientifically true' and less subject to challenge. He argues that the jury verdicts should be treated as 'one more flawed input to the discussion, from sources with a relatively large stake and relatively small voice in the decision. Those voices can be treated with some scepticism, if there are reasons to believe that their views have been overstated'.

These exchanges seem to raise two other pertinent issues. First, as Deshingkar and Johnson observe, the range of scenarios presented to the farmer-jurists in the *Prajateerpu* exercise may have limited the debate. They call attention to significant research on livelihoods in AP (incidentally, DFID funded) that highlights a greater complexity of livelihood pathways than were captured in the three scenarios used in *Prajateerpu*. A scenario based on this work, they imply, might have complemented the others, and provided more fodder for debate and discussion. Second, as already noted, the 'verdict' requirement of the jury format led to a situation where deliberation around and

across scenarios was, it appears, not part of the process, potentially leaving an array of important issues untouched. Perhaps a more interesting route would have been to focus on the trade-offs between scenarios, exploring the 'gaping hole' between polarised positions (Wynne), and avoid the perhaps artificial 'closing down' to an agreed verdict.

### Issues of engagement

A deliberative event of this sort is necessarily only one part of a longer process of policy engagement and debate. Critiques of the *Vision 2020* approach adopted in AP certainly did not start with *Prajateerpu*, nor will they end with it. But in order to develop an alternative vision for a sustainable rural future, much more work has to be done beyond a simple rejection of the dominant *Vision 2020* view. This is of course an important step, and the presentation of the jury results to the media was most definitely focused on this aspect of the jury outcome. As Wynne notes, the jury result was uncontroversially a resounding 'no' to the *Vision 2020* approach, but also, and importantly, not a 'no' to all aspects of it under all circumstances. As he observes, 'To see alternative scientific opportunities requires commitment, imagination, and reflection by scientific and technical experts helped by public voices'.

On the basis of their extended research in AP, Deshingkar and Johnson point out that poor people are not automatically 'anti' new technology per se, but want to know about the wider deal (debt burdens, hidden costs, impact on labour, and so on) (a point reinforced further by Reddy Peddireddy in the 'Issues of accountability' section). In other words, many may be 'pro' certain types of biotechnology, for instance, under certain conditions, and vehemently 'anti' other types of technology option under different conditions. New technology and development options therefore must fit into and build on existing livelihood strategies if they are to work. While rejecting (as many in AP and beyond do) the modernist vision of *Vision 2020*, the real work has to be in creating – and promoting – alternatives suited to real people's livelihoods and aspirations, not those based on the models of international management consultants or northern green NGOs. Poor people in AP urgently 'need new options', as Deshingkar and Johnson argue. The innovative participatory scenario approach experimented with here clearly has some important potentials, but these, as all contributors agree, deserve further exploration and elaboration.

A key challenge for deliberative processes is to assist in reframing debates. With much policy discourse constrained by the framing assumptions and political commitments of



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**'In the current policy environment where participation is all, poor people become important actors in the policy process, either as disembodied voices in the sound-bite quote approach of the World Bank or as real people standing up passionately at public meetings. But who are "the poor"? And are their "voices" really being heard?'**

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those in power, the opportunity for others to interrogate assumptions and recast the debate is important. There is a danger of slipping back into simple polarisations, however, as in much of the GM debate, which, as Wynne puts it, 'constrain the exploration of alternatives grounded in more democratic inputs'. As Stirling notes, 'the manner of engagement with policy debate is very different in "opening up" mode. The purpose becomes one of informing and stimulating more active plural discourse rather than prescribing and justifying particular options for closure'.

Wynne goes on to comment that one challenge laid down by the *Prajateerpu* exercise was 'escaping the hegemony of (singular) modernisation'. According to Pinotti, the deliberations went beyond the 'norms of efficiency and progress' to an alternative vision based on the 'politics of autonomy', where other perspectives, often personal and intuitive, have a say. This opening up of debate presents a critical challenge to forms of engagement in policy processes. This must apply to specific policies just as much as it does to broader strategies and ideas in the policy domain (such as *Vision 2020*). As Wynne argues 'not policy' is often in fact policy, but withdrawn from critical public scrutiny.

Beyond the deliberations, then, processes of influencing policy outcomes are a critical complement to any deliberative forum or event. How do we locate citizen juries/panels/scenario workshops in broader policy processes? In the commentaries, different alternatives are both implicitly and explicitly discussed. Three alternatives suggest themselves:

- one-off, high profile events, aimed at raising and refocusing the debate, linked to an activist approach of media campaigning and lobbying activity, with messages necessarily stylised and focused to gain attention (the advocacy ideal);

- attempts at ongoing deliberation, recognising complexity, dispute, dissent, and multiple perspectives, with the aim of gaining credibility and purchase on those in power through inclusive processes of argumentation (the deliberative ideal, cf. Stirling, Pretty et al., Colborne, Pinotti); and,
- stimulating local organisations and democratic processes, where policy debates are emergent from strengthened capacities to deliberate and influence from the bottom up (the local democratic ideal, cf. Gujja, Suryanarayanan).

Of course these options are not mutually exclusive, and one may feed into the other. In the *Prajateerpu* exercise the deliberative ideal was an important starting point, although a more activist stance was initiated in the post jury publicity and report writing phase. The hope of the organisers has also been that the process will become a trigger for greater embeddedness in local organisations' own advocacy activities, reinforcing a local democratic ideal. Without careful thought, however, tensions may exist between these ideals, resulting in conflicting strategies and tactics. Thus a fully partisan publicity-oriented campaign, based on the advocacy ideal, may undermine trust in the deliberative process it is based on, particularly by those who remain sceptical of the results. With advocacy work – and particularly international media campaigning – the key actors are often removed from local settings, potentially creating distance between local actors and well-connected activists. Some of these tensions inevitably arose during the *Prajateerpu* process and, as Colborne observes, probably deserve further reflection and debate.

Reason notes that citizen juries, as time delimited events, may be criticised out of context if attention is not paid to the wider articulation with 'an emerging process of democratic debate'. Such a focus recasts the discussion beyond narrow issues of evidence and representation to questions of how to facilitate processes of democratic

**'The methodological insights offered by contributors to this electronic forum have demonstrated how the practical, the political, and the processual are all intertwined, and that simple responses based on narrow framings or limited methodological viewpoints are insufficient'**

engagement, with citizen juries being one part of a bigger picture. This is an important point, and suggests many questions about the role of participatory 'events' within wider democratic processes. What, for instance, should the relationship be between citizen juries and representative electoral politics (cf. Goetz)? How should deliberative spaces created outside state sanctioned structures and processes articulate with the more formal channels of policymaking (cf. Sagasti)? How does this affect our understanding of the role of the state and of citizens in policymaking (cf. Gujja)? And what potentials exist for a more emergent process of democratic engagement in settings such as AP (cf. Reason, Gujja, Suryanaryana, and others)? These questions remain unanswered by the *Prajateerpu* experience, but in our view urgently require further discussion.

Whatever strategies are employed there remains a critical role for intermediaries, convenors, and facilitators. What role should they play? Wynne argues, for example, that independent (but inevitably positioned) researchers (operating in what the authors of the *Prajateerpu* report term 'take only' mode) can play a useful role in exposing complexity, hidden exploitation and the perverse unintended effects of policies. Colborne believes that such researchers/facilitators must tread a careful line between raising controversial issues, while maintaining independence and credibility in the eyes of critics and sceptics. The role of accreditation was raised (cf. Newell) and the importance of a demonstrably independent oversight panel was highlighted. Others argue that the activist researcher necessarily must take a stand and be seen to do so, using all political means at their disposal to push the debate forward (cf. Pinotti, Wynne). Here difficult interactions with the media, forms of publicity, and campaigning come to the fore, and questions can be raised as to whether this should be the role of the jury facilitators or other stakeholders in the process.

**The opening up of debate presents a critical challenge to forms of engagement in policy processes**



### Issues of accountability

To what extent do deliberative processes, such as *Prajateerpu*, offer opportunities for holding the powerful to account? This was certainly one of the stated objectives of the process – introducing alternative perspectives and voices into a debate about rural futures where marginalised farmers had previously been excluded. The specific aim was to hold the AP government and its aid donors to account, allowing the questioning of motives and strategies by those who are supposed to be 'beneficiaries' of the development enterprise. Follow up meetings with AP and UK government officials were clearly designed towards this end. The commentary contributed by UK Department for International Development (DFID) India to the e-forum reveals that the whole affair has encouraged further reflection within the organisation on its approach to food, agriculture, and rural development in AP, indicating some success in this regard. But are exercises like *Prajateerpu* the model towards improving accountability – through complex, necessarily expensive, high profile events? Or are there other routes – through more informal lobbying and influencing or through the normal channels of representative democracy (however limiting in the AP setting, as Gujja notes)? For example, is there a potential that participatory events, outside the normal orbit of decision making and politics, may sometimes undermine the growth, strength, and efficacy of other forms of policy dialogue?

Goetz asks whether citizen juries or other deliberative procedures have a right to demand information, call witnesses or offer information to the legislature? Do they, in other words, have the clout to realise true accountability? She argues that, in practice, 'consultations' have become popular among the development establishment because of their 'aura of authenticity that they impart to

**To what extent do deliberative processes offer opportunities for holding the powerful to account?**



public decision making.' Presented as 'proof' that 'ordinary people' have articulated their concerns they are offered up as accountability mechanisms. But she goes on to note that such events may offer voice without accountability, and that this can only result in disenchantment. Chambers, by contrast, takes a more optimistic view. He argues that citizen juries and similar exercises can present real opportunities for self-critical reflection by those in power, offering opportunities to learn and do better.

Much of the discussion surrounding the *Prajateerpu* results has been focused on DFID and the UK Government rather than the AP Government per se. As a major aid donor in the state, this is clearly appropriate, but the new way in which aid is provided (essentially untied budget support granted on the basis of some general conditionalities about 'pro-poor policy' and 'good governance') makes direct forms of accountability (to projects or particular items of expenditure) more difficult. Inadvertently the *Prajateerpu* exercise has raised some important questions about the accountability of aid donors in the era of direct budgetary support. Is it sufficient for foreign donors to pass the buck, saying that support is granted to an elected government and the government is responsible to their electorate for how things get spent and delivered? Those involved in the *Prajateerpu* exercise clearly think not. But this is a debate that, though not explored in depth in the e-forum, will certainly be raised again.

## Conclusions

As Bezanson and Cross note, citizens' juries and associated deliberative and inclusionary processes are important new areas of methodological experimentation, at the forefront of challenges for development policy making everywhere. Despite differences of opinion and emphasis on certain aspects, the e-forum has shown that there is much more common ground than would first appear. The methodological insights offered by contributors to this electronic forum have demonstrated how the practical, the political, and the processual are all intertwined, and that simple responses based on narrow framings or limited methodological viewpoints are insufficient. As Pretty et al. comment, 'Juries should be conceived of as part of a potentially open and open-ended political process, where they contribute to a broader debate'.

The *Prajateerpu* exercise and its aftermath have certainly generated a great deal of heat over the past year. As Colbourne wryly observes, 'Who would have thought that hearing people's views could be so powerful?'. But the intense debate ignited by *Prajateerpu* also illuminated a number of significant issues about people-centred approaches for informing and influencing policy, processes, and practice from below. Several of these issues were highlighted in the many constructive offerings made to this e-forum, but few were resolved and most will require further elucidation and deliberation. In future, this ongoing debate will occur in a range of fora and among a variety of networks. This e-forum is simply one contribution to that broader set of exchanges and we encourage others to create other open spaces to allow critical reflection and discussion on these and other related topics.

In concluding, we would like to thank all those who registered and contributed to this exchange of views, as well as the many interested observers who visited the website to read the exchanges. As Chambers reflects, 'The costs of the *Prajateerpu* process have been high'. We hope that, with the addition of the many considered and perceptive reflections that were contributed to the e-forum, it will have been worth the price.

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## 11

# Drugs, AIDS, and PLA in Myanmar/Burma

Adapted from an unpublished article commissioned by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

By **DITCH TOWNSEND** and **ANNE GARROW**

## Summary

World Concern pioneered Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) work amongst drug users in northern Myanmar/Burma, in a difficult and disabling environment. For socially excluded people, we advocate the attempted use of PLA to reduce the damage of the participants' oppressions, whilst recognising that compromises will need to be made.

## Introduction

A worldwide debate continues about the most effective ways to intervene with drug-using populations. There is now a growing knowledge of the complexity of these issues and acceptance that the issue needs to be tackled at many levels in society (Pennington, 1999). In this paper we explore the use of PLA in an extremely disabling environment where there is little capacity to develop a multifaceted approach. The prevailing intervention paradigms can be summarised as follows.

## Demand reduction

Prevention of drug use in southeast Asia has tended to focus on extreme deterrence, coupled with large-scale abstinence and 'healthy living' initiatives, often with a heavy emphasis on religion, morality, and victim blaming. The more positive end of this spectrum is still heavily weighted towards Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) approaches, which

tend to do little to change behaviour despite improving knowledge levels.

## Supply reduction

Interdiction absorbs a large proportion of funds relating to drugs in Southeast Asia. Thailand and China's long, porous borders with Myanmar and Lao PDR place their police and military most frequently in the firing line. Numerous cross-border initiatives, often supported by the USA and the United Nations international Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) have come unstuck in the local political and insurgent mire of the Mekong sub-region, not least in Myanmar's Shan States area.

## Harm reduction

Some of the most celebrated examples of harm-reduction approaches amongst drug users come from Asia. These include opiate substitution and needle and syringe exchange in New Delhi by an Indian NGO called Sharan. For street-based drug users, a number of drop-in-centres (DICs) also feature on the Asian drug scene, including IKHLAS in Kuala Lumpur.

## Drug user treatment

For many years, Sahara House in New Delhi has been a Therapeutic Community (TC). Examples of TCs are growing throughout Asia. Structured, expensive, professional led,

substance abuse clinics also exist particularly for those drug users in families at the upper end of the income spectrum – including Yayasan Harapan in Bogor (Indonesia). More widespread, and prevalent throughout Southeast Asia, are the low-cost, often income-generating, Christian drug rehabilitation centres focused around religious conversion. Around three such centres existed in Burma/Myanmar at the time of the PLA project but provided a limited referral route for a handful of the PLA clients. Some herbal-based detoxification is available on a limited scale but generally does little to prevent relapse. Also, perhaps inappropriately termed ‘rehabilitation’ are the vast government drug user internment camps in Asia, pre-eminently found in Malaysia, but also found to varying degrees of benefit and abuse in other countries of South East Asia.

