NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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2. Papers should be accompanied by a record of the author's name, address, affiliation, and a contact telephone or fax number where possible. All papers should include a summary, table of contents, notes, and references.

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5. World Development uses American rather than British spelling. Numbers from zero to nine should be written out; numerals should be used for all other numbers.

6. Bibliographical references should be carefully checked for accuracy. Every reference cited in the paper, whether in the text, tables, or figures, must be listed in the References section. Book references should give (in this order) author name(s), full title, place of publication, publisher, and year of publication. Journal references should give author name(s), full title, journal name, volume and issue numbers, year, and inclusive page numbers. References to privately circulated or mimeographed material should contain the name and location of the appropriate department or institution.

7. Broad divisions and section headings should be clearly marked in the text where appropriate. Any quotation should appear in double quotes, with the source identified in footnotes or in the text, but not both.

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10. Figures should be clearly identified and indexed. They should be submitted on separate sheets (not in the text) and accompanied by the basic statistics required for their preparation. Each figure should be clearly labeled with appropriate headings, units of measurement, etc. Base dates for index numbers, geographical area covered, units of measurement, and sources should be clearly stated. Vertical lines may not be used in tables, and horizontal lines should be kept to a minimum.

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The past decade has witnessed more shifts in the rhetoric of rural development than in its practice. These shifts include the now familiar reversals from planning and action. PRA has been called "an approach and methods for learning about rural life and conditions from, with and by rural people." The prepositions have sometimes been reversed in order to read "by, with, and from." The phenomenon described is, though, more than just learning. It is a process which extends into analysis, planning, and action. PRA as a term is also used to describe a variety of approaches. To cover these, a recent description of PRA is "a family of approaches and methods to enable rural people to share, enhance, and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act. PRA has sources in activist participatory research, agroecosystem analysis, applied anthropology, and field research on farming systems, and rapid rural appraisal (RRA). In RRA the data are elicited and extracted by outsiders; in PRA it is more shared and owned by local people. Participatory methods include mapping and modeling, transect walks, matrix scoring, season calendar, and change analysis, well-being and wealth ranking and, and analytical diagramming. PRA applications include natural resources management, agriculture, poverty and social programs, and health and food security. Dominant behavior by outsiders may explain why it has taken until the 1990s for the analytical capabilities of local people to be better recognized and for PRA to emerge, grow, and spread.

1. INTRODUCTION

The past decade has witnessed more shifts in the rhetoric of rural development than in its practice. These shifts include the now familiar reversals from planning and action. PRA as it exists in the early to mid-1990s has several sources. It has evolved from, drawn on, and resonates with, several traditions. Some of its methods do appear to be new; but some have been rediscoveries of things that were known long ago. This paper is based on the work and innovations of many people, too numerous to name, but I thank them all. For comments on earlier versions, I am grateful to Terry Dean, James MacFarland, Glen Jolly, and two anonymous referees. Responsibility for errors, omission and opinions is mine alone. Final revision accepted: February 21, 1994.

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WORLD DEVELOPMENT

for antecedents see, for example, Whyte, 1977; Pelto and Pelto, 1978, and Rhoades, 1992). In understanding what has happened, it makes no sense to try to separate cause, effects, influences, and diffusion as though they follow straight lines. In a world of continuously quicker and closer communication, the transfer and sharing of ideas have become more rapid and untraceable. So these sources and traditions have, like rivers, in a broad stream, intermingled more and more over the past decade, and each also continues in several forms; but directly or indirectly all have contributed to a confluence in PRA, and research associated with participatory research, has had strong associations with industry and agriculture (Whyte, 1991). The techniques used in PAR (summarized in Cornwall, Guji and Wolburg, 1991, p. 25) include collective research, through meetings and sociodramas, critical recovery of history, valuing and applying 'folk culture,' and the production and diffusion of new knowledge through written, oral and visual forms.

