

editorial

Welcome to issue 45 of PLA Notes

Special theme

In this issue, the theme section looks at community-based animal health-care, or participatory epidemiology. Whilst the topic of animal health covers many other areas, such as nutrition and animal husbandry, many of the more progressive recent developments in animal health have been focused around participatory epidemiology.

In this issue, the authors discuss community participation, policy, and institutional change, and look at specific methodologies and impact assessments. The articles highlight recent explorations and adaptations of participatory approaches and methods that have been used to understand diseases in animal populations, as a means of improving disease control, such as through community-based animal health services.

As many rural populations depend upon the health of their livestock as a source of food and income generation, problems surrounding lack of access to veterinary services, drugs, and incorrect information about drug administration, can severely impact upon the quality of the animal health-care available.

In particular, the articles in this issue focus on the role of community-based animal health workers (CAHWs). Whilst CAHWs are not trained veterinarian staff, there are still many advantages to the CAHW system. CAHWs are usually part of the local community, and as such can respond more quickly to animal health needs. With comparatively little training, but with the support of formal veterinary and livestock services, CAHWs can be equipped to

diagnose and treat health problems, play an important role in helping national strategies for vaccination, assist with the collection of samples for disease surveillance, and provide data for other forms of research. They can also play an important role in mobilising and informing communities about animal health issues, in a participatory way. The articles look at both the pros and cons of the CAHW approach, issues around training, remuneration, and effectiveness, and provide insightful, critical reflections for both policy-makers and donors alike.

The guest editors for this special issue are **Andy Catley** and **Tim Leyland**. Andy Catley previously worked on community-based animal health projects with NGOs in the Horn of Africa. He also worked with IIED's Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme on our Participatory Methods in Veterinary Epidemiology (PAVE) project (1998-2000), which was supported by DFID's Animal Health Programme, and is author of *Methods on the Move*, a review of veterinary uses of participatory approaches and methods focusing on experiences in dryland Africa. Currently, Andy is a veterinarian working in the Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology (CAPE) Unit for the African Union's Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (OAU-IBAR), on secondment from the Feinstein International Famine Centre (FIFC), Tufts University, USA.

Tim Leyland heads the Community-based Animal Health and Participatory Epidemiology (CAPE) Unit in OAU-IBAR, also on secondment from FIFC. Tim has been managing community-based livestock initiatives in OAU-IBAR and previously coordinated the UNICEF-Operation Lifeline

Sudan Livestock Programme in southern Sudan. He has also worked in Afghanistan and Papua New Guinea.

General section

The general section in this issue includes five articles.

Paul van Mele and **AKM Zakaria** write about a new participatory rapid appraisal (PRA) tool called the Innovation Tree, which helps people to visualise and analyse how an innovation is spread between community members, and how it can help them to understand some of the social and psychological dimensions that influence the adoption and diffusion of an innovation within a community.

The article 'In our own words' by **Chris McIvor** looks at issues around sustainability and institutionalisation, in the context of informing services for disabled citizens in Morocco. He discusses issues of discrimination and equal representation, such as those affecting poorer disabled families and women, and how to ensure the genuine and meaningful inclusion of disabled people in research exercises.

Next, we have an article from **Luz Estela Velásquez**. It describes a new Sustainable Development Observatories initiative in Manizales, Colombia, which has been developed in partnership with the local government authorities, universities, and civil society groups in order to monitor, evaluate, and promote sustainable development indicators within the city, and also to facilitate and encourage citizen participation. As well as the original Spanish article, there is also an English version, translated by **Kimberly Vilar**, of IIED America Latina.

Finally, **Ben Bennett** describes a simple set of tools developed to enable communities to conduct market scoping. These are tools to help people to gather information

about marketing systems quickly and simply, by identifying market information and key issues that need to be addressed. These can include, for example, the dynamics of demand for certain products and problems associated with inadequate prices received for those products.

Regular features

In this issue, Tips for Trainers is an exercise called 'Hopes and fears' by **John Newstrom** and **Edward Scannell**, taken from our *Participatory Learning and Action Trainer's Guide*. It is a simple but effective exercise, which allows participants to share and alleviate any fears they might have when attending a training programme, as well as giving trainers an opportunity to understand the needs of, and provide reassurance to, the trainees.

We would like to make an apology to **Kamal Singh**, whom we failed to acknowledge as the contributor of the certificate example used in the 'Certificate snare' extract that was used in the Tips for Trainers section of our last issue, *PLA Notes 44: Local*

government and participation. The extract was taken from **Robert Chamber's** book *Participatory Workshops: A sourcebook of 21 sets of ideas and activities*.

The In Touch section contains all of our regular features, such as book reviews, up and coming events and workshops, and news from the RCPLA Network, as well as our e-participation page, which for this issue includes websites which focus on community-based animal health, as well as more general contacts.

News flash! Launch of new *PLA Notes* website: www.planotes.org

We would like to announce the launch of our new *PLA Notes* website, which includes abstracts, contents listings, and ordering information for all back issues, as well as author guidelines and how to contribute to the series, information about the RCPLA (Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action) Network, links to other participation-related publications published by IIED, information about forthcoming issues, the *PLA Notes* CD ROM,

and much more. There is also a free sample issue of *PLA Notes 40: Deliberative democracy and citizen empowerment* online in portable document format (PDF). We hope that you can find the time to visit the website, and please let us know what you think! Send your comments to the usual address, or email PLA.Notes@iied.org

Lastly, we would like to thank Andy and Tim, and all the authors who have contributed to this special issue section, both for their hard work in producing and collating the material, and also for sharing with us their experience and expertise on the subject of community-based animal healthcare. Many thanks are also due to everyone else who has worked on, and contributed to, this issue of *PLA Notes*: the authors, editorial team, the RCPLA Network, **Cristina Zorat** and **Bansuri Taneja**, the designer **Andy Smith**, and **Angela Milligan**.

We hope that you enjoy this issue of *PLA Notes*, and as always, we welcome your feedback and contributions.

Holly Ashley, Acting Editor