### A new paradigm – participatory development

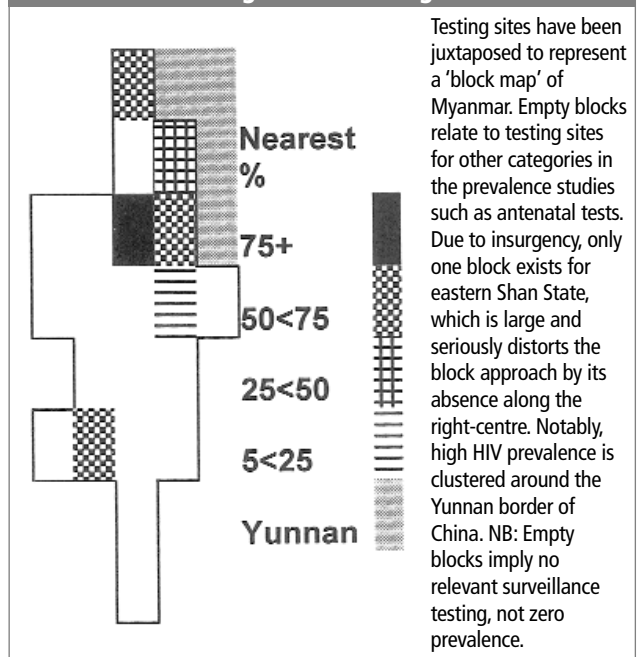
Drug using populations are generally socially excluded, whatever the economic and political structures of the country in which they live. Within the available literature on the application of PLA, there is no discussion of the use of PLA with drug using populations, although there has been some related work. Wallerstein and Bernstein (1988) report an empowering education against substance use project for adolescents in New Mexico. One of the authors (Townsend, 2001) reported preliminary results of using PLA with prisoners with HIV/AIDS in Malaysia, most of whom had a heavy drug use history, and brought this experience to bear in the Myanmar project. There has also been unpublished documentation of attempts in the United Kingdom to work with intravenous drug users in a probation hostel (Levine, 2000; Chambers, 2000).

The authors of a recent paper (Busza, Xakha, Ly, and Saron, 2001) discuss the application of PLA methods with commercial sex workers in Phnom Penh (Cambodia). Of particular note is their caution that PLA principles may at times seem to be compromised in such work but, ‘with vigilance and the willingness to experiment with various facilitation strategies, the potential benefits to the community are numerous and the challenges are not insurmountable’.

### The PLA project Background

The two-year Myanmar project was funded by UNDCP and implemented by World Concern. Following the arrival of one of us (Townsend) in October 1998, the IEC methodology was revised to focus on PLA approaches. UNDCP endorsed these changes and implementation began in early 1999 with the project funded until December 2000. Garrow undertook the task of strengthening the project’s evaluation by including a

**Figure 1: Burma / Myanmar HIV Sentinel Surveillance Data: Point Prevalence among Intravenous Drug Users in March 1999**



methodology review component to examine the novel use of PLA in the context of drug use.

### Project areas

The PLA component, aimed at drug using populations and people at high risk of becoming drug users, was implemented in three of Kachin State’s regional towns – Bamaw (near to the Chinese border and a major trading point), Hpakant (a jade mining town), and Hopin (a key transport intersection). Each town attracts a transitory population and has drug-taking communities.

Myanmar’s history of opiate production is well documented. In addition, the country is facing an increasing problem of amphetamine production. In Hpakant, UNDCP (1999) noted that some mine owners believed that 60% or more of their workers were regular drug users. Various approximation methods were used by the World Concern team to triangulate a possible figure for numbers of regular heroin users in Hpakant. The team concluded that there are around 60,000 smokers and 6000 injectors of opiates in a population that can oscillate from approximately 100,000 during the wet season to approximately 500,000 during the dry season.

In 2000, UNAIDS estimated that 530,000 people in Myanmar had HIV, an adult prevalence rate of 1.99%. Figure 1 illustrates the high prevalence rate of HIV amongst opiate injectors in Myanmar during March of 1999.

## Methods

Three teams (comprising a total of 12 facilitators) were trained in participatory learning methods (a very new approach for them in this context).

Participative implementation planning allowed the teams to help select appropriate PLA tools including six core ones: a personal timeline, a Venn diagram of community networks, a symptom based illness catalogue, a wealth ranking chart, a livelihood analysis, and a causal diagram for key problems. One team resided in each of three towns, each having at least one member previously resident in that town. This and the commitment of the facilitators meant that their involvement with participants often extended beyond the group work context.

Group participants encountered opportunities to join in a range of ways. Social contact was established by facilitators with each potential participant as part of the method before they were invited to join. Group sizes ranged from one to seven.

## Immediate outcomes

One of us (Garrow) conducted a participatory methodological review of the PLA component of the work in the presence of a representative of the Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) and a staff person from a government drug treatment centre. In addition, she collaborated with an external evaluation of World Concern's overall drugs project. This evaluation was presented and fully discussed with both UNDCP and the CCDAC. With the permission of World Concern, summary findings are presented below:

- Some participants reported that they had stopped using drugs.
- Staff observations and client follow-up indicate that some participants have stopped using drugs. There is some evidence that they were more likely to be the heavy opium smokers than intravenous drug users.
- Many participants had made their first decision to change their drug use.
- Some participants had reduced their drug use. In some cases ex-clients reported that this enabled them to work. Sometimes returning to work and becoming responsible for their family again was part of an action plan that could only be achieved using this approach. One worker explained, 'I say, "It's your decision whether you slowly reduce or stop, but you must decide whether you can do it – just stop it. If you wish, it's your decision". And most of them decide to reduce in their own time'.
- Some participants began to make changes that would reduce HIV transmission. Many commented on how they

had learnt about transmission of infection and how to prevent infection. 'After discussion I use disposable syringes and separate blades to avoid AIDS'. There is evidence that the groups have served to provide education to clients, whether this be through the IEC material or the facilitator. It is possible that in the PLA group setting participants were more open to the education material.

- Significant improvements to the 'enabling environment' occurred as people in the community became familiar with the nature of the PLA processes.
- Others in the community began to work with drug users in a less judgmental way.
- Community 'gatekeepers' changed their attitudes towards drug users.
- The unconditional concern by workers for them was reported by many participants as being new and significant in their conceptualisation/perception of themselves and their worth.
- Collaboration with other projects improved.
- Staff developed sustainable skills in management and implementation.

## Longer-term outcomes

Follow-up for a highly migrant drug using community is not an easy prospect. This was expected and the project was less interested in short term behaviour change, than in promoting the cycling through of a longer-term behaviour change spiral (Parnell and Benton, 1999). The project showed that a large percentage of participants had made significant progress through this spiral (around two-thirds planned a simple but significant and achievable action plan on the foundation of detailed personal and contextual analyses undertaken by the PLA process). Theoretically, longer-term behaviour change can be expected to have been accelerated by the work.

Staff were surprised to hear that some former participants were informally initiating and conducting PLA groups of their own. However, these anecdotes hint at the power of consciousness-raising in setting the scene for internally driven behaviour change. It reinforces the importance of one of the project's key positions arising out of this work: PLA work should not be considered merely a method (and subject to short-term evaluation of limited indicators) but an operational philosophy.

Lastly, without access to appropriate rehabilitation opportunities, it is unreasonable to expect much in the way of drug-use behaviour change. Knowing their own constraints, staff were in some ways grateful that as a method for imbuing people with abilities to change their lifestyle contexts, the use

of PLA was not necessarily required to be directed at the narrower goal of short-term drug use prevention.

### Conclusions

The work this paper represents is in most ways experimental. There has been insufficient validation of the use of PLA methods amongst extremely socially excluded groups and project staff have not been able to do much more than benchmark a process which can be built on. The choice and development of the particular PLA tools employed with Myanmar's drug users was in many ways arbitrary. While there was a positive response to most of the tools, we did not test a wide range of PLA tools for their utility and may through evaluation be able to improve the scope and scale of tools.

It can be argued that the success of PLA is not merely in its outcomes, but also in its implementation. The process is, in and of itself, empowering. Secondly, PLA always enables its participants to look realistically at their environmental limitations.

PLA and its associated techniques, on the back of Paulo Freire's work in the 1960s and 1970s, have perpetually emphasised the necessity of group action following consci-

entisation (Freire, 1972). The extent to which this is possible will be largely determined by the perceived risks facing those who are already excluded from mainstream society.

Lastly, funding and other constraints in the Myanmar context forced the project to offer the PLA work almost without reference to a viable drug user support environment. Staff were virtually unable to provide opportunities for drug users to benefit from any other drug related interventions. Some could legitimately ask if the work unfairly raised expectations. We would argue that project staff were not necessarily setting out to prevent drug use. Conscientisation involves a recognition of unresolved (and at times irresolvable) paradoxes as a prerequisite to internally motivated change. It also stimulates participants to find ways to change for themselves.

Ultimately, it may be that PLA work with people under extreme social exclusion must of necessity be carried out in a compromised fashion, if it is not to backfire on people already without social power. The task then is to explore the features of PLA work, which can bring sufficient relief to its participants to justify its taking place. On the other hand, some would argue that conscientisation is a human right and worth doing even under the most difficult circumstances.

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### NOTES

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# 12

## Using participatory learning and action (PLA) in understanding and planning an adolescent life planning and reproductive health programme in Nigeria

By GBENGA ISHOLA, WUMI ADEKUNLE, TEMPLE JAGHA, BOLA ADEDIMEJI, YEMI OLAWALE, and LUCY ENIOLA

### Introduction

This paper shares the experience of the Association for Reproductive and Family Health (ARFH) in adopting the participatory learning and action (PLA) approach in understanding and meeting the life planning and reproductive health needs of young people in Oyo State public secondary schools. This is important because it was the first attempt to adopt such an approach in the process of identifying the needs of our projects' beneficiaries and planning to meet these needs. Our previous experience was with using verbal tools, such as focus group discussions (FGD), key informant interviews (KII) and in-depth interviews.

The adoption of the PLA approach to understand the life planning and reproductive health needs, and to map out strategies to address the issues, was suggested by the Department for International Development (DFID), who funds the Life Planning Education in Oyo State public secondary schools, to encourage active participation of all stakeholders at all stages of the programme implementation and to make the programme more sustainable. Choosing PLA came from the recognition of the fact that young people are knowledgeable about their needs and can identify ways in which their needs can be met and their problems solved.

### The process

Four teams of facilitators from multi-disciplinary backgrounds, including social sciences, education, health education, and school administration carried out the activities in eight Oyo State zones. The PLA activities in all the educational zones commenced with a one-day meeting. Specifically, meetings were held with community leaders before the field activities commenced in all the communities, to acquaint them with the purpose of the activities, and more importantly, to gain entry and acceptance since not all the team members were from within the communities.

There then followed meetings with the school principals and the teachers. In the schools, letters of introduction prepared by the State Ministry of Education were presented to show the involvement of the state government. The schools were informed of the activities to be carried out in their schools, and of the need for full cooperation.

After discussions with the school authorities, the students were assembled in each school to tell them of the purpose and the activities to be carried out. Students were then randomly selected across the classes to ensure adequate representation for the PLA activities. The selected students were divided into groups (in most cases five groups) each with two facilitators. Each groups started by



conducting a transect walk to familiarise them with the schools' environments. The interaction at this stage served as a guide in the application of other tools in all the groups.

After the transect walks the groups drew the maps of their respective schools using available materials and FGD sessions were held. The FGDs presented an opportunity for participants to express themselves, and it was the outcome of these discussions that enabled facilitators to identify selected visual methods which could be used to further gain insights into the life planning and reproductive health problems and behaviour of the students. The visual tools used included flow charts, pair-wise ranking/scoring, school mapping, school calendar, matrix scoring, and the sexuality lifeline.

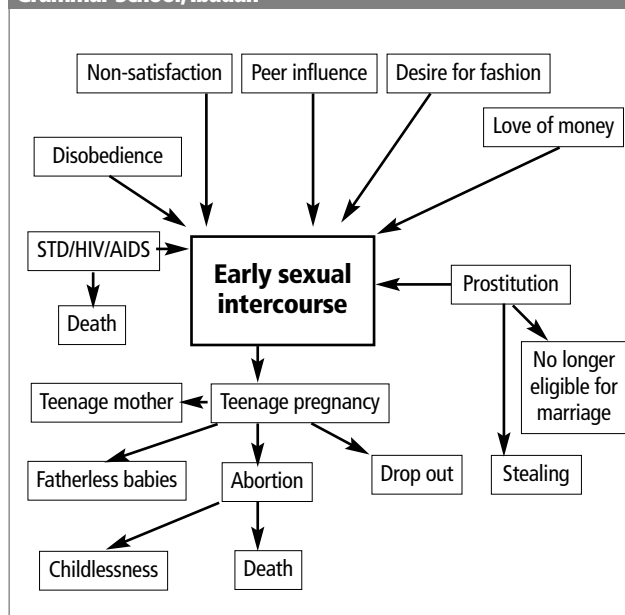
The analysis of the visual tools took place at three levels. The first stage, which is very important, was during the process of the discussion and drawing of the visual materials. The discussions served as reference points to the issues. The facilitators at the end of each day's field activities conducted the second stage, reviewing the visual materials created by the participants. The last stage of analysis was carried out outside the communities to identify and classify the issues raised by participants across the eight educational zones.

### Learning about young people's knowledge and perceptions of sexual health and well-being

We learnt that pre-marital sexual relations and multiple sexual partners are major reproductive health problems amongst young boys and girls in the schools. These problems were associated with the increase in cases of unplanned pregnancy and withdrawal from school for young girls. Discussions amongst the young people, during the process of developing the various flow charts, revealed that pre-marital sex is a major source of conflict between parents and their wards. We also learnt through this tool that many of the young boys and girls were aware that having multiple sexual partners put them at risk of sexually transmitted infection, including HIV/AIDS (see Appendix 1).

Through the use of pair-wise ranking and matrix scoring the implementing partners also showed their understanding of the various social problems faced by students. The students were able to demonstrate a perceived lack of seriousness on the part of the government to meet the educational needs of the students. They linked this problem to the inability of most students to achieve their academic and life plan objectives. The problem of inadequate education facilities in schools was also linked to one of the reasons why many students fail their examinations and why they

**Appendix 1: Early sexual life flow chart. Flow chart on early sexual intercourse developed by boy students at Odinjo Grammar School, Ibadan**



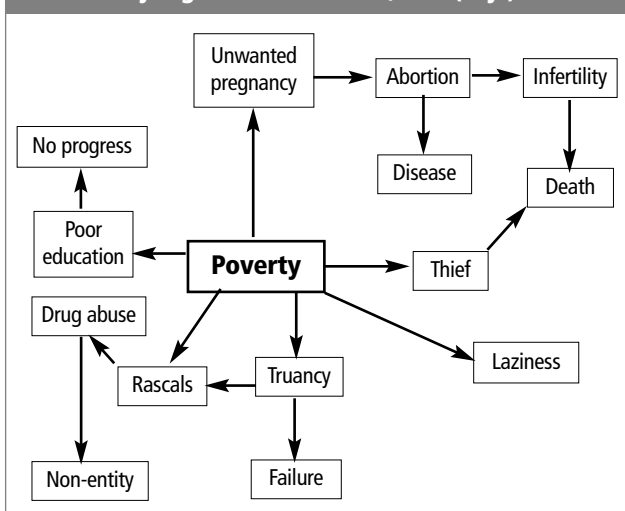
cannot compete with their counterparts in other countries.

We learnt that young people engage in risky behaviour due to ignorance about human physiology and physical development. Consequently, adolescents are more likely to engage in behaviour detrimental to their well-being, such as having pre-marital sex, using drugs, and abortion. The use of body mapping exposed the ignorance of many of the students as to parts of the body that are negatively affected by this behaviour. For example, many sexually active students did not know which parts of the body were affected by pregnancy. Another tool that helped to facilitate understanding was the use of individual interviews, which followed the use of the sexuality lifeline.

### Learning about youth culture

PLA helped us to interact with and learn about youth culture, which helped to advise the programme implementation re-structuring. Through a series of discussions and social mappings, we learnt and understood their use of language, terms, and slang. If culture is perceived in its broader perspective, the adoption of social mapping/school mapping gave us access to places and areas within schools and communities where activities such as sex and smoking often take place. The youth had various names for these locations, which would have been difficult to identify without the transect walk.

**Appendix 2:**  
Flow chart: Ayelogun Grammar School, Idere (boys)



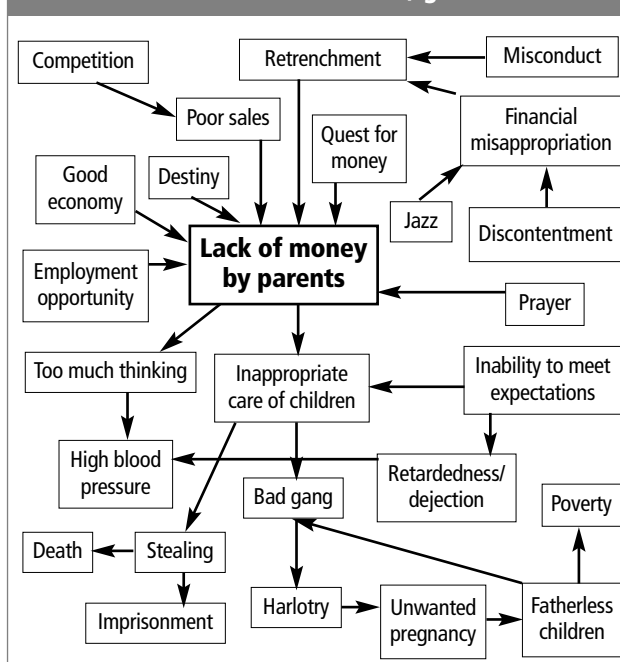
One important benefit derived from the social and school mapping found by the ARFH/MOE/MOH Life Planning Education Programme was being able to identify accessible areas where the students wanted the proposed Youth Friendly Clinics to be cited within their communities. It was also easier for us to identify locations, such as an abandoned hall that has now been converted into a seminar hall.

### Learning about adolescent's perceptions of poverty and implications for their sexual behaviour

By using flow diagrams/charts we were able to understand some of the relationships that exist between poverty and other problems confronting young people. For example, we learnt that most of the students associated pre-marital sexual relations (especially among the girls) to the poverty of their parents. In most cases this included the parents' inability to provide for the social and educational needs of their female wards (Appendix 2 and 3).

One focus of the LPE programme is directed at poverty alleviation. The use of well-being ranking provided us with adequate knowledge about how youth perceive poverty, and the need to plan appropriately for this component of the programme in the state. The well-being ranking tool enabled us to understand poverty not in economic terms (as common through conventional research methods) but from the people's perspective. It was the definition and description that was given to poverty which informed the context of the curriculum and module developed to address the problem (Appendix 4).

**Appendix 3:**  
Flow chart: Methodist Grammar School, Igora



When the wealth ranking produced by the youth was linked with their reproductive health behaviour, it was found that teenage pregnancy was more predominant among the children of low-income parents, and those whose parents are not well read.

### Impact of participatory methodologies in designing an acceptable school-based sexuality programme

The adoption of flow charts enabled us to design appropriate strategies to solve the various problems, as we learnt that young people were not ignorant of their problems nor of how these problems could be solved.

Through flow charts it was discovered that group acceptance is very important to adolescents, hence they give in to peer pressure. So we incorporated the topic 'self esteem' into the curriculum. Many of the students have developed self-confidence, assertiveness, and boldness. Many of them can now participate in public debates and discussions without fear of intimidation.

According to reports received from the school principals, cases of unplanned pregnancies have reduced in the schools pre-marital population. The adoption of participatory methodologies in implementing life planning has developed sexual refusal amongst the girls. It also developed their skills in negotiating for the use of condom.

**Appendix 4: Okeho-Iganna Grammar School, Okeho**  
**Well-being ranking/perception of wealth**  
**Male group JS2-SS1 09/07/1999**

Category	
Very-rich	Have many motor cars Have many houses Have good house materials Has a position on his own (chief) Has many workers Sends his children to better schools Have no problems
Rich	Has a motor Has a house Has a position under some person (worker) Sends his children to ordinary school Has some problems
Poor	Has sons and daughters Sends them to school (ordinary) Has some problems Depends on some person
Very poor	Has sons and daughters Has many problems Depends on some person Has no motor Has no house He cannot send his children to ordinary school

Adopting these tools has shown us that reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually related problems cannot be solved through an individual approach but through an interactive, collective, and community approach. Introducing topics about sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases (STIs), and HIV/AIDS, especially regarding disease transmission by using body mapping, reduced the number cases of pre-marital sex and unprotected sexual relations amongst sexually active students.

Also, since the Life Planning Education Programme is directed at teaching life planning education topics in the classroom, we were able to ascertain the method/s of delivery that have the most impact with students. Through

focus group discussions and pair-wise ranking of preferred sources of LPE information, students were able to identify sources of information available to them, and the sources they would prefer to use (Appendix 5 and 6). Importantly, the PLA approach in this process allowed students to be critical in their assessment of the various sources available to them and why they would prefer certain avenues.

The adoption of participatory methodologies also changes the teaching methods in classes. Teachers trained to deliver life planning sessions in the schools also started adopting the methods in other core subjects. This made a difference between them and other teachers who were not trained in the use of participatory methodologies. Students now interact with their teachers for counselling on career decisions and subjects combination, which was unusual prior to the introduction of LPE teaching in the selected schools.

The PLA approach also influenced the topics included in the programme curriculum. The curriculum for adolescent reproductive health is a difficult thing to compile. While the use of participatory approaches found that adolescents were eagerly seeking correct information via reliable sources, especially on sex and reproduction, adolescents also believed many myths on the subject. These issues therefore needed to be addressed. The way this was done was to bring the youth to the curriculum development workshop as active participants. Thus the topics included in the LPE curriculum were those identified jointly by the different stakeholders to the project. The students, their parents, and teachers, including the health care providers and opinion leaders, contributed immensely in this process. The use of pair-wise ranking to rank the different issues, which were perceived as important, ensured that only the most important topics and those preferred were included in the curriculum (Appendix 7). Preparing the curriculum using participation ensured that all identified areas of concern were included in the context.

**Matrix scoring with SS girls at Nurudeen Grammar School, Ogbomoso**

	Female teacher	Male teacher	Mother	Father	Doctor	Friend
Knowledge	***	*	**	*	*****	*
Familiarity	***	*	*****	**	*	*
Secrecy	*	**	*****	**	***	**
Friendliness	*	*	*****	*****		***
Proximity	****	*	****	***		**
TOTAL	12	6	23	13	10	9

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#### NOTES

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# A participatory approach to the assessment of built heritage: an example from Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand

By MICHAEL HARTFIELD and SARA KINDON

## Introduction

There is considerable interest in built heritage in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Territorial local authorities (TLAs) are using the past to enhance urban renewal, which helps to promote community identity and to retain, restore, and inject pride. But what we see of heritage, the way it has been identified and the way we use it is, to a considerable extent, contrived. What do we protect? Who decides what is worth keeping? Who is it meant for?

When built heritage is presented, choices are inevitably made about what ought to be included and protected. At present, these choices are made by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (Trust) and TLAs, which use official criteria to select 'appropriate' buildings for heritage status and protection. The criteria and process of selection tend to reflect 'white, middle-class, literate value-making assumptions about what people want and should know about the past' (Fowler, 1992:91). Not surprisingly, heritage buildings tend to be those considered significant to the country's ethnic majority rather than significant to indigenous Maori or other minority ethnic groups.

Given the recent increasing use of participatory and deliberative processes within the 'North', which seek to challenge and rearrange the boundaries between 'expertise' and 'experience' (see *PLA Notes* 38, 2000; Gaventa, 1993 in Cornwall

and Gaventa, 2001), we felt that it was important to extend the application of such processes into the arena of heritage assessment. This article discusses a pilot exercise in participatory heritage assessment carried out in 2000 in Newtown, the most ethnically diverse suburb of New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. The approach and process we discuss below aimed to challenge the current criteria and processes associated with built heritage selection and to provide an alternative, which was more inclusive of different ethnic and cultural groups' relationships to the past<sup>1</sup>. As far as we are aware, such an application of participatory learning and action (PLA) has not been attempted here or elsewhere. It provides an innovative approach within an arena of increasing importance to local community identity and economic development worldwide.

## Context

Newtown stretches along a shallow valley to the south of Wellington's central business district. Original inhabitants of Wellington harbour, Ngai Tara, settled many of the surrounding hills but the physical layout of the suburb actually began with the arrival of immigrant ships from England in 1840.

<sup>1</sup> The work was undertaken for the research component of Michael's Masters of Development Studies degree at Victoria University of Wellington and built upon his professional expertise as a heritage planner.

**'What we see of heritage, the way it has been identified and the way we use it is, to a considerable extent, contrived. What do we protect? Who decides what is worth keeping? Who is it meant for?'**

Since the 1950s, the ethnic make-up of the suburb has changed considerably to include a large number of migrants from various Pacific Nations, China, India, mainland Europe, and Africa. In 1996, the suburb's population was comprised of 53% European, 13% Maori, 15% Pacific Island, and 14% Chinese or Indian making it considerably more diverse than the rest of the city and New Zealand as a whole.

The Wellington City Council (WCC) has identified and protected 16 buildings in the suburb. Most of these are also listed by the Trust. Most date from the turn of the last century, are Victorian or Edwardian in architectural style, and are either public buildings or churches, commercial buildings in or adjacent to the main retail street, or large villas owned by relatively affluent residents.

### Current heritage assessment process

There are two layers of official protection available in New Zealand. One is via the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Act (1993), in which certain buildings are registered as having heritage significance. The other is by means of the Resource Management Act (1991) under which TLAs are charged with the responsibility of identifying and protecting sites and buildings via their respective district plans.

What usually happens is that a group of 'experts', often architects or historians, are invited by a TLA to identify buildings in an area. These buildings are evaluated against a set of criteria, which might include: architecture, age, rarity, and association with a particular person or event. These criteria are reasonably standard and are employed, with some variation, by most TLAs. There is an opportunity to record anecdotal accounts, but these are not always obvious from the information cards produced by the Trust (Kernohan, pers.comm. 2000).

A list of buildings is then included in a District Plan and the public is invited to comment. Adding or removing an item becomes a statutory procedure requiring submissions and a hearing. The process is reasonably time-consuming and can be expensive. It also tends to favour participation by people who are fluent in English, familiar with statutory processes, knowledgeable about architecture, confident, articulate, and actively

interested and committed to aspects of the built environment. While these processes promote participation in theory, in practice the concerns and interests of diverse ethnic and cultural minority groups are rarely recognised or incorporated.

### Alternative participatory assessment process

A more participatory approach was adopted, which sought the active involvement of a wide range of people from Newtown's diverse population. Contact was made through letters, phone calls, and personal contacts with members of various cultural, church, and residents' groups as a way of involving Chinese, Indian, Polish, Moslem, Samoan, and other Pacific Nations peoples, alongside an already active group of mainly *Pakeha* residents within the Newtown Residents Association<sup>2</sup>. Indigenous Maori residents were not directly approached to participate in this work as in 1994, the WCC had developed a detailed and innovative citywide inventory of sites of significance to Maori. A number of these are in Newtown.

A number of meetings were held with particular cultural or ethnic groups and an open public meeting was organised by the Newtown Residents' Association. In addition, smaller meetings were held with local commercial property owners and architects living in the suburb, and individual informal interviews were undertaken. In total, 130 residents were involved in some aspect of the process.

Participatory exercises were adapted to each situation and generally took the following form:

- introductions;
- a slide show presentation outlining the goals and objectives of the project; a summary of the intended outcome; a précis of the way in which heritage is currently selected and managed; a brief history of Newtown; and, photographs of currently listed heritage buildings;
- a facilitated discussion about the existing WCC heritage criteria;
- the sharing of oral histories associated with particular buildings and sites (some listed, others not) and their representation and classification on a map of the suburb;
- a decision-making process about which sites to recommend for formal heritage listing and ones which should be included in more 'informal' cultural maps;
- wrap up and discussion of ownership of information and the next stage of the process; and,
- refreshments (either *in situ* or at a local pub or cafe).

In many instances, participants offered their private collec-

<sup>2</sup> *Pakeha* is the Maori term given to New Zealanders who are of (Western) European descent. It is in common usage within public and media discourse, but is also a contested term because of its association with colonisation.

**Photo 1: Former hotel – listed by the WCC and the Trust**



**Photo 2: New layers of heritage based on the participatory exercises**



tions of photographs, newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia to facilitate the creation of an alternative layer of understanding about heritage within Newtown.

### Outcomes of the approach

Residents involved in the participatory exercise within the public meetings tended to focus on buildings that had personal or family connections and associated oral histories, or larger buildings that identified their cultural community within the wider landscape. The commercial property owners emphasised the link between the restoration and listing of heritage buildings and economic development in the area noting how the recent restoration of a prominent landmark had stimulated investment and gentrification elsewhere (see Photo 1). One of them was particularly keen to see a row of commercial properties he owned heritage-listed for their streetscape value (see Photo 2). Over coffee in another cafe, several locally-based architects provided the widest range of

possible additional sites including a number of newer buildings which, from their perspectives, represented New Zealand design innovations, as well as older buildings of cultural significance to Polish, Samoan, and Maori communities.

While most participants endorsed the current heritage criteria and buildings listed by the Trust and WCC, a number also acknowledged that the lists represented only a smattering of what could potentially be considered. As a result, several buildings were identified as being worthy of listing, including three churches, a group of wooden shops dating from the early 1900s, and a multi-storey housing estate designed in the 1970s (see Photo 3). It was also interesting to note the similarities and the differences in the criteria used by the WCC and the local community when evaluating currently listed buildings. For example, the WCC register identified a terrace of wooden shops as having 'architectural' (classified as 'simplified Italianate') value with a high level of 'authenticity' (that it 'retains a moderate-high level of authen-

**Photo 3: Chinese Baptist Church – proposed by its congregation for listing**



ticity in materiality, craftsmanship, and setting'). There is no mention of the buildings 'cultural' or 'emotional' significance to the local community (for example, according to one participant, they provided cheap residential accommodation on the first floor for workers at the nearby brickworks and space on the ground floor for an array of small commercial enterprises)<sup>3</sup>.

Running parallel to this more formal process, was a strong desire by residents to have an alternative means of recording and displaying their heritage information that would be accessible to their communities and perhaps influence Council heritage policy in future years. Participants accepted that not all buildings of significance to them personally or collectively may be worthy of formal listing at present, but wanted them, and their cultural presence in the landscape, acknowledged in some way.

Residents recommended the production of a series of informal cultural maps that could represent the diversity of Newtown's histories and the installation of plaques that could convey information about particular buildings or sites of former buildings. Both were seen as tangible and relatively inexpensive ways in which their understandings of heritage could be represented and acknowledged appropriately by local authorities in conjunction with more formal heritage assessment procedures.

A number of participants also felt that the Trust and WCC needed to consult more widely when carrying out assessment procedures and that using participatory exercises like this one were useful in getting residents involved so that their knowledge was better respected and reflected in listings. In particular they felt that the participatory assessment process would help 'experts' to move away from an emphasis on architecture and European history and accordingly make fewer assumptions as to the sorts of buildings selected, and result in more culturally diverse and representative built heritage listings.

### **Reflections on the approach: positive outcomes and lessons learned**

#### **Positive outcomes**

The whole process of participatory appraisal, including the interviews, took about 30 hours, involved 130 people from a range of ethnic and cultural groups, allowed people of different backgrounds and attitudes to discover common concerns, and generated a considerable amount of information about sites and buildings in Newtown. In particular, the public meetings were successful at generating discussions about the suburb's history and the personal and collective histories and stories associated with particular places. The informal gathering in the pub following one public meeting went extremely well, as participants were relaxed and there was time to talk in more detail.

The informal interviews were productive. In some respects, they were more focused and detailed than the public meetings as they usually involved residents with a particular passion for the topic. This said, the two smaller meetings with the architects and commercial property owners were particularly successful, probably because the participants were more homogenous, had high levels of education, and were directly involved with and concerned for the suburb.

The suggested listings and the cultural maps produced have generated considerable interest in the process. To date, information from the project has been shared via informal meetings with the WCC and Trust. A workshop for heritage

<sup>3</sup> Heritage Buildings Inventory (1994) Wellington City Council.



specialists, TLA, and Trust staff has been planned, and the project has been presented at two conferences on community development, at a number of seminars, and to several Newtown groups.

From a practical perspective, information from the exercise has been included in a recently published trail of sites of significance to Wellington's minority groups. Also, one of the buildings identified by many of the participants as being of particular heritage significance to the area (due to its design, age, size, and location) is under threat of demolition. It is not currently listed by the WCC or Trust. Information taken directly from this exercise has been presented at separate hearings to the WCC and Trust, recommending that the building be listed. Meetings have taken place with the building's owner and alternatives to demolition have been developed.

At the time of writing, however, the owner is still intent on demolition. Options, including referring the decision to demolish to the Environment Court, are being considered. If there is a court hearing, then information gathered from this exercise will, with the agreement of participants, be presented as evidence.

### **A summary of the outcomes**

- a greater awareness for participants of existing heritage buildings listed in Newtown;
- the sharing of stories and recognition of common concerns across different groups;
- the exposure of a hitherto unrecorded and largely unrecognised layer of local knowledge and information – confirmation that not all heritage is what can be seen or touched (European model);
- the generation of a series of 'informal' cultural maps representing sites and buildings identified by participants;
- the nomination of a number of buildings represented on the cultural maps for official protection to the Trust and WCC; and,
- a proposal that plaques be installed to mark the sites of former buildings which had significant heritage value.

### **Lessons learnt**

- Making contacts from all ethnic and cultural groups was difficult. Face-to-face contact worked best, but required quite a considerable investment of time.
- Participants tended to be those residents with an explicit interest in heritage and motivation to attend meetings. Working through already established church and cultural groups (for speed of access) inevitably excluded other members of their wider communities and taking maps out

onto the street or near supermarkets might have resulted in the involvement of a wider range of residents.

- The short-term nature of the exercise meant that a vast source of information remained untapped. It might have been better to spend more time with fewer groups.
- There has not been an opportunity to monitor how effective the exercises were for participants, although feedback was sought at the end of each meeting and this was generally positive. On two occasions, participants commented that they could have made a more informed contribution if they had been better prepared, and more aware of the intended outcomes of the process.

Despite these limitations, from our experience and the comments of most participants, the process indicated that participatory appraisal exercises are valuable ways of enabling people who would not normally be involved in heritage procedures to be heard, respected, and taken seriously, and for generating alternative information for consideration within formal heritage management procedures. The approach has been favourably received by both the Trust and the WCC.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

Through the application of a participatory approach, the role of an outside expert such as a heritage planner changes from being someone who controls the process, to one in which the person becomes more a facilitator and resource for community-based decisions. This approach can complement local or national statutory and regulatory procedures as it emphasises greater consultation and community involvement.

As our work was a pilot, we would like to offer some recommendations for other practitioners, heritage 'experts' and local government authorities to consider regarding the development and implementation of participatory heritage assessment. These include:

- developing a core of facilitators who specialise in participatory approaches and who can carry out exercises like the one outlined above with specific community groups;
- expanding the range of groups involved to include specific communities of interest such as young people: establishing face-to-face contact with such groups is critical;
- facilitating a discussion of outcomes with group representatives and a heritage specialist, who could act as a resource person for them; and,
- supporting residents to establish projects to manage their own built heritage (e.g. through the installation of signs and guided walking trails) and to make submissions to TLAs and the Trust based on their own research and recommendations.

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# Diagnosing priorities for rural women's welfare through participatory approaches in the Punjab, Pakistan

By BASHIR AHMAD, NAZIA TABASSUM, and PARSA ARBAB GILL

## Introduction

The most urgent problem that blights the lives of most people in Pakistan is the wholly unacceptable poverty. The largest number of the poor live in rural areas, where the rural market is characterised by low wages and as a consequence of this, a substantial section of the rural labour force lives in a state of under-nourishment, starvation, and despair.

A very high rate of population growth in the past annihilated most of the development achievements and the country remained poor in terms of socio-economic indicators. For example, the annual per capita income in Pakistan is \$460. Only 24% of women and 50% of men are literate, and about 60% of the total population has no access to safe water; satisfactory sanitation is available to only 30% of the population. Various indicators show that compared to men, women have a relatively low status, compared to other countries of the region.

Women's status can be improved by making them 'earning' family members. Women who participate directly in production activities (whether it is on the farm, in the family craft business, or any other enterprise) can expect a higher status within the household than those women whose work is confined primarily to housework. In rural households, both men and women need to work to realise

a reasonable living standard. In order to reduce poverty, illiteracy, and to improve their health status, women need to actively participate in income-generating activities; this can have a far greater impact on household security and child nutrition than men's income, as women's incomes tend to come more frequently and in smaller amounts, and it may be spent more readily on daily needs.

The present study was conducted to identify major problems faced by rural women while engaging themselves in various income-generating activities. An attempt has also been made to assess the nature and operation of these income-generating activities in which the rural women are engaged.

## Methodology

The study was conducted in the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)-UAF project area in Tehsil, and the Faisalabad district in the Punjab province. Four villages were selected for the purpose of this study. Women in the project area carried out a number of activities. The present study related mainly to poultry and sewing income-generating activities, where female labour is involved. The participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques used in this study included semi-structured interviews, causal flow diagrams, and problem ranking of these activities.

**'In order to reduce poverty, illiteracy, and to improve their health status, women need to actively participate in income-generating activities; this can have a far greater impact on household security and child nutrition than men's income, as women's incomes tend to come more frequently and in smaller amounts, and it may be spent more readily on daily needs'**

### Problems and problem ranking

The PRA team evaluated the problems identified by the participants, by constructing a direct ranking matrix on the criteria of frequency and seriousness of the problems.

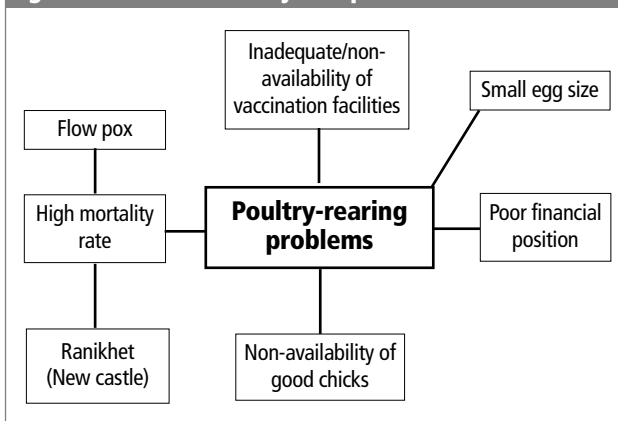
### Poultry

Backyard poultry rearing is an important micro enterprise in most of the households in the villages, supplementing household incomes, especially for those families that are relatively poor. This enterprise is most often run on a very small scale, where a few poultry birds are kept for eggs and meat, generating additional income for families by selling eggs and live birds. According to the women participants, poultry farming requires less time and a smaller initial capital investment, with the promise of high and quick returns, compared to other side business. Chickens and chicks do not require sophisticated feed supplements; the feed mix is generally made up of grain, flour, and unused bread, all of which are readily available at home.

The participating women found that a decent amount of money could be easily earned/saved from poultry farming even when it is run on small scale, in addition to fulfilling domestic meat consumption needs. An egg is generally sold at Rs.4 during winter and Rs.2–3 in summer. On an average, Rs.5000 to 5400 can be earned per annum from a dozen healthy laying birds. This income is spent on items of daily use like sugar, tea, ghee, vegetables, and soap. This opinion is consistent with other studies, which report that in contrast to men's, a high proportion of women's earnings is spent on basic daily needs.

Women who were involved in this activity were more confident and enjoyed a definite social status in comparison to others who were not participating in this type of activity.

**Figure 1: Problems in Poultry Enterprise**



### Ranking poultry raising problems

In order to look at the causes of low-level participation in poultry enterprises, a problem-causing diagram was constructed (Figure 1) with the active participation of the women's poultry group. From the final version of the problem-causing diagram, a short list of key issues was distilled, and subsequently used for ranking problems and arriving at some concrete conclusions.

Two common poultry breeds raised in the project area are the Missri and Golden breeds. Very few birds of desi (local) type were reported. A direct matrix ranking exercise was conducted to prioritise the problems in raising poultry. A similar approach was adopted by Drinkwater (1993) and Chambers (1992) for ranking varieties of crops and fruits. In the present study, various problems were identified and ranked. The most significant was disease prevalence, which was given a value of ten, followed by care of chicks (nine), and the lack of vaccination facilities (eight). The direct matrix exercise showed different levels of problems in the Missri and Golden poultry breeds. Using date seeds as counters, an exercise was done to ascertain the seriousness of problems in the two poultry breeds. Table 1 indicates that the disease prevalence is the most serious problem, and is ranked highest. However, this problem was found to be more serious in the Golden than the Missri breed, and mainly due to the lack of vaccination cover available at the village level, and also that no treatment facility was available for young chicks during any disease outbreaks.

The proper care of chicks was another problem. The women participants were of the view that chicks were to be protected from cats, birds of prey, and from cold weather. Extreme cold weather conditions resulted in high mortality rates and losses in overall production to a considerable extent. The participants assigned a score of three to Missri and six to the Golden breed.

**A woman from a poultry group feeding birds at her house**



**Table 1: Matrix ranking for the two breeds of poultry**

Problems	Poultry Breeds	
	Missri	Golden
Disease prevalence (10)	****	*****
Mortality rates in chicks (9)	***	*****
Non-availability of vaccination (8)	****	****
Non-availability of quality poultry birds (6)	***	***
Small size of eggs (4)	****	-
Total score	133	164

**Table 2: Ranking problems relating to sewing/stitching:**

Problems	Frequency	Seriousness	Score	Ranking
Deferred payment	5	5	10	1
Health Problem	5	2	7	2
Inefficient marketing	3	3	6	3
Non-availability of required quality material	2	1	3	4

Members of the participating group ranked the lack of vaccinations as the third important problem. Eight date seeds were placed for this problem by participating women, four each for the Missri and Golden breeds, indicating an equal seriousness in both breeds.

The participants identified the lack of quality poultry birds as another problem, preferring to raise birds of a more disease-resistant breed, with good egg production. According to the women, the Missri chickens lay smaller eggs than the Golden breed.

Ahmad and Ahmad (1995) ranked non-availability of quality chicks, inadequate availability of quality feed, and poor vaccine quality as the three most important problems on commercial layer poultry farms. This difference in problem ranking was probably due to the fact that the present study was confined to those participants who had household-level experience, raising poultry on a small scale rather than on a large commercial scale.

The overall score for both breeds was obtained by multiplying the value of the problem by the breed's ranking for that problem and then summing the values. The value of the overall score was 133 for Missri and 164 for Golden. Thus in an overall context, Golden was more prone to problems than Missri.

The matrix scores were discussed with a group of women to see their response. They were of the view that *Ranikhet* disease is the major problem in rearing poultry. The Golden breed is more susceptible to this disease compared to Missri; Missri chicks are sturdier, more resistant to disease, and, like the local breed (which has disappeared in the area), have acclimatised well in the poor rural area conditions. A higher

incidence of mortality in the Golden breed has resulted in a decreasing number of these birds over the last few years. The participants pointed out a similar problem regarding the lack of available quality poultry birds, as the chicks are supplied by peddlers in rural areas.

Interventions proposed:

- the provision of vaccination facilities against various diseases;
- for technical help to be extended, to locate and purchase quality birds; and,
- the provision of credit facilities for the purchase of quality chicks.

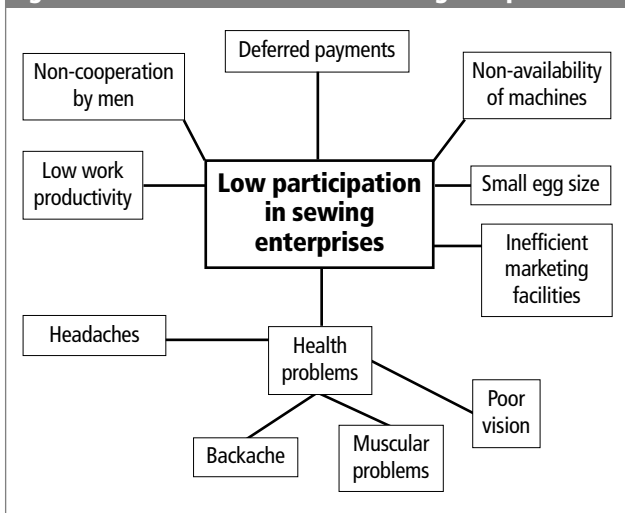
The project has expanded the vaccination programme to reduce levels of disease incidence and mortality rates, besides advancing micro credit facilities.

### Sewing

In a village within the project area, a group of women had a common interest in stitching clothes. About 16 village households were actively involved in this activity. Of this group of women, 50% were married. They were able to spare some time for sewing after finishing their daily chores, whereas the other 50% were unmarried and were able to devote more time to this activity. Both married and unmarried women can earn Rs.50 for a simple dress and Rs.70 for a gentleman's suit. One simple suit was completed in three to four hours. Specially designed dresses take longer to sew, and cost more.

It was noted that married women could barely complete one suit daily. Without an electric sewing machine, the task took extra time. In addition, it was difficult for them to regu-

Figure 2: Problems associated with stitching enterprises



lary spare time as they had to look after their household affairs, and attend to their children, husbands, visitors, and other related family matters.

### Ranking sewing activity problems

Problems/causes of low participation in sewing activities are indicated in Figure 2.

These problems are made worse due to the frequency and seriousness of them. It was observed that the members of the group were interested expanding this activity, provided that customers paid for their clothes in good time. It was noted with concern that even resourceful people did not pay them at the appropriate time. The participants ranked these deferred payments as the number one problem.

Health problems associated with this activity were ranked as the second highest. The usual symptoms reported included headaches, backache, and muscular strain. Also mentioned

A girl from a sewing group is busy sewing clothes at home



were inadequate marketing facilities and the non-availability of required matching thread.

When the women involved in this activity discussed the matrix scores, they noted that due to poor financial conditions, or to bad habits (including those of well-off people), often fees were not paid in time, despite several requests for payment. In some cases, people did not pay for several months. For the other problems, their ranking was similar to the one estimated above in the matrix.

### Proposed intervention

It was proposed that proper marketing facilities must be provided, as well as credit to purchase electric sewing machines for the further expansion of this enterprise.

The project is now providing loans for sewing activities. However, the solutions to the problems identified do not come under the purview of the project activities.

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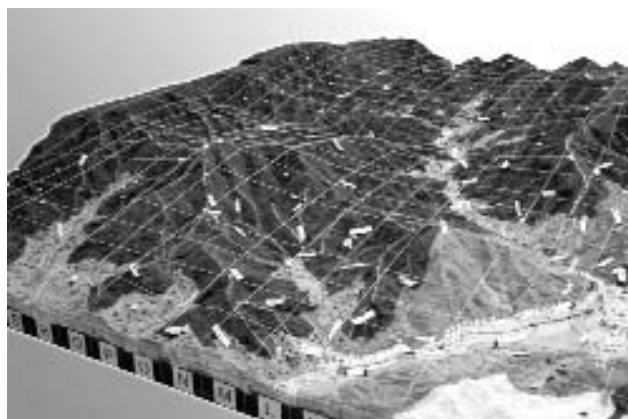
# The seventh helper: the vertical dimension feedback from a training exercise in Vietnam

by **GIACOMO RAMBALDI** and **LE VAN LANH**

Participatory 3-D Modelling (P3DM) is a community-based mapping method developed in Thailand in the 1980s and fine-tuned in the Philippines over the past eight years. P3DM has been conceived to support collaborative processes related mainly to resource use and tenure and aimed at increasing public participation in problem analysis and decision making.

P3DM integrates people's knowledge and spatial information (contour lines<sup>1</sup>) to produce stand-alone scale relief models (Photo 1) that have proved to be user-friendly and relatively accurate data storage and analysis devices and at the same time excellent communication media (Rambaldi et al., 2000). Relief models may display exclusively community knowledge composed from the mental maps of the participants or be enriched by additional geo-referenced information obtained from field surveys, Global Positioning

**Photo 1: Villagers constructing a 3-Dimensional model**



Systems' (GPS) readings, and secondary sources.

When linked to a Geographic Information System (GIS), the P3DM method bridges the gap existing between Geographic Information Technologies and spatial Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) found among marginalised, isolated, and frequently natural resource-dependent communities. The manufacture of a 3-D model leads participants through a collective learning process (see Photo 2) to the visualisation of their economic and cultural domains in the form of scaled and geo-referenced relief models, which can be subsequently used for different purposes. These

<sup>1</sup> Contour lines can be sourced from existing topographic maps or from digital data sets. Bringing source data to the desired scale (e.g. from 1:50,000 to 1:10,000) may involve enlargement via digital copiers (modern photocopying machines) or elaboration in a GIS environment. The first solution is the cheapest, but suffers in terms of loss of accuracy. Incorporating GIS into the process increases accuracy and adds communication power to community knowledge. Compared to other processes used to generate geo-referenced and scaled data (aerial photography, remote sensing, etc.), P3DM is definitely cost effective (2-3 USD/km<sup>2</sup> at 1:10,000 scale). What is more important is that by adding accuracy and transparency and to people's knowledge, the method definitely amplifies communication capacity. Obviously this does not happen for free ...

**Photo 2: Discovery learning, the first step for informed decision making**



**Photo 3: 1:10,000 scale model of Pu Mat National Park, Nghe An, Vietnam**



include among others collaborative research and planning, management of conflicts bound to the territory and its natural resources, community based natural resource management, participatory monitoring and evaluation and community cohesion and self-actualisation.

One major constraint of participatory 3-D models is their limited mobility due to their size and weight. Their use is therefore generally confined to those convening around them (see Photo 3).

To upscale their utilisation, P3DM exercises are best integrated with GPS and GIS to make the content of the models portable and sharable. This allows adding precisely geo-referenced data, conducting additional analysis, and producing cartographic outputs. The synergies resulting from the combinations of the three systems add veracity and authority to community knowledge, paving the way for more balanced power-sharing in collaborative natural resource management.

Practitioners using physical 3-D models at community level have found that when informants are provided with a blank relief model instead of a blank contour map or a blank sheet of paper, they can easily depict their spatial knowledge in a scaled, geo-referenced manner and add a lot of precise details. The fact that 3-D models augment the power of mind and facilitate scaling, allows for filling in information more fully and accurately on a given area. Generally this is not the case with sketch mapping, which has been widely used to represent spatial knowledge in the context of participatory action research. The difference between a blank contour map and the corresponding relief model is the physical vertical dimension that provides essential cues for stimulating memory and for establishing spatial associations.

Among the different visualising methods<sup>2</sup> used to spatially reproduce people's knowledge, P3DM is the one which – by adding the vertical dimension and using simple communication means like colours, shapes, and dimensions – offers substantial advantages for depicting cognitive maps (Rambaldi et al., 2002).

Here are some noted advantages of P3DM (Rambaldi et al., 2000 and Rambaldi et al., 2002):

- The physical 3-dimensional representation of space offers users a so-called bird's eye view and a common perspective from which to acquire a holistic view of the landscape where landmarks and salient features are *visible* to everyone.
- If the method is applied in a genuinely participatory manner, it generates relatively accurate qualitative and quantitative geo-referenced data that are intellectually owned and understood by those who have compiled them (Chambers, 2002).
- Both process and output fuel self-esteem, raise local awareness of linked ecosystems, and delineate intellectual ownership of the territory.
- Relief models provide stakeholders and local authorities with a powerful medium for easing communication and language barriers, and create common grounds for discussion.
- The method is especially effective in portraying relatively extensive and remote areas, overcoming logistical and practical constraints to public participation in land/resource use planning and management.
- Manufacturing a relief model has positive effects in stim-

<sup>2</sup> e.g. sketch mapping, transect diagramming, participatory aerial photo-interpretation, relief modelling, mapping, etc.



ulating community cohesion because it gathers people to share information and concerns and frequently reinforces community self-actualisation through the revival of local knowledge. Old people share history with young people, passing on legends and religious beliefs, and knowledge of sacred rites and places so essential to conserving tradition (Alcorn, 2000:1–2).

- In Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) sketch maps, transect diagrams, or other conventional spatial tools produced at different times are compared. There is an inherent weakness in the fact that the outputs are not properly geo-referenced and consistently coded. P3DM overcomes this weakness, because the relief model is a constant with its legend and coding embedded.
- Most protected areas in Less Developed Countries do not have demarcated boundaries. Relief modeling can give communities and local authorities a clear first time factual understanding of their perimeter. This facilitates a bottom-up approach to boundary delineation and zoning, both of which activities tend to otherwise be characterised by bureaucratic logistics and lengthy negotiations.
- Thanks to the use of differentiated coding systems and materials, 3-D models, similarly GIS, accommodate overlapping information layers, thus facilitating community-based analysis and decision making.
- Experience gained in the Philippines over almost a decade has shown that 3-D modeling exercises conducted entirely at community level, and as a response to local needs versus external threats, have yielded positive effects in terms of community-cohesion and identity building (PAFID, 2001).

### The Vietnam experience

In response to a request made by the Vietnam National Environment Agency (NEA), the Vietnam National Parks and Protected Areas Association (VNPPA), the Social Forestry and Nature Conservation of Nghe An Project (SFNC), and the ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation (ARCBC) organised a participatory 3-D modelling exercise in Pu Mat National Park, Con Cuong, Nghe An Province, Vietnam. The main purposes of the event included training participants in the use of the technique, acquiring data on the application of the method in the local socio-economic and environmental context while providing local stakeholders with a communication means that would enable joint learning and dialogue between ethnic minority groups living within or close to the park, government officials, and project staff.

The exercise was a Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (European Commission) funded intervention, the Social Forestry and Nature Conservation Project

#### Box 1: Training in participatory 3-D modelling and visualising local knowledge for application in protected area management

##### Participating bodies

##### ■ Government agencies

- Forest Protection Department (FPD)
- National Environment Agency (NEA)
- Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), Philippines

##### ■ National parks

- Bach Ma National Park
- Ba Be National Park
- Cuc Phuong National Park
- Tam Dao National Park
- Pu Mat National Park

##### ■ Non-government organisations (NGOs)

- Vietnam National Protected Areas Association (VNPPA)
- Conservation Education Network (CEN)
- Centre for Environment, Tourism and Development (CETD)
- Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE), Philippines

##### ■ Projects

- GTZ-funded Song Da Social Forestry Project
- GEF/UNDP-funded Protected Areas Resources Conservation (PARC) Project
- EU-funded SFNC project

##### ■ Academe

- Hanoi University of Sciences, Faculty of Biology
- Hanoi University of Sciences, Faculty of Geography
- National Centre for Natural Science and Technology (NCNST), Geographic Institute
- Hanoi National Economic University, Faculty of Economy and Municipal Environmental Management
- Centre for Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES)
- Institute of Water Resource Planning
- Human Geography Research Centre

(1997–2004). This project aims to conserve biodiversity within the park through people's participation.

The hands-on training took place in November 2001, but preparations started well ahead.

The training, which followed an orientation seminar held in Hanoi in October 2001, had a broad outreach, involving a number of agencies, projects and NGOs (see Box 1) operating in the sectors of biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in Vietnam.

The core area and the buffer zone of Pu Mat National Park cover 91,000 and 86,000 hectares respectively and are inhabited by a number of minority groups, including Tay Phoong, Man Thanh, Dan Lai, Kho Mu, H'Mong, Thai, and Kinh. The population of approximately 10,000 resides in 16 communes and 110 villages. Key to the success of the exercise has been the active participation of 76 villagers inhabiting the park and its buffer zone, 30 students and teachers residing in the area, a number of park staff, 24 trainees, facilitators, and translators.

**Photo 4: Key informants locating themselves vis-à-vis the relief model**



The 1:10,000-scale model, measuring 2.8m x 2.4m, covers a total area of 70,000ha including portions of core area and buffer zones located southeast of the park. A 1:7500-vertical scale was used to enhance the perception of slope.

The exercise went through a series of phases including orientation, focus group discussions, and hands-on activities, all of which served as a learning ground for participating members from the local community, project and park staff, trainees, and facilitators. To complete the model, exercises were done to extract data and export these to a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) environment. Different methodologies were practiced including data extraction by the use of digital photography coupled with direct on-screen digitising.

### **Group dynamics**

Careful attention was paid to group dynamics during the entire exercise. The trainees, coming from different institutions, easily became familiar with one another and generally worked as a team. The diverse educational background of the group (including cartographers, GIS technicians, biologists, social scientists, and park management staff) positively contributed to the outcome. In fact, any P3DM exercise is meant to be facilitated by a multi-disciplinary group including at least three disciplines: cartography/GIS, community work, and environment.

The management of the Pu Mat National Park sent ten staff to attend the training. Interestingly – before starting the actual exercise – most of them expressed some doubts about the capacity of the villagers to fruitfully relate to the

## Box 2. Fissuring frames of mind

The 'inverted map' exercise involves displaying on a wall a map featuring the terrestrial boundaries and/or the coastline of a country known to the participants, with the North pointing to the floor and the South to the ceiling, and stimulating discussion on the feeling induced by such an unconventional display.

Participants will generally concur that there is nothing wrong in hanging a map upside-down, except for the fact that their frame of mind has been somehow distressed and that this has caused feelings of discomfort.