Activist participatory research has taken different forms and has been practiced by people with a range of ideological positions, from radical crypto-paternalism to open-ended technofacilitation. In its initial form (thinking of the underprivileged and on political action has threatened the establishment, whether political or professional, and limited its spread. In practice, much PRA has similarly been concerned with poverty and equity. The contributions of the activist participatory research stream to PRA have been more through concepts than methods. They have in common three prescriptive ideas:

- that poor people are creative and capable, and can and should do much of their own investigation, analysis and planning;
- that outsiders have roles as convenors, catalysts and facilitators;
- that the weak and marginalized can and should be empowered.

Agroecosystem analysis

Agroecosystem analysis (Conway 1985, 1986, 1987) was developed in Thailand from 1978 onward, initially at the University of Chiang Mai, by Gordon Conway and his colleagues (Gyampatsi and others, 1980). It spread first through Southeast Asia and then to Africa and Latin America. One key methodological feature of this technique is the synthesis of systems and system properties (productivity, stability, sustainability, and equitability) with pattern analysis of space (maps and aerial photography), time (seasonal calendars and long-term trends), flows and relationships (flow, causal, Venn and others). Other techniques (bar diagrams, indicators, and social surveys) have been used in addition. In some cases, either or both have been applied independently.

Agroecosystem analysis was so powerful and practical that it quickly overlapped with and contributed to much RRA. In some cases, either or both labels could be used to describe what was done. Some of the major contributions of agroecosystem analysis to current RRA and PRA have been:

- the importance of attitudes, behavior and rapport;
- the idea of field learning as flexible art rather than rigid science;
- informal assessment (mapping, sketch maps drawn on site);
- rapid rural appraisal (scoring and ranking different actions).

Sociology in particular, and anthropology in general, has long been a field of study and practice. In the 1960s and 1970s, it became clear that sociologists and anthropologists were needed to analyze the impact of development projects on the local community. This led to the development of participatory research, which involves involving local communities in the planning and implementation of development projects.

Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) is a method of rural development that involves local communities in the planning and implementation of development projects. It is based on the idea that local communities have knowledge and expertise that can be used to inform development decisions. PRA is a flexible and adaptable approach that can be used in a variety of contexts.

The philosophy, approaches and methods known as rapid rural appraisal (RRA) began to emerge in the late 1970s. Workshops held at the Institute of
Development Studies at the University of Sussex on rural development tourism (1977), indigenous technical and development studies (1978, 1979) were only some among the parallel moves in different parts of the world in search of better ways for outsiders to learn about rural life and conditions. RRA can be seen to have had three main origins.

The first was dissatisfaction with the biases, especially the anti-poverty biases, of rural development tourism — the phenomenon of the brief rural visit by the urban-based professional. These biases were recognized as spatial (visits near cities, on roadsides, and to the centers of villages to the neglect of peripheries); project (where projects were being undertaken, often with foreign funding and support); person (meeting men more than women, elites more than the poor, the users more than the nonusers of services, and so on); (seasonal) going in the dry and cool rather than hot and wet seasons which are often worse for poor rural people); and diplomatic (where the outsider does not wish to cause offense by asking to meet poor people or see bad conditions). All these could combine to hide the worst poverty and deprivation.

The second origin of RRA was disillusion with the normal processes of questionnaire surveys and their results. Again and again, over many years and in many cultures (for example, Shrestha and Stone, 1979), the experience had been that large-scale surveys with long questionnaires tended to be drawn-out, tedious, a headache to administer, a nightmare to process, and results unreliable in data collection, analysis, or interpretation. Many studies were not released, leading to reports, if any, which were long, late, boring, misleading or difficult to use, and anyway ignored.

The third origin was more positive. More cost-effective methods of learning were sought. This was helped by the growing recognition by development professionals of the obvious fact that rural people were far more knowledgeable about their affairs than the outsiders who wished to learn. In answering the question — whose knowledge counts? — it sