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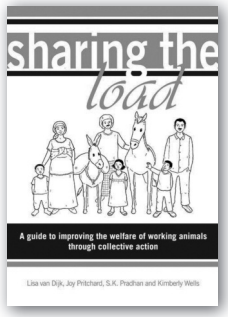
Tools for supporting sustainable natural resource management and livelihoods

RESOURCES



Sharing the load: a guide to improving the welfare of working animals through collective action

● *Lisa van Dijk, Joy C. Pritchard, S.K. Pradhan and Kimberly L. Wells. Practical Action Publishing in association with The Brooke, 2011*

The Brooke's experience of working with animal-owning communities has been documented in this field manual for community facilitators. The book helps the grassroot-level facilitator to develop an understanding of animal welfare through observational exercises in the field. It provides a broad explanation of strategies and approaches for improving welfare, looking at the specific context of different target populations in terms of welfare risks to working animals and the vulnerability of their owners' livelihoods. It provides guidance for collective action through practical examples and illustrations of the participatory process and tools developed, as well as discussing the use of mass media, radio and other outreach strategies.

This manual is written for community facilitators and anyone else who has direct contact with working (traction and transport) animals and their owners, including vets, community-based animal health workers, government extension workers and development workers. It can be used by animal welfare organisations with projects in the developing world who wish to be more effective in finding sustainable solutions to welfare issues. It is also written for development organisations that promote the use of animals to improve human livelihoods and need specialist information to manage the welfare implications of their programmes.

See also 'Sustainable animal welfare: community-led action for

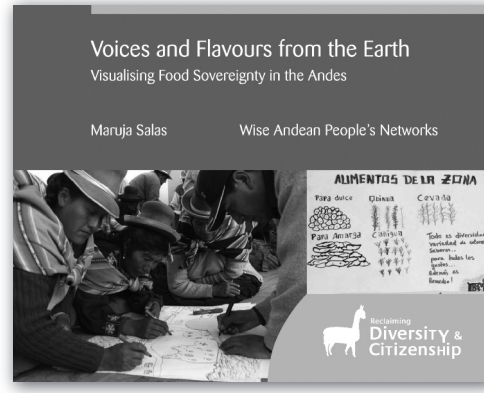
improving care and livelihoods' in this issue.

■ Available from Practical Action Publishing : developmentbookshop.com/sharing-the-load.html#.UhR8jH_4LWd
Available online in Spanish and French: www.thebrooke.org/resources-approach/our-approach/expansion2.
English, Hindi and Arabic available online soon.

Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta newsletter, *Kabar Itah*

Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta (YTS) is a development foundation based in the Indonesian provinces of Kalimantan. These provinces have a small population, but are rich in natural resources. The foundation YTS is working to create conditions that will enable development locally to be balanced, sustainable and equitable. To this end YTS is collaborating with local communities and governments to strengthen their capacity to jointly manage the process of development.

■ Download the *Kabah Itah* newsletter, including back issues: tambuhaksinta.com/kabaritah/index.html
To subscribe to the *Kabah Itah* newsletter, contact: Jl. Rajawali VII, Srikandi No.100, Bukit Tunggal, Palangka Raya 73112, Kalimantan Tengah, Indonesia, Tel: +62 536 3237184; Fax: +62 536 3229187; Email: tambuhaksinta@gmail.com; Website: www.tambuhaksinta.com
Download other recent YTS publications: www.borneomercury.com
Watch a YTS and UNIDO collaboration that sought to analyse the problem of mercury pollution from small-scale mining in Central Kalimantan, Borneo: www.youtube.com/borneomercury
Watch a short video on the use of mercury in artisanal gold mining: www.unep.org/flvPlayer/videoplayer.asp?id=27529&l=en



Voices and flavours from the Earth: visualising food sovereignty in the Andes *(Los sabores y las voces de la Tierra: visualizando la soberanía alimentaria en los Andes)*

● *Maruja Salas and the wise elders network from the Altiplano of Peru, IIED, 2013*

This is a new multimedia publication that uses video, audio, images and text to describe how indigenous communities are drawing on their knowledge and cosmovisions to rethink the priorities and governance of food and agricultural research in the Andean Altiplano of Bolivia and Peru.

This book reflects the testimonies of the wise elders from Quechua and Aymara communities in the highlands of Peru about the right to the culture of food, and a plea to ask scientists for their research to respond to these communities' needs – and for the benefits of their research to be for the public good. A detailed description of the dialogue

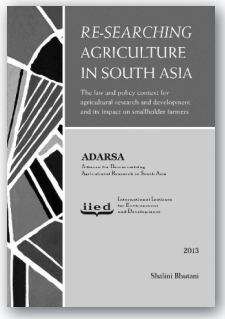
Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta

between farmers and scientists is part of this documentation. The work presented here is part of a larger international and multi-regional initiative known as: Democratising the Governance of Food Systems: Citizens Rethinking Food and Agricultural Research for the Public Good. To find out more about the project, see: www.excludedvoices.org

■ Download the full publication or individual chapters in English or Spanish: www.iied.org/voices-flavours-earth-food-sovereignty-andes

Read and watch a series of short videos online 'Learning to value mother earth': www.iied.org/learning-value-mother-earth

For more information contact: Maruja Salas, Gomaringerstr. 6, D-72810 Gomaringen, Germany. Email: mas49@gmx.net



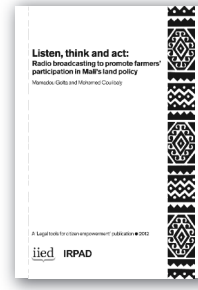
Re-searching agriculture in South Asia: the law and policy context for agricultural research and development and its impact on smallholder farmers

● *Shalini Bhutani, IIED, 2013*

Drawing on evidence and new data accessed under the Indian Right to Information Act, this report shows how an emerging web of powerful actors and processes is now redefining public agricultural research in South Asia. It analyses the forces and factors that are re-shaping and privatising research, resulting in rapid change under the influence of global economic forces such as the new rules of global finance, free trade, intellectual property rights and new laws, as well as consolidations and strategic alliances in the agricultural input industry and the structural power of multinational food corporations.

The report is part of an international initiative called Democratising Food and Agricultural Research, launched in 2007 by partners in South and West Asia, the Andean region of Latin America, West Africa and Europe (including IIED). This multi-regional initiative uses a decentralised and bottom-up process to enable small-scale farmers and other citizens to (a) decide what type of agricultural research needs to be done to ensure peoples' right to food; and (b) influence and transform agricultural research policies and practices for food sovereignty. For more information see: www.excludedvoices.org. The South Asian component of this international initiative is known as the Alliance for Democratising Agricultural Research in South Asia (ADARSA): www.raitateerpu.com/adarsa.html

■ Download the report online: pubs.iied.org/G03628.html



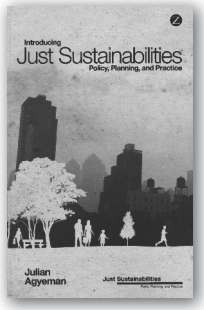
Listen, think and act: radio broadcasting to promote farmers' participation in Mali's land policy

● *Mamadou Goïta and Mohamed Coulibaly, IIED and IRPAD, 2012*

The vast majority of agricultural production in Mali is carried out by smallholder farmers, who are often unaware of the laws and policies that govern access to the land and resources they rely on to secure their livelihoods. This means they can lose out as access to resources is secured by large-scale agribusinesses or investors. In response, the Institute for Research and Promotion of Alternatives in Development in Africa (IRPAD) launched a project to raise the awareness of farmers and their organisations of agricultural laws and policies. The aim was to enhance their capacities to influence policy and to participate in decision-making in agriculture and natural resource management, particularly on land issues.

IRPAD used an innovative tool to communicate information on the law and related policies to rural people and farmers' organisations: the approach combined community-based training and pre-recorded radio broadcasts explaining the provisions of Mali's newly adopted Agricultural Orientation Law. This paper presents the tool, its outcomes and lessons learnt.

■ Online: pubs.iied.org/G03419.html
Also available in French: pubs.iied.org/G03424.html



Introducing just sustainabilities: policy, planning and practice

● *Julian Agyeman, Zed Books, 2013*

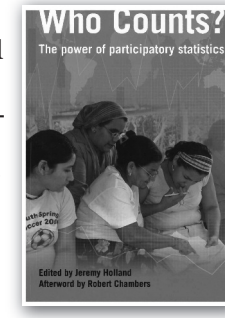
This unique and insightful text offers an exploration of the origins and subsequent development of the concept of just sustainability. *Introducing just sustainabilities* discusses key topics, such as food justice, sovereignty and urban agriculture; community, space, place (making) and spatial justice; the democratisation of our streets and public spaces; how to create culturally inclusive spaces; intercultural cities and social inclusion; green-collar jobs and the just transition; and alternative economic models, such as co-production. With a specific focus on solutions-oriented policy and planning initiatives that specifically address issues of equity and justice within the context of developing sustainable communities, this is the essential introduction to just sustainabilities.

■ Available from Zed Books: zedbooks.co.uk/node/11882

Who counts? The power of participatory statistics

● *Edited by Jeremy Holland, Practical Action Publishing, 2013*

Participatory statistics (PS) aim at both ends – providing information as a solid and reliable foundation for policy-making and programme planning and empowering concerned people by enhancing their consciousness and self-realisation and thus providing them with the power to change for the better. This book gives an abundance of well-reflected examples of the combination of these two aspects through PS approaches.



The introduction frames PS in the context of social research and development efforts and provides an exciting perspective of a future range of applications for this approach. The main body of the book consists of three parts on functioning approaches to participatory statistics for policy planning, programme steering and impact assessment.

Part I contains key examples on 'planning from below'. PS provides such an approach for very different administrative fields (e.g. climate change adaptation, health or fragile post-war situations). This 'bottom-up' approach also provides a solid and reliable database for regional and state policy planning that effectively meets the needs of the people concerned. At the same time, the applied methods generate self-help and self-governing potentials with the actors, generating information relevant to their own perspectives. Mapping in a variety of forms constitutes the core instrument of this first part.

Part II focuses on the creativity of methodological approaches in making complex concepts such as 'empowerment', 'well-being', and/or 'poverty' both visible and quantifiable. The examples show especially how the advantages of quantification (i.e. generalisation, overview and clear structure) can be

combined with the advantages of a qualitative approach in order to understand the context, motivation and perspectives of the people concerned.

Part III focuses on the impact assessment of relief and development efforts based on the people's perspectives. From the generation of such indicators, participatory methods create powerful insights at the local level that allow for conclusions of the target groups. At the same time, the application of the same methods in a randomised number of locations allows for the aggregation of findings and programme-level conclusions.

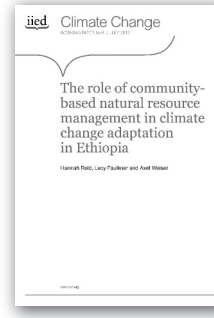
Overall, the book provides a great overview of methods and approaches that successfully overcome the dichotomy of quantification and participation. Examples show that there are areas between extreme positions – such as:

• People owned versus extractive
• Understanding versus counting
• Single spot case study versus the general view.

Such contrasts can be effectively allied. In his afterword, Robert Chambers shares this insight. He formulates the vision that with this breakthrough of bottom-up methods and approaches the visibility, influence and power of marginalised people will grow. His hope is that, with the approaches of PS, academic and official perceptions will be more timely, accurate and realistic, helping for joint development efforts fuelled by adequate political decisions in addition to the inspiration and creativity of the people.

● *Reviewed by Jochen Currie, a consultant specialising in rural development and agricultural innovation systems at FAKT (www.fakt-consult.de).*

■ For more information including a table of contents visit: www.ids.ac.uk/publication/who-counts-the-power-of-participatory-statistics. To order a copy: www.ntd.co.uk/idsbookshop/details.asp?id=1325 Alternatively, please call the IDS Bookshop: +44 1273 915 637.



The role of community-based natural resource management in climate change adaptation in Ethiopia: assessing participatory initiatives with pastoral communities

● *Hannah Reid, Lucy Faulkner and Axel Weiser, IIED, 2013*

This Climate Change Group working paper describes the methodology developed to assess the role of selected community-based/participatory initiatives undertaken by Save the Children with pastoral communities in the lowlands of Borana and Guji zones in Ethiopia in contributing to climate change adaptation.

The authors outline the results and recommendations generated from applying this bespoke methodology at the study sites. Similar sites that also suffered from drought and had the same history of development and humanitarian interventions, but had no Save the Children interventions, were also visited for comparative purposes.

■ Online only: pubs.iied.org/10048IIED.html

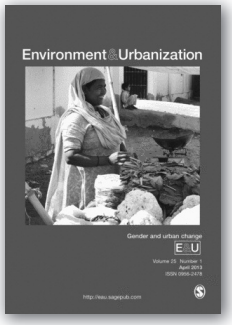
Tried and tested: learning from farmers on adaptation to climate change

● *Hannah Reid, Muyeye Chambwera, Laurel Murray. Gatekeeper 153, IIED, 2013*

There exists a wealth of largely overlooked experience that has been accrued over generations by small-scale farmers and pastoralists in poor countries as they cope with climatic extremes and increasing uncertainty – climate-change related or otherwise. This Gatekeeper

paper draws lessons from this wealth of knowledge in order to inform adaptation planning efforts at all levels. The paper underscores how measures to increase climate change resilience must view food, energy, water and waste management systems as interconnected and mutually dependent. This holistic approach must also be applied to economic analysis for adaptation planning. Similarly, it is vital to use traditional knowledge and management skills, which can further support adaptation planning. The aim of this paper is to avoid energy and effort being expended on re-inventing the wheel; it urges those involved in supporting climate change adaptation to draw much more from the existing strategies and knowledge of the millions of farmers and pastoralists worldwide. Of course, no amount of knowledge based on past experience will help deal with large or extreme changes. But in many cases the existing knowledge and experience of how to cope with current and past climate variability provide a solid grounding for how best to adapt to current and future climate change.

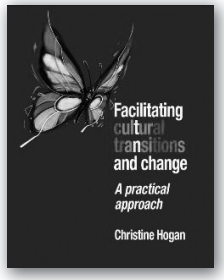
■ Available online: pubs.iied.org/14622IIED.html



Environment and Urbanization: Gender and urban change

● *Cecilia Tacoli, David Satterthwaite, Sylvia Chant, Celine D'Cruz, Patience Mudimu, Caren Levy, Cathy McIlwaine, Sarah Bradshaw, Nicola Banks, Julian Walker, Alexandre Apsan Frediani, Jean-François Trani, Kaveri Haritas, IIED, 2013.* Urbanization is often associated with greater independence and opportunities for women – but also with high risks of violence and constraints on employment, mobility and leadership that reflect deep gender-based inequalities. These issues are explored in the April 2013 issue of *Environment and Urbanization*, on gender and urban change. It includes papers on: where and when urban women enjoy advantages over their rural counterparts; community savings schemes that build women's leadership and support upgrading; how transport planning still fails to respond to women's travel needs; how urban contexts can reduce gender-based violence, although often they can increase it; how income and ideology influence women's decision-making in rural and urban areas in Nicaragua; the changes in women's participation in labour markets in Dhaka and the tensions this can generate within households; what was learnt from a project working with girls and boys with disabilities in Mumbai; and the particular roles of women in seeking to get better services for their low-income/informal neighbourhoods in Bengalaru. The editorial summarising the key issues covered is open-access. This issue also has two papers on climate change, which are a detailed benefit-cost analysis applied to Durban; and the different responses of low-income tenants and squatters to adaptation in Khulna. Other papers include: the limitations in the Indian government's Basic Services for the Urban Poor Programme; the politics of non-payment for water in Manila's low-income communities; community-managed reconstruction in Old Fadama (Accra) after a fire; developing a solid waste collection service in informal settlements in Managua; how well-connected individuals control land allocations and water supply in an informal settlement in Dhaka; and an assessment of provision for water, sanitation and waste collection in two informal settlements in Kumasi.

■ Download a sample PDF or subscribe at pubs.iied.org/10628IIED.html



Facilitating cultural transition and change: a practical approach

● *Christine Hogan, 4 Square Books, 2013, 300pp.*

People are crossing international boundaries for work, study and/or in pursuit of a better life in larger numbers than ever before. *Facilitating cultural transitions and change* provides a practical approach for facilitators needing to enhance their skills when working with participants in transition from a diverse range of multicultural backgrounds. Based on research and feedback from participants, the book includes a variety of materials to suit different learning goals and contexts.

This book is important reading for facilitators working with students, workers and sojourners in transition, before departure and on arrival in new lands; and importantly, in returning to their homelands. Using a step-by-step approach, it gives the facilitator ideas, myths, stories, processes and models to assist the preparation and facilitation of workshops.

Christine is also the author of *Facilitating multicultural groups; Practical facilitation; Understanding facilitation; Facilitating empowerment* (all published by Kogan Page, London) as well as *Facilitating learning* (published by Eruditions, Melbourne).

This book is available from Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk or from the author.

■ Email: Christine@hogans.id.au

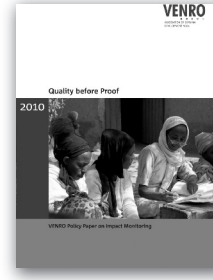
Guide price: US$45; £29.95; €34.95 (plus postage).

The SAGE encyclopedia of action research

● *Edited by David Coghlan, Mary Brydon-Miller. Forthcoming, 2014*

Action research is a term used to describe a family of related approaches that integrate theory and action with a goal of addressing important organisational, community and social issues together with those who experience them. It focuses on the creation of areas for collaborative learning and the design, enactment and evaluation of liberating actions through combining action and research, reflection and action in an on-going cycle of co-generative knowledge. While the roots of these methodologies go back to the 1940s, there has been a dramatic increase in research output and adoption in university curricula over the past decade. This is now an area of high popularity among academics and researchers from various fields — especially business and organisation studies, education, healthcare and nursing, development studies, and social and community work. This encyclopedia brings together the many strands of action research and addresses the interplay between these disciplines by presenting a state-of-the-art overview and comprehensive breakdown of the key tenets and methods of action research as well as detailing the work of key theorists and contributors to action research.

■ Available from: www.sagepub.com



Quality before proof

● *Policy paper on impact monitoring, VENRO, 2010*

A note by Claudia Villagra, Kolping International

VENRO is an umbrella association, which combines the strengths of German development NGOs. Together in solidarity, they stand up to combat poverty, promote human rights and conserve our natural resources. The central goal of VENRO is to promote fair and just globalisation, or more importantly to combat world-wide poverty. VENRO strengthens the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

and civil society in international development so that they can make their contribution to global justice.

VENRO members are very heterogeneous in their areas of work as well as their size. However, targeting civil society as partners and the empowerment of the target groups are their main similarities. Partnership and participation with their partners and with the target groups are fundamental values of their work. Among the VENRO members impact is a very important topic.

In 2004, VENRO member organisations initiated the forum NGO-IDEAs to empower organisations in impact monitoring by empowering the target groups to set their own goals and monitor their achievements. External funding for NGO-IDEAs ended early 2012, but NGO-IDEAs continues as an informal process. Since 2008, there is also a working group on impact observation. This group promotes the exchange of experiences among member organisations, encourages them to work out concepts and political positions and promotes dialogue with political and academic stakeholders.

In 2010, the working group wrote a position paper, *Quality before proof,* which was adopted and published by VENRO. This paper presents the quintessence of impact monitoring from the perspective of VENRO members, to promote understanding and to start a dialogue. Quality in this paper is defined through four goals of impact assessment: learning from experience, steering, empowerment and accountability.

This paper sparked a discussion in Germany about impact, monitoring, participation and science-based methods. These critiques found the scientific perspective missing in VENRO's understanding of monitoring. VENRO responded by pointing out some misunderstandings about concepts such as impact observation versus impact evaluation, empowerment versus capacity building, or data validity based on different perspectives versus scientific validity. This debate in academic journals was followed by a conference Dialogue Day: Impact in November 2011.

Quality before proof started a dialogue that it is still ongoing; the outcomes of this debate and exchanges are now the basis for the dialogue between VENRO and the new German evaluation institute.

■ Download online:
www.venro.org/628.html

Events and training

EVENTS

TheWorkshop2013

Praxis will be hosting its 17th annual commune on participatory development from 21st–28th October 2013 in Thrissur, in the southern Indian state of Kerala. This year's format offers participants the opportunity to learn about participatory methods and attend modules to see how these approaches work in different contexts. The thematic application modules on offer this year include: project cycle management; public accountability; participatory communication; participatory monitoring and evaluation (with focus on sustainability); campaign, advocacy and networking; and community mobilisation. See also an update from Praxis in the RCPLA pages of this issue.

■ For more information please visit: www.theworkshop.in or email us at: info@theworkshop.in

The Big Push Forward conference

A report by Bernwand Causemann

In April 2013, the Big Push Forward's conference on the Politics of Evidence took place at the Institute of Development Studies in Brighton, UK to discuss the effects of the results agenda on the development sector. Given that 'the politics of evidence' had not been scrutinised systematically in much depth, the conference sought to provide that platform. Central to all discussions were the implications for

transformational development. Centring on participants' experiences of the pros and cons of dealing with the politics of evidence and the results agenda, the conference was structured around four questions:

- What do we mean by 'the politics of evidence' – factors, actors, artefacts? And why is it important?
- What are the effects on transformative intentions and impacts of potentially useful approaches on evidence of and for change, such as 'theory of change' or 'value for money'?
- Under what conditions do these practices retain their utility rather than undermine transformational development efforts? What factors and relationships drive the less useful practices and protocols?
- How are people engaging with problematic practices and protocols? What are they accepting and doing, what are they resisting and how? What alternatives have they found to create spaces for approaches more aligned with transformational development?

A survey by Brendan Whitty ('Experiences of the results agenda') amongst practitioners in the run-up to the conference showed that experiences with the results agenda were ambivalent. Concepts like 'logical frameworks', 'theories of change' and 'value for money' had both positive and negative effects. Externals (researchers and academics) and advisers inside the organisations were much more critical than monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialists and senior managers. Implementers sat in the middle.

- Many organisations with resources but sluggish bureaucracies saw positive effects. They reported improved monitoring and evaluation.
- Organisations with sophisticated systems often found the results framework limiting, too burdening and damaging to learning.
- Smaller local organisations with limited administrative capacity were struggling to meet the requirements without benefiting from them; the results framework forces them to put more resources into accountability often without benefit to their own learning or practice. They risk losing funding although they might be doing reasonable work on the ground.

During the conference, individual cases were discussed and lessons drawn. A major factor for the disempowering consequences of the results agenda seems to be that public and parliament in some countries are very critical of development aid. It has been drawn into partisan politics at least in the UK, the Netherlands, Australia and Sweden. Where aid is contested, results are used to defend or to constrain development spending. But as that does not really help to convince opponents, it became clear that many in the development bureaucracy believe in the results agenda and use the 'accountability to the tax payer' argument to justify the results focus that rather benefits the bureaucracy and puts implementers under pressure.

The case studies were also used to discuss strategies. Very few questioned the results framework as a whole, although there was a question whether all this actually needed to be done. Most strategies dealt with creating space for transformative, empowering development work. All the results concepts, if used flexibly, can help to promote learning and improve practice. If that was not possible, constructive complicity was suggested: do what needs to be done in face-saving ways and get on with what your work really is about. It often helps to offer positive alternatives because initially, all these tools were designed to promote critical thinking.

In the end, it seemed to boil down to senior managers. Do they make their organisations comply with the reporting and 'evidence' requirements 'to the letter'?

Do they increase demands even further? Or do they stick to vision and values of their organisations and create as much space as possible to mitigate the disempowering effects of the results framework?

Reflecting on the discussions with a small group of participants from German civil society organisations, the conclusion was obvious: there is broad consensus about development funding and German NGOs still have much more space than many organisations funded in the Anglo-Saxon world. If German NGOs bureaucratise their reporting on effectiveness, then it is done out of choice, not because of requirements by the German Ministry for Development. But as practice in Germany's bilateral cooperation can be much more restrictive, it will be important for civil society to retain this space.

Many wanted to continue the conversation. At the end of the conference it was not yet clear how that could happen as the five convenors announced that they would stand down later in the year. However, some of these discussions have continued online and there also various resources related to the conference available to download.

■ Visit: www.bigpushforward.net

E-participation

Access Agriculture

www.accessagriculture.org

Access Agriculture is an international NGO which showcases agricultural training videos in local languages. Here you can see examples of videos, download them or order a DVD copy. The audio tracks can also be downloaded by radio stations. This is a platform for agricultural research and development staff, service providers, extension agents, communication professionals and representatives of farmer organisations to see what training videos are available and request new language versions. The videos are all designed to support sustainable agriculture in developing countries.

Participatory Methods

www.participatorymethods.org

This new website from the Participation, Power and Social Change Team at the Institute of Development Studies, UK, provides resources on a range of methods for inclusive social development. The site gives an overview of participatory methods, where and how they have been used, their problems and potentials and the debates about them. The focus is on participatory approaches to strategic analysis and programme design, monitoring and evaluation. It also includes resources on participatory learning, research and communication in organisations, networks and communities.