Thereafter the facilitator should lead the focus of the discussion on the concept of 'diversity' and its social and cultural implications.

3-D model and to compose its landscape based simply on cognitive maps.

Questions like 'how can we correct their errors?' surfaced during two focus group discussions, organised in anticipation of the arrival of the key informants. The meetings helped prepare the park staff to accept different perspectives and the fact that there is more than one locus of knowledge.

'Do's and don'ts' of facilitation were discussed to enhance the importance of 'broadening the perspective' or 'developing analytical skills' of key informants, rather than 'correcting their mistakes'.

The 'inverted map' exercise (see Box 2) was used to encourage the acceptance of existing diverse frames of mind, and the necessity of 'thinking outside the box'.

After being oriented on the mechanics of the 3-D modelling exercise and on the use of the coding means, key informants quickly familiarised themselves with the topography of the model, and pinpointed the location of their houses and other landmarks (see Photo 4).

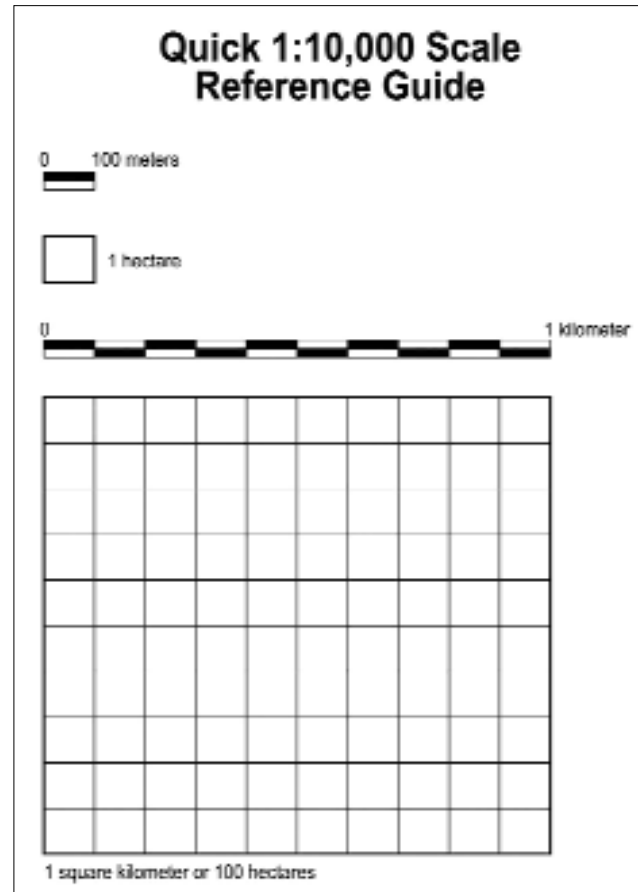
In learning by doing and through concrete sensorial experiences, they rapidly internalised the area represented by the model.

The use of the Quick Reference Guide (see Photo 5) proved to be extremely useful in the process.

By sharing this discovery learning process, the park staff rapidly appreciated how familiar and spatially conscious community members were. The villagers took the lead in generating data and the park staff acted with increasing skills as facilitators.

It is worth recalling that the park management drafted the initial map key (legend) and that at the beginning of the activity, key informants were invited to review it and suggest changes or integrations and to improve definitions. By the end of the exercise the initial legend had expanded to a total of 55

**Photo 5:**  
Quick  
reference  
guide



features (lines, polygons, and points), a number of which were added by the villagers themselves. Some of the items listed on the draft legend were removed. Most importantly the villagers improved the definitions of the various features to assure better understanding by all those participating.

Interpersonal dynamics, final workshop assessments, and the closing remarks made by the trainees, all clearly indicate that the park and SFNC project staff recognise collective community knowledge as a valid and substantial asset to be considered as a key component for the management of the park and its buffer zones.

In addition, the exercise was the first occasion for most key informants to visit the Protected Area Office Compound, which is located at a considerable distance from the park. Some participants had to travel for two days to reach the venue. They were first time 'actors on the scene', playing the role of resource persons (see Photo 6).

All these human interaction dynamics are stepping-stones towards improving relationships and mutual trust between park/project staff and communities residing within

**Photo 6: Villagers introducing a second group of key informants to the dynamics of the exercise**



the core area and buffer zone.

As Andrew Weir (EU Co-director, SFNC) spelled out in his closing remarks, 'Participatory 3-D Modelling has proven to be – among others – an efficient means for bringing people together'.

The exercise led to the manufacture of a relief model covering only a portion of the area of interest. The SFNC project manifested the intention of replicating the activity to include the entire project area. So far the model has been used for collating information, learning, and discussing boundaries and zoning issues. Other activities will follow.

### **Innovative techniques**

New techniques have been successfully tested including the use of a quick reference guide, which helped key informants to scale data in terms of size, thus reducing one error (scaling of areas) common in depicting mental maps, and the export of data from the model to a GIS environment with the use of a high-resolution digital camera (see Photo 7) followed by direct on-screen digitising.

### **Conclusions**

The exercise was based on experience gained in the Philippines

among indigenous people living within or around protected areas, and among hill tribes in Thailand. The applied process, which included a long preparatory phase of community mobilising, has proven to be successful in diverse cultural settings.

The use of the third dimension appears to offer additional cues to memory, thus enhancing the capacity of individuals to recompose their cognitive maps in a quite accurate, geo-referenced, and scaled manner. The fact that 3-D models facilitate scaling, allows also for a large number of features to be depicted on a given area. This is not the case in sketch mapping which has been the most common manner of representing spatial knowledge in the context of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The difference between a blank contour map and the corresponding relief model is the physical vertical dimension.

In promoting discovery learning, facilitators are frequently advised to stimulate discussion by the use of open-ended questions to allow respondents to better articulate their replies. This is generally achieved by the use of the so-called six helpers – who, what, where, when, why, and how? Experience has shown that the third dimension definitely helps when it comes to depicting mental maps. We wonder whether '3-D hints' could be added to the list.

**Photo 7: Parallel camera movement shooting to capture digital, high resolution images of the landscape**



#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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#### NOTES

Giacomo Rambaldi has been practicing community mapping for the past 12 years. He has been working (2001–2002) as technical advisor at the ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation and has been tasked with the development and dissemination of the P3DM method in Southeast Asia.

Le Van Lanh is the Secretary General of the Vietnam National Parks and Protected Areas Association and has been instrumental in organizing the training in Vietnam.

The ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation has been established by a joint cooperation project of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU).

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent any official view of the European Commission, the ASEAN Secretariat, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the National Biodiversity Reference Units.

The designation employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the publisher and authors concerning the legal status of any country or territory, city, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Details on the exercise and lessons learned, including the cost analysis of conducting P3DM in Vietnam, are found in the proceedings, which are available for download from the following address:

[www.iapad.org/publications/02\\_0003a.zip](http://www.iapad.org/publications/02_0003a.zip)

Additional information and selected bibliography on P3DM are found at [www.iapad.org](http://www.iapad.org)

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# Tips for trainers

Contributed by **PERRY WALKER, GHEE BOWMAN, GWEN VAUGHAN, and ROWENA HARRIS**

For this issue, we look at how Drawing Shields has been used during workshops and courses in different ways by different practitioners. Each example describes how the Shields can be used in different ways: as an icebreaker, to encourage workshop participants to open up; to consider issues, to find common ground, and to discuss change and ways forward; as a means of self-expression, and to consider their own strengths and skills; and to create an atmosphere of trust and reflection amongst the group.

## Drawing Shields

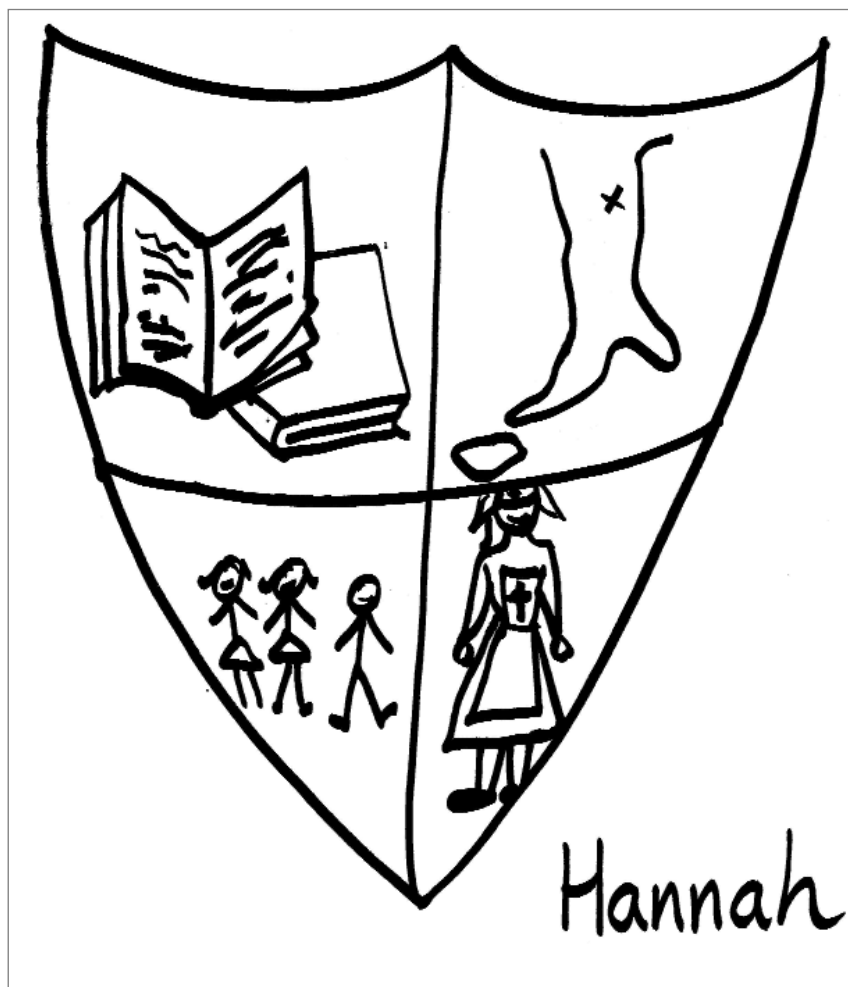
### An example from Perry Walker

What I did was to introduce the idea of a coat of arms as a means of self-expression. I then asked participants to:

- draw an outline of a shield, with a horizontal line across it (they were welcome to make the shield any shape they liked if that would help to demilitarise it);
- draw an animal that had resonance for them above it;
- do a drawing on the top half of the shield about their current life;
- do a drawing in the bottom half of the shield about their desired future life;
- underneath the shield to draw on the left factors inhibiting the achievement of that desired future and on the right factors promoting it; and,
- at the bottom of the page to write a motto – the only place where words are allowed.

Everyone then talked about his or her shield. It worked very well.

● Source: Perry Walker, Director, Democracy Programme, New Economics Foundation, Cinnamon House, 6–8 Cole Street, London SE1 4YH, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7089 2848; Fax: +44 (0)20 7407 6473; Email: perry.walker@neweconomics.org



### An example from Rowena Harris

I've used Drawing Shields, and I make it up according to what I want participants to consider, discuss, or become aware of. This could be strengths, dreams, visions, or what is most loved or valued; interests, hobbies, or pastimes; or qualities and skills that participants can contribute and bring to a team.

● Source: Rowena Harris, Independent Facilitator, BJ Associates, Top Office, 49 Thingwall Park, Bristol BS16 2AJ, UK. Email: rowenaharris@topoffice.fsbusiness.co.uk

### An example from Ghee Bowman

Time taken: 20 minutes or more,

depending on the group size.

**Aim:** To introduce participants to each other and foster an atmosphere of listening and openness.

**Materials required:** A4 paper and marker pen for each participant, and your own example of a completed shield.

**Context:** This exercise works best at the very start of a training workshop or course, when the majority of participants don't know each other yet. ICA:UK regularly use this activity at the start of our Volunteer Orientation Weekends.

**Steps:** Before the session, prepare

your own Shield (at least in your head if not on paper). Draw a Shield on a piece of paper with a marker pen and divide it into four. In each quarter draw something that's significant in your life – a person, a thing, a place, a hobby, or an interest... four things about yourself that you're prepared to tell the group. It helps if you don't draw it too neatly or professionally, as you can make a joke about not needing to be a great artist for this exercise. Write your name on the Shield.

Show your Shield to the group and briefly explain the four sections. So in my Shield I might draw a quick picture of my wife Rebecca and daughters Alex and Hannah, the ICA symbol to show my work, a map showing Egypt (where I worked as a volunteer for two years) and me running – one of my hobbies. Other people might draw something more abstract like a concept, something related to their studies, something about where they live... whatever is important in their life that they'd like to share with the group.

Give each person (including course leaders) a sheet of paper and a marker pen, and give them five minutes or so to do the same (don't rush them, it may be difficult for some).

When most of them have finished, ask them to pair up with somebody they don't know and introduce themselves using their Shield (make sure the course leaders are included in the pairings). Give

them plenty of time for this; it's often a good chance for people to share other ideas and anxieties about the course. Tell them that they'll be introducing their partner to the whole group later.

When they're ready, bring them back into a circle and ask them to show their partner's Shield, indicating to the different drawings, and to introduce their partner to the group. For example, 'This is Hannah, she likes reading, she was born in Italy, she has two sisters and a twin brother, and she's a nurse'.

When everybody has introduced their partner, thank them and appreciate the wealth of skill, interest, and experience in the room. Put all the Shields in a prominent place on the wall for the duration of the course, and remember that some people may want to take their Shield away with them at the end.

**Variations and limitations:** VSO have used a similar exercise on their Preparing for Change course, where a group of four participants each draw one concern in a section of a large Shield, then write a motto underneath to express a positive approach towards their shared concerns.

Some people find the word 'Shield' carries some negative feelings of being defensive, so instead call the product a 'Coat of Arms'.

We usually follow this exercise with another exercise to discover what the participants expect from

the course (details on request).

● Source: Ghee Bowman, Volunteer Service Programme Coordinator, ICA:UK, 15 Mile Lane, Exeter EX4 9AA, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1392 422216; Email: gbowman@gn.apc.org; Website: www.ica-uk.org.uk

### An example from Gwen Vaughan

I have loved using the shield: it is simple, powerful, and very flexible!

In the context of change, whether personal or organisational, it can be the protective shield with which we go into battle. The four sections contain representations of where we are, where we wish to go, and the factors that help or hinder the change. The representations may be literal or metaphorical – the key is the visualisation of change and the discussion around the issues.