Participating in Knuts

www.go-knuts.com

The recent spring of mass political action around the world has led to a flourishing of websites that attempt to create online environments that facilitate communication and engagement of large

groups of people. But the ideal set out by the deliberative democracy movement is not easily implemented online. Multiple forums and long linear threads leave members overwhelmed and disengaged. A central question is how to moderate the flow of information. Some use moderators, a useful way to ensure productive discussions, but this comes at the price of decentralised deliberation. On other websites with no moderators it is hard to make sense of the cacophony of statement exchanges. When large numbers of people engage in a discussion they produce a very rich data set of opinions and reactions. Is there a useful way to sift through this data using statistical analysis, the way we analyse survey data?

Knuts – a new online interactive forum by D-Governance – tries to take a small step in addressing the above obstacles. Named after the famous king who thought he could stop the tide with his words, Knuts invites participants to try and change the tide of opinion. In Knuts, large groups of people can discuss and vote on a particular issue. The discussion is completely decentralised, using the wisdom of the crowd to glean the important aspects and main arguments. Unlike social media, it centres on the arguments themselves, rather than on who made those arguments. Knuts also ensures that every participant gets useful feedback on how s/he influences others' opinions.

The brainchild of a London School of Economics professor and a web designer, Knuts has two faces. Behind the scenes, a sophisticated distribution system based on dynamic auctions ensures a decentralised, smooth and meaningful flow of discussion. Innovative statistical inference techniques allow the platform to use the wisdom of the crowd to analyse the public discussion. The other face of Knuts is the one that those who participate encounter. Especially designed to increase engagement, the platform focuses on how the individual interacts with the group. Participants get constant and useful feedback on their participation, how different opinions they expressed or supported are perceived by others, and how they relate to the group as a whole.

Knuts has a wide range of applications in education, political organisations and in consultations and evaluations in large organisations. Knuts is currently in its Beta phase and D-Governance are looking for organisations that could benefit from its use. The aim is to set up a platform that would allow any organisation or individual set up their own Knuts interactive forums in an easy and economical fashion. For further details and contact information visit Knuts: www.go-knuts.com

The Pelican Initiative: Platform for Evidence-based Learning and Communication for Social Change

dgroups.org/groups/pelican

The Pelican Initiative is an online platform hosted by dgroups which focuses on the central question: How can we learn more from what we do while at the same time having the biggest possible impact on the social change processes in which we engage?

We usually try to learn from what we do through monitoring and evaluation (M&E), participatory inquiry, research or combinations of these. We have made a lot of progress in developing better approaches and methods to allow relevant stakeholders to participate in such processes. However, to allow for broadened social interaction around evidence and widespread learning for development, insights need to be communicated effectively.

This platform seeks to bring together development practitioners from different disciplines, specialists and policy makers to explore this question, share

experiences, and to push the agenda further on three themes:
• evidence and learning for policy change;
• learning in organisations and among partners; and
• society-wide learning among a multitude of stakeholders.

It aims to enhance practical understanding of joint learning processes in development and to identify strategies to strengthen them. The space can be used to:
• interact with other participants on issues of concern to you through the interactive email discussion forum;
• make your own views and experiences available to a wider community of practice by sharing case studies;
• link to or upload your tools, methods and other relevant documents as resources; and
• keep up to date, and make others aware of upcoming events in this field of work.

Contributors are invited to participate in a series of publications based on materials and interactions that take place on this platform. For more background information on the Initiative, please refer to the document *Learning for development: we can do better! Introduction and guidelines to the Pelican Initiative*: tinyurl.com/pelican-we-can-do-better

The initiative is open to all development practitioners, specialists and policy makers interested in the issue of learning for development.

Initiators of the Pelican Initiative are the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), Exchange, Bellanet and Unicef East Africa Regional Office. For more information, please contact Niels Keijzer: nk@ecdpm.org

Reality check approach

reality-check-approach.com

This is a resource for anyone interested in reality check approaches (RCAs). RCA is a qualitative approach to feedback and evaluation which involves outsiders living with people living in poverty in their own homes and joining in their everyday lives over several days and nights. The relaxed environment this provides enables easy informal conversations with all members of the family and their neighbours. It enables the outsider to experience and observe for themselves and provides a meaningful basis for joint reflection on change with the family. It helps to shed light on the disconnects between knowledge, attitudes and practice which conventional evaluation is often unable to do.

The interest in commissioning RCAs has increased recently as they have earned credibility as potentially powerful tools for improving the connection between policy makers and implementors of development policies and programmes with the people served by them. To date they have been commissioned by Sida, DfID, AusAid and the European Commission. Findings have frequently challenged received wisdom and revealed important insights into how development assistance is experienced. RCAs have now been carried out in a number of different contexts. The Bangladesh RCA (2007–2012) provided insights into the large-scale sector-wide approaches in primary health and primary education. Among many findings which policy makers have responded to was the issue of rising drop-out of boys from school (noted long before the official statistics confirmed this), the changes in the diets of people living in poverty (which have serious consequences for health such as the increased intake of salt and spices) and the extent of misuse of free Government medicines by the non-ill. The Nepal RCA (2012) undertaken as part of a larger review of the impact of forty years of development assistance in the Koshi Hills for DfID and the

Government of Nepal revealed a major lag in development assistance response of some seven to ten years to people's aspirations, local context changes and local innovation. A small scale RCA in Mozambique (2010–11) noted that project assumptions that increased disease resistance of poultry would lead to better household-level nutrition outcomes was flawed. Although families indicated in PRA sessions that they ate chicken, the RCA found that this was not the case. This highlights the difference between public and private space disclosure and RCA's special advantage. The Indonesia RCA (2010) focusing on basic education highlighted the real costs of so-called free education, including the demands made by children to have daily pocket money to purchase snacks at school and the high levels of children's own agency in making decisions to skip or leave school. The latest RCA in Northern Ghana (2013) which will continue periodically until 2020 has noted among other things the unrealistic expectations of programmes which demand cash payments, albeit small, in communities which are still largely cash-less. The voices of people living in poverty gathered through different RCAs have been heavily cited in various documents produced to try to influence the post 2015 agenda.

Food We Want

www.foodwewant.org/eng

Food We Want is an international campaign to raise information, awareness and lobbying to promote small-scale family farming and sustainable agri-food systems as a key solution to tackling hunger, as well as addressing poverty and climate change issues. The initiative is funded by the European Union, and involves eight countries (Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, UK, Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania) with the objective of sharing ideas, promoting common solutions and stimulating a public debate on the future of food.

Our Food

www.ourfood.org.uk

Our Food works to give excluded voices more say in the future of food and farming. Building on international experience, this initiative has organised a series of community events in the UK to bring people together to share food and discuss the issues around food research. The project aims to create spaces for free and wide-ranging discussion of many of the key issues linked to agricultural and food research, and to build a more inclusive way of working based on a re-imagining of the role of research in our food system based on dialogue. The dialogue process has led to theatre performances, developed by actors and community drama groups who met with community groups and researchers with experience in food and farming.

Age of We

www.ageofwe.org

The Age of We is a non-commercial network set up to provide support to creative clusters – groups involved in creative activities with an ethos of inclusion and participation aimed at bringing about positive change in communities.

LINKEDIN GROUPS

Video4Dev and Web2forDev are both open discussion groups on LinkedIn. Join in the discussions, view and contact other members of the group, or find out about forthcoming events, training and job offers.

Video4Dev: Participatory Video for Development

www.linkedin.com/groups/participatory-video-development-2123359?trk=myg_ugrp_ovr

Web2forDev – Participatory Web 2.0 for Development

www.linkedin.com/groups/web2fordev-participatory-web-20-development-135666?trk=myg_ugrp_ovr

The environmental lens

www.environmentallens.org

The Environmental Lens is a creative method that aims to help you analyse a programme, project or organisation from an environmental perspective. The method consists of a tool in the shape of a plus sign. It provides an in-depth analysis of how address the impacts and causes of environmental problems. It aims to help you to create more sustainable and well-thought-out projects and programmes, using simple brainstorming exercises. Successful implementation comes about when participants take an active part in the context analysis, problem description, and in formulating and prioritising solutions.

Participatory video

www.insightshare.org

In 2014, InsightShare will celebrate its 15th anniversary. It has become a leading centre of Participatory Video (PV) knowledge, learning, training and sharing of methods and best practice. Alongside standard capacity-building in PV and PV