On a lighter note, the shield makes a great introductory exercise (and quite fun for an international audience, some of whom have no concept of heraldry, to learn something that comes from my cultural traditions). For participants to be able to draw the things that mean home, an animal that represents self, a vehicle to represent your work, and the thing that makes you happiest, can introduce a closeness and depth of communication early in an event.

● Source: Gwen Vaughan, Freelance consultant. Email: gwen.vaughan@virgin.net

# in touch



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

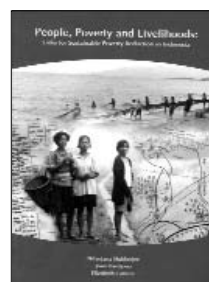
- **Networks.** Do you have links with recognised local, national or international networks for practitioners of participatory learning? If so, what does this network provide – training? newsletters? resource material/library? a forum for sharing experiences? Please tell us about the network and provide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

like to share with other trainers?

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

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

## Book reviews



**People, poverty and livelihoods: links for sustainable poverty reduction in Indonesia**

● N. Mukherjee, J. Hardjono, and E.

Carriere, World Bank and DFID, 2002

In 2000 the World Bank and DFID discussed how the World Bank strategic report on poverty in Indonesia (*Indonesia: Constructing a New Strategy for Poverty Reduction*) could reflect the voices and realities of poor people themselves. It was agreed that DFID and the World Bank would organise a limited number of participatory poverty assessments to provide qualitative depth to issues discussed in the World Bank report. The authors of this book tested the DFID's Sustainable Livelihoods framework to carry out participatory action research in urban and rural locations in four provinces of Indonesia. The book documents the process, the findings and their implications, and offers some reflection on the methodology used.

■ Available from: World Bank Office Jakarta, Jakarta Stock Exchange Building, Tower 2, 12th & 13th Floors, Jl. Jend. Sudirman, Kav. 52–53, Jakarta 12190, Indonesia. Tel: +(62 21) 5299 3000; Fax: +(62 21) 5299 3111; Website: [www.worldbank.or.id](http://www.worldbank.or.id) or DFID Jakarta, British Embassy, Jl. M.H. Thamrin 75, Jakarta 10310, Indonesia. Tel: +(62 21) 315 6264; Fax: +(62 21) 314 1824



**Realising rights: transforming approaches to sexual and reproductive wellbeing**

● Andrea Cornwall and Alice Welbourn (eds), Zed Books, 2002



Sexual and reproductive wellbeing has gained recognition as a basic right, enshrined in international law. Yet reality on the ground is different, as society, health programmes, and aid agencies are all entrenched in old ways. Fundamental shifts in thinking and practice are needed to realise these rights and transform these realities. This book portrays a wide range of innovative examples from around the world. From popular theatre in Nigeria to participatory research in Britain; from role-playing in Cambodia to visualising reproductive health in Zimbabwe, and from collaborative planning in Egypt to community dialogue in the Andes, these 24 chapters reveal the value of transforming approaches to sexual and reproductive wellbeing. All begin with the need to engage women, men, and youth more directly in determining pathways to change; and all highlight both the complexities and the possibilities of making rights real. Some other reviews of the book include:

*This remarkable collection is revolutionary. Subjects supposed to be too sensitive have been explored with an unexpected frankness and freedom... If the bottom line of development is human wellbeing, here is a book with huge development potential. It is more than just essential reading: it is a source of practical new ideas for good things to do; and an invitation to action. Read it and be inspired!*  
Robert Chambers, IDS.

*The discourse on human rights and the practice of participatory development tend to remain in unfortunately separate, almost watertight, compartments. This book sensibly and valuably brings them together by making participatory processes central to making*

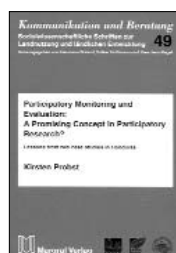
*reproductive and sexual rights real. It contains food for thought for the development analyst and critic, as well as new insights and valuable methods for the practitioner.*

Gita Sen, Sir Ratan Tata Chair Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India.

*Gender inequity, with its consequent lack of real sexual and reproductive choice for women, is the greatest catalyst to the spread of HIV. Yet, despite the great strides made in medical technology over the past decades, similar advancement is not evident in women's rights to sexual autonomy. I eagerly await the book, which will fill a crucial gap in our analysis of this important aspect of human life.*

Susan Paxton, Research Fellow and AIDS Activist, La Trobe University, Australia.

■ Available from: Zed Books Ltd., 7 Cynthia Street, London N1 9JF, UK. Tel. +44 (0)20 7837 4014; Fax +44 (0)20 7833 3960; Email: zed@zedbooks.demon.co.uk; Website: www.zedbooks.demon.co.uk

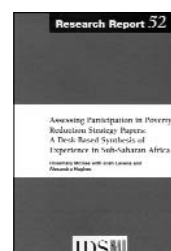


**Participatory monitoring and evaluation: a promising concept in participatory research? Lessons from two case studies in Honduras.**

● Kristen Probst, Margraf Verlag, 2002  
In agricultural research, user and farmer involvement in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) seems to be widely limited to the evaluation of technologies, and to consultations on adoption and impacts of innovations. The focus of this book, instead, is on participatory M&E as an instrument to support regular self-reflection and learning processes in participatory research for natural resource

management. The study is based on qualitative empirical data gained in two participatory projects in Honduras, where action processes were initiated and facilitated. The book discusses the potential benefits and limits of participatory M&E and its prospects and strategic value in the context of participatory research.

■ Available from: Margraf Verlag, Laudenbacher Str. 9, Postf. 105, 97990 Weikersheim. Tel: +49 (0)79 34 3071; Fax: +49 (0)79 34 8156; Email: info@margraf-verlag.de

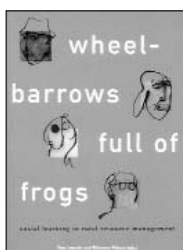


**Assessing participation in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers: a desk-based synthesis of experience in sub-Saharan Africa**

● Rosemary McGee with Josh Levene and Alexandra Hughes, IDS, 2002  
This study, carried out by the Participation Group at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), provides an update on practice and experiences of civil society participation in the development of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). The report concludes that civil society participation can add considerable value to PRSPs and policy processes more generally, and can contribute to more responsive behaviour on the part of donors and governments. However, the review does not demonstrate conclusively that in all countries significant value has been added to date. Much remains to be done to consolidate the gains made so far.

■ Available from: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1273 678 269; Fax: +44(0) 1273 621 202 or 691 647; Email: publications@ids.ac.uk. Electronic copies of

the report (pdf and Word format) are also available at the IDS Participation Group website [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip)



**Wheelbarrows full of frogs: social learning in rural resource management**

● Cees Leeuwis and Rhiannon Pyburn (eds), Van Gorcum, 2002

The central theme of this book is 'social learning' in the context of rural resource management. The concept of social learning reflects the idea that the shared learning of interdependent stakeholders is a key mechanism for arriving at more desirable solutions to complex problems in rural environment. It is based on interactive problem solving, conflict resolution, shared learning, convergence of goals,

concerted action, and so on. The book is organised around some major themes in the discourse of social learning, from the significance of theories of social learning to its application in agriculture, the role of facilitation and the relations between social learning and institutions.

Available from: Koninklijke Van Gorcum Bt, P.O. Box 43, 9400 AA Assen, The Netherlands.

## Workshops and events

### **Participatory communication 16th – 20th June 2003 Ottawa, Canada**

This is a new introductory workshop about participatory communication. It will focus on a variety of practical tools and innovative processes that seek to strengthen and give voice to all stakeholders, particularly the poor. Participants will learn to apply the steps in a communication planning process, including active participation in audience research and communication strategy development. At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to identify communication needs and initiate a communication strategy to address those needs.

### **Participatory development: concepts, tools, and application in PLA/PRA methods 23rd – 28th June 2003 and 21st – 26th July 2003 Ottawa, Canada**

These intensive six-day PD workshops focus on core participatory concepts, tools, and their application. Set in the community to maximise learning,

group interaction and networking, topics include: the origins of participatory development, learning, and application of PRA/PLA tools; the application of participation to project design; monitoring and evaluation; developing effective facilitation skills; building action plans; and team-building. Two-day community assignments proposed by community-based organisations in the Ottawa region will allow participants to apply tools learned in the workshop to real-life situations.

### **Participatory monitoring and evaluation 28th July – 2nd August 2003 Ottawa, Canada**

Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) involves a different approach to project monitoring and evaluation by involving local people, project stakeholders, and development agencies deciding together about how to measure results and what actions should follow once this information has been collected and analysed. This workshop is practically focused with daily excursions into the community and a three-day community assignment. Topics covered at the workshop include: origins of PM&E; skills and attributes of a PM&E

facilitator; learning PM&E tools; designing a monitoring and evaluation framework; actions plans; and much more. A project clinic will include projects from participant's workplace and provide a rich environment for feedback.

● For further information about these courses, please contact: Mosaic-net International, 705 Roosevelt Ave., Ottawa K2A 2A8, Canada; Tel: +1 (613) 728 1439; Fax: +1 (613) 728 1154; Email: [workshop@mosaic-net-intl.ca](mailto:workshop@mosaic-net-intl.ca); Website: [www.mosaic-net-intl.ca](http://www.mosaic-net-intl.ca)

### **Group facilitation methods 9th – 10th April 2003, London 29th – 30th April 2003, Cambridge 11th – 12th June 2003, Manchester**

A structured introduction to the basic ToP focused conversation and consensus workshop methods. The focused conversation method consists of how to: conduct purposeful, productive focused conversations; capture the wisdom of the group; stimulate feedback; and reach shared awareness in meetings. The consensus workshop method includes: channel input; integrating diverse ideas; building a group consensus; and developing solutions.

### **Group facilitation skills 10th June 2003, Manchester**

There is a whole range of skills that a facilitator needs to bring into play both before, during and after the event itself in order to ensure that the process and the methods employed are effective. In this pilot one-day course participants learn how to share actual experiences and challenges; explore ways of addressing these in future; reach a deeper understanding of what it means to facilitate; and experience the ToP focused conversation and consensus workshop methods.

**Participatory strategic planning  
12th – 13th May 2003, London**

The course presents structured long-range planning process, which incorporates the consensus workshop method for building consensus, the focused conversation method for effective group communication and an implementation process for turning ideas into productive action and concrete accomplishments. Previous experience in group facilitation methods is a pre-requisite for this course.

● For further information about these courses, please contact: Martin Gilbraith, ICA:UK, P.O. Box 171, Manchester M15 5BE, UK. Tel/Fax: +44 (0)161 232 8444;

Email: martin@ica-uk.org.uk; Website: www.icaworld.org

**Dealing with data from  
participatory studies: bridging the  
gap between qualitative and  
quantitative methods**

**14th – 25th July 2003, Reading**

This workshop, facilitated by the International and Rural Development Department and the Statistical Services Centre of the University of Reading, will help participants to achieve an optimal combination of PRA tools and statistical principles for dealing with qualitative and quantitative information collected in participatory studies. The workshop will include sampling, design of tools for information management, data handling, and analysis techniques that are relevant for social mapping, trend analysis, ranking and scoring, and seasonal calendars. Each participant will receive, free of charge, a copy of the add-in macros developed by the Statistical Services Centre for data analysis. Participants do not need to have prior statistical knowledge to attend this workshop.

● For further information about this course, please contact: Lorna Turner, Statistical

Services Centre, The University of Reading, Harry Pitt Building, Whiteknights Road, P.O. Box 240, Reading RG6 6FN, UK. Tel: +44 (0)118 931 8025; Fax: +44 (0)118 975 3169; Email: L.E.Turner@reading.ac.uk; Website: www.reading.ac.uk/ssc

**Participatory appraisal  
28th April – 2nd May 2003,  
Edinburgh**

This workshop concentrates on the practical application of PA, with three days spent on practical exercises and other methods for learning about PA. The remaining two days will include placements in Edinburgh and the surrounding area, and will provide an opportunity for a practical application of the approach. Placements will vary in their duration, location, and host-group composition. The placements will include evening work; this is necessary to accommodate host-group schedules.

● For further information, please contact: Vikki Hilton, Honorary Fellow, Institute of Ecology & Resource Management, The University of Edinburgh, Darwin Building, Mayfield Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JU, Scotland, UK. Tel: +44 (0)131 650 6439; Fax: +44 (0)131 662 0478; Email: vikki.hilton@ed.ac.uk; Website: www.ierm.ed.ac.uk



# e-participation

## **The Jefferson Center: originator of the citizens' jury process**

[www.jefferson-center.org/](http://www.jefferson-center.org/)

The Jefferson Center is a non-profit, non-partisan organisation that advocates the use of the Citizens' Jury process. This website is a resource for learning more about the Center's activities and the citizens' jury process as a tool towards citizens' empowerment. It provides details of current citizens' jury projects around the world, including final reports, and offers a selection of useful links.

## **Deliberative Democracy Consortium**

[www.deliberative-democracy.net/](http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/)

This is the online home of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium, a professional affiliation of researchers and practitioners linked to the growing movement of deliberative democracy. The Consortium recognises and supports the nascent, broad-based movement to promote and institutionalise deliberative democracy at all levels in the United States and around the world. The website is a source for commentary, upcoming events, useful links, and scholarly writing.

<http://cjp.anu.edu.au>

This site contains reports from the Citizens' Jury project funded by the Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation (LWRRDC) in Australia, under which two citizens' juries have been run. The first report introduces the citizens' juries and contrasts them with other forms of public consultation and environmental value assessment; the second considers the role of group-

dynamics in citizens' juries; and the third provides an overview of the methods and results of the first citizens' jury.

## **The Loka Institute**

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

Loka works to make science and technology more responsive to social and environmental concerns by expanding opportunities for grassroots, public-interest groups, and everyday citizen and worker involvement in vital facets of science and technology decision making. The website describes Loka's ongoing projects, publications (with some extracts available online), provides news articles from various sources, and science and technology links.

## **TAN+N: the Global Democracy Movement**

[www.auburn.edu/tann/](http://www.auburn.edu/tann/)

TAN+N is dedicated to the creative use of modern technologies (ICT) and face-to-face deliberative techniques in all forms that directly empower citizens to have authentic input into political systems at all levels of governance around the world. It contains information about major projects and organisations, events on global direct democracy, book reviews and links, current and archived news, a webzine, e-voting, and a simulated constitutional convention.