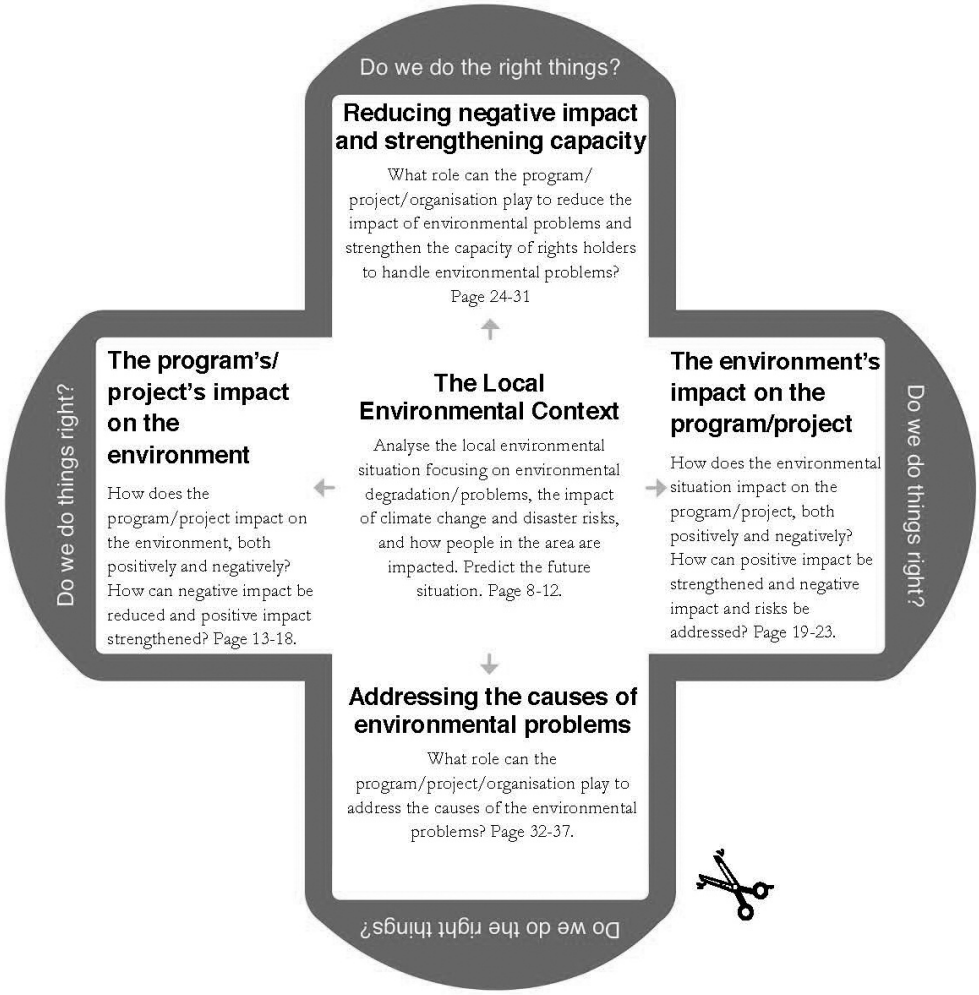


Photo: Megmedia/InsightShare

The participatory video team with their storyboard in Aretika, NE India.

for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), InsightShare supports organisations to implement their own participatory video programmes. Combining face-to-face and virtual mentoring, it offers organisations and individuals support in PV programme design and implementation, troubleshooting, tailored training courses, and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) of their PV projects. To celebrate InsightShare's upcoming anniversary, we thought we would share an update on some of its recent activities.

• Over the past year, members of the team have provided face-to-face and distance support to two freelance PV facilitators who work in the Netherlands. They were looking for advice on how to strengthen their PV practice, as well as guidance on how to set up a PV charity that supports asylum seeker youth during their integration period.

• InsightShare also undertook a participatory monitoring and evaluation process of a participatory video programme being delivered by War Child Holland and its partners in Yei County, South Sudan. It trained project beneficiaries to use the collection, selection and analysis of video-recorded testimonies and dramas to generate a clear and accessible picture of the way the initiative has led to transformation at the organisational level and how those initiatives are changing lives in communities. They also made recommendations for future scaling up of this work.

• Recently, InsightShare has delivered a series of capacity-building projects in participatory video facilitation programmes for partners of IUCN Netherlands in India and Bolivia. The three-stage training model enabled staff from four national conservation agencies to be trained in all aspects of participatory video, which led to a variety of rich and powerful participatory video processes with communities living with and impacted by conservation projects. *TYI* (Atong for 'water') is a video made by the local people of Aretika, a small village located along the Simsang river in the South Garo Hills (Meghalaya). It shows how, amongst other challenges affecting traditional livelihoods and lifestyles, recently established coal mines have heavily polluted the river which lies at the heart of their community. Villagers who once depended on fishing as their main livelihood are now resorting to using their nets to fishing coal out of the river to sell in the local markets. This is an example of a participatory video project undertaken by trainee facilitators working with the

Photo: InsightShare

The participatory video evaluation team in Eldoret, Kenya finishes an in depth 14-day process, and celebrates!

Wildlife Trust of India as part of their post training assignment (stage two of a three-stage training) see: tinyurl.com/o4jqw7x

• Two InSightShare trainers – Sole and Sara – carried out a participatory video evaluation for Mercy Corps in Kenya, as part of their Financial Literacy Research Programme. Over 14 days they trained local facilitators to support 74 young people to share their stories of change. They then facilitated workshops with over 130 people representing a spectrum of key stakeholders. The videos of change were screened, stimulating lively exchanges and debates as the targeted audiences selected which story they felt was most significant and discussed why. A story that was selected over and over was one about a man called Matthew, who after receiving training in financial literacy felt the need to do something with his life. He started a business with one packet of flour and almost no investment, and today he has diversified into three businesses and has gone back to college to study agriculture. This story gives a lot of detail about the 'enablers of change' (training and family support), as well as the blockers he has had to overcome (stereotypes, peer pressure, lack of knowledge). This story and the other video stories of change will soon be available at www.youtube.com/insightshare. More information about the PV Most Significant Change (MSC) approach can be seen here: bit.ly/pvmscdiag

TEDx

www.ted.com/tedx

TED started out in 1984 as a conference bringing together people from three worlds: technology, entertainment and design. TEDx was created in the spirit of TED's mission: 'ideas worth spreading'. It is an international community that organises TED-style events, celebrating locally-driven ideas and elevating them to a global stage. TEDx events are produced independently of TED conferences, each event curates speakers on their own, but based on TED's format and rules. The programme gives communities, organisations and individuals the opportunity to stimulate debate and action at the local level. Recent TEDx talks include: *This is not a video camera:* Chris Lunch on participatory video at TEDxIHECS
http://youtu.be/5nVsI2nzzEs
How to ensure that aid empowers urban poor groups: David Satterthwaite at TEDxHamburg youtu.be/95Lq2T9OoFo