## **Empowerment: a World Bank perspective**

[www.worldbank.org/poverty/empowerment/index.htm](http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/empowerment/index.htm)

This is the Empowerment section of the World Bank PovertyNet website.

It provides a description of the World Bank's approach to empowerment, together with an online Empowerment Sourcebook with brief descriptions of relevant analytical tools and a selection of practices principally from the Bank's experience. Documents and links related to the topic are also available.

## **The Community Planning Website**

[www.communityplanning.net/](http://www.communityplanning.net/)

This well structured and practical website provides an overview of new methods of community planning. Specifically, it lists principles, methods, and scenarios that appear to be universally relevant, and can be drawn on for inspiration and guidance. They are based on pioneering projects and experience from many countries over the past few decades. It also presents an abstracted selection of useful documents and films, contact listings, and a glossary.

## **Agricultural biotechnology and policy processes in developing countries**

[www.ids.ac.uk/biotech](http://www.ids.ac.uk/biotech)

This website contains links to a selection of materials from projects on biotechnology coordinated by the Institute of Development Studies, including a new briefing paper series. The papers ask critical questions about how policies really affect the livelihoods of the poor, such as how can policy processes be more inclusive and responsive to the concerns of the poor? How can we 'democratise' biotechnology?

# RCPLA Network

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

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## News from Praxis

Praxis has been working with EMF Films, The Netherlands on a documentary project focusing on the realities of poverty and the poor in India. EMF films were particularly interested in the participatory research and films that Praxis has produced in recent years. Both Praxis and EMF Films recognise the huge complementarity between research and the media in bringing the perspectives of the poor and marginalised to a wider audience.

In November 2002, Praxis was commissioned by the World Bank to conduct a Development Audit of the World Bank-funded District Poverty Initiative Program (DPIP) in Rajasthan. This mid-term development audit exercise was undertaken to assess the efficacy, orientation, and systemic strengths of the project. It was a forward-looking exercise, aimed at informing the design of the remaining phase of the project.

Development Audit (DA) is a

combination of tools to assess the financial performance, social impact/relevance, technical quality, and systemic strengths of an intervention from the perspective of primary and other internal/external stakeholders. It is an instrument that can be used by organisations to increase accountability, effectiveness, and transparency (and thus, acceptability) of programmes/projects through stakeholder engagement.

A holistic, participatory approach, involving all stakeholders at all stages of the audit, was adopted. Participatory workshops were conducted with stakeholders at various levels from state to village as well as with external stakeholders. This enabled stakeholders to offer their perspectives about the implementation and impact of the programme initiatives and to provide suggestions for improvements. The design of the development audit was constantly evolving to ensure that all facets of the DPIP were captured in

our research. The final design employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

The development audit is an important step towards assessing and understanding the impact of poverty alleviation programmes on the lives of the poor. It also provides a transparent analysis of the mechanisms that are required to implement such a scheme from the perspectives of the implementing agencies. The results of the development audit will be converted into actionable procedures that will involve key stakeholders of DPIP. As the development audit is a groundbreaking initiative Praxis will publish the results for a wider audience, and for use as a guide for similar projects to be conducted in the future.

Continuing our commitment to providing opportunities to young people interested in pursuing a career in the development sector, Praxis was

joined in January by a volunteer, Shane Boris, an Economics, Religious Studies, and Political Science undergraduate from the University of Ohio, USA. He came to India to get exposure to participatory approaches in India and to learn about the contribution of participatory approaches to policy making. Shane embraced the opportunity to be involved in all areas of Praxis work, including a field study in Haryana.

#### News from DIPD

DIPD has been coordinating the National Working Group for Participation (GNTP) over the past year. GNTP is a network of institutions and independent members committed to participatory processes in Bolivia. Formed in 1994, it has applied participatory methods and tools in different development areas all over the country. It has also provided training expertise for specific projects, municipalities, government institutions, and international cooperation.

GNTP fits into the current national reality by concentrating efforts on the implementation of Poverty Relief Programmes within the PRSP, Dialogue Law, Popular Participation Law and HIPC II resources. It is involved in a series of projects aimed at strengthening local actors in Northern Potosí (Caripuyo, Llallagua), Vallegrande and other municipalities in order to reinforce the participation spaces established by law and promote social and institutional capacities and citizens' empowerment.

GNTP is also contributing to the Logolink Programme, the international comparative learning experience coordinated by the Participation Group at the Institute of Development Studies in Brighton. This

gives GNTP the opportunity of sharing Bolivian experiences in citizen participation and local governance with other countries.

GNTP recently celebrated its first year of support by DFID, which means that the second phase is just beginning! We hope that it will bring further achievements and the consolidation of the network as a learning community.

● For more information about GNTP, visit [www.GNTParticipa.org](http://www.GNTParticipa.org).

#### News from IDS

Over the last few months we have been involved in two important workshops. The first, 'Sharing Experiences on Values, Attitudes, and Behaviour: Exploring Opportunities for PLA and Advocacy in Trade Unions' Work', was convened by the Nigeria Labour Congress in collaboration with the UK Department for International Development. It provided a forum for trade unions to share experiences and reflect on how they have engaged with their constituencies and other actors in their work.

The second, 'Tools and Methodologies for Participatory Urban Governance', held in China in February, was sponsored by Ford Foundation China. and brought together twenty-five participants from local governments, NGOs, community organisations, and academic institutions. Participants were able to work through concepts, tools, and methodologies used in pursuing the practice of participatory governance in other countries and to explore how these might be employed in their own contexts.

Our three-year research project on Poverty Knowledge and Policy Processes has seen project partners engaged in a series of dissemination

events in Uganda and Nigeria over the last nine months. These included national workshops, local radio, local language newspapers, poster campaigns, and theatre events. For more information see IDS Research Report 54 (details below).

*A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation* (Lisa VeneKlasen with Valerie Miller) was published by World Neighbors at the end of last year. It is a manual for people and organisations grappling with issues of power, politics, and exclusion. Extracts from the manual featured in issue 43 of *PLA Notes*. Copies are available from World Neighbors ([www.wn.org](http://www.wn.org)).

March sees the publication of IDS Research Report 54 Poverty Knowledge and Poverty Processes in Uganda: case studies from Bushenyi, Lira, and Tororo districts (Brock, McGee, Okech, and Ssuuna). Limited numbers of many of our publications are available for Southern organisations and resource centres for free. Please contact us for details.

#### News from IIED

General news

IIED welcomed a new Chair, Jan Pronk, former Environment Minister and Development Minister in successive Dutch governments. Mr Pronk, who was UN Special Envoy for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, is able to contribute his considerable knowledge and experience in government and the United Nations.

Take the chance to have your say in IIED's information survey entitled 'Is IIED meeting your information needs?' Complete our survey and you could win US\$100 worth of our publications. The IIED Information Survey can be filled out online

([www.iied.org/infopubs](http://www.iied.org/infopubs)) or you can download a hard copy and return it to us by email, post, or fax. If you would like a hard copy emailed or posted to you, contact us at the usual address.

#### Participation news

IIED continues to work on participation in a variety of ways. One of these is bringing together and disseminating information on participation through our publication programme. As well as *PLA Notes*, IIED publishes *Environment and Urbanization*, which regularly includes papers on participatory approaches used in an urban context. The April 2003 issue, on Rural-Urban Transformations, includes two papers on participation. 'Participatory action planning in the peri-urban interface: the twin city experience, Hubli-Dharwad, India' by Meera Halkatti, Sangeetha Purushothaman, and

Robert Brook describes a participatory planning process in five peri-urban villages, including the tools used, the main issues which emerged from the process, and their relevance to different groups (women, landowners, landless, and lower castes). 'Youth participation in El Alto, Bolivia' by Caspar Merkle asks why disadvantaged youth in El Alto, Bolivia fail to involve themselves in the local political system even though they are highly organised and active in social and cultural groups. The paper identifies the many constraints that contribute to this lack of involvement, including the corruption of local officials, the low level of political education and awareness, and the various regulations that make prosperity a prerequisite for real participation. Further details are available from IIED's website ([www.iied.org](http://www.iied.org)), then follow the links for E&U or write to the Director, Human

Settlements Programme at IIED.

The *Gatekeeper Series*, produced by IIED's Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihoods Programme (SARLs), has regular papers on participation. The aim of the Series is to highlight key topics in the field of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. Each paper reviews an issue of contemporary importance and provides preliminary recommendations for policy makers, researchers and planners working in agricultural development. Recent papers have covered topics such as participatory watershed management, the life sciences industry, community wildlife management, and participatory evaluation. For subscription details, please contact the SARLs programme at IIED or visit the SARLs pages on the IIED website. Free downloads of some Gatekeepers are available through the website.



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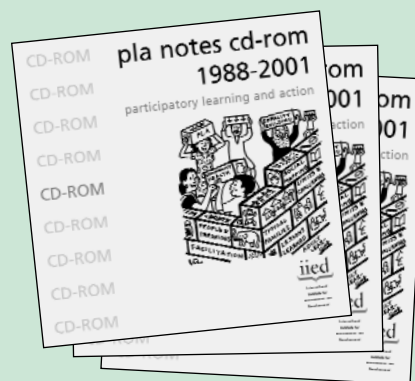
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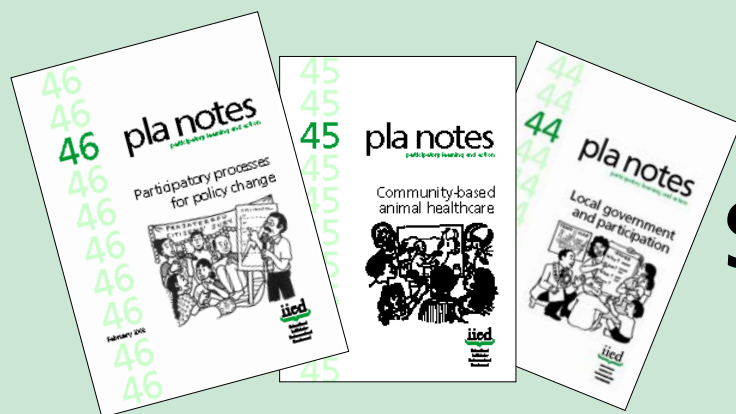
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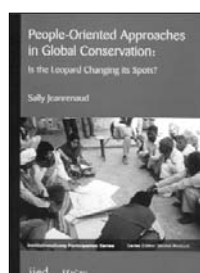
### State versus Participation: Natural Resources Management in Europe

Andréa Finger-Stich and Matthias Finger  
Volume II in the Institutionalising

Participation Series. The participation of the public, local communities, indigenous peoples, and various other stakeholders in natural resources policymaking, planning and/or management has been increasingly promoted in international and national policies. This book analyses and discusses how participation does – or does not – occur in the management of forest and water resources at various institutional levels in European contexts. More precisely, the authors critically analyse how the state has, over time, strengthened its own development interests by removing decisions over the management of natural resources from local users and communities' hands and today tends to instrumentalise people's participation for its own legitimacy purposes. This evolution is considered in the light of two more recent trends, namely the globalisation of economic interests and the demands for democratisation, decentralisation, and accountability. The authors

highlight the strategies various state agencies use to control participation in decision-making processes relating to forest and water resource management. You can read more about this book at [www.iied.org/agri/ipa.html#9169](http://www.iied.org/agri/ipa.html#9169)

● IIED Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihood Programme and IDS Participation Group, 2003. ISBN: 1 84369 242 2. Order no 9169IIED. Price: USD22.50/£15.



### People-Oriented Approaches in Global Conservation: Is the Leopard Changing its Spots?

Sally Jeanrenaud

Whereas local people were once considered a threat to nature and were often removed from protected areas, many international and national conservation organisations now promote a wide range of people-oriented conservation approaches. Despite these changes, this paper suggests that we should be cautious about claiming that 'participation' has been mainstreamed in global conservation programmes. Drawing mainly on case studies from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the author suggests that organisational structures, fundraising imperatives, dominant conservation narratives, and western environmental values all work against the 'leopard changing its spots'. Volume I in the Institutionalising Participation Series, This book is now available in French as a pdf (*Populations Locales et Conservation de la Nature: Le Léopard serait-il en train de Muer?*).

Read more: [www.iied.org/agri/ipa.html#9134fr](http://www.iied.org/agri/ipa.html#9134fr)

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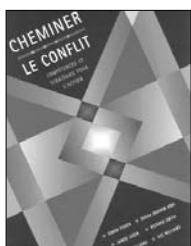
### Local Perspectives on Forest Values in Papua New Guinea – The Scope for Participatory Methods

Maryanne Grieg-Gran and Irene

Guijt with Basil Peutalo

Wild resources are often overlooked in policymaking and land use decisions, yet they are important for local communities and often critical for their survival. IIED's Hidden Harvest project examines the role of wild resources in local livelihoods in different countries and ecosystems. This report presents the outcome of a Hidden Harvest training workshop and field exercise carried out in Papua New Guinea which focused on wild forest resources. Using examples from the fieldwork, the report highlights some methodological questions related to valuation in transitional communities. These questions are particularly pertinent for research related to economies that have not commoditised all natural resource management-related economic activities or for professionals seeking to use complementary methodologies. The report concludes that participatory methods have an important contribution to make, given the challenges in local level valuation, both as a complement to more conventional approaches and in their own rights as a tool to inform decision making.

● IIED Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods, 2002. ISBN: 1 35793 8X. Order no: 6155IIED Price: USD25.00.



**Cheminer avec le Conflit: Méthodes Pratiques (French)**

Simon Fisher, Dekha Ibrahim Abdi, Jawed Ludin, Richard Smith, Steve Williams, Sue Williams

New French translation of Working with Conflict, previously published by Zed Books and Responding to Conflict. This source book is for people working in areas affected by conflict and violence. Easy to use, well laid out, and including helpful visual materials, it provides a range of practical tools – processes, ideas, visual aids, and techniques – for tackling conflict. These tools have

been developed over a number of years by the organisation Responding to Conflict (RTC) in collaboration with practitioners from around the world. Includes a guide to understanding conflict, how to build effective strategies to address conflict, intervening in situations of acute conflict, and the skills involved in evaluation and learning.

● IIED, 2002. ISBN: 1843692287. Order no: 9157IIED. Price: USD22.5/£15.00.

**Participatory learning and action: a trainer's guide**

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

Designed for both experienced and new trainers, who have an interest in



training others in the use of participatory methods, whether they are researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, villagers or

trainers. The guide provides a comprehensive background to the principles of adult learning and details 101 interactive training games and exercises.

● IIED Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme, 1995.

Also available in Spanish. ISBN: 1899825002. Order no: 6021IIED. Price: USD 31.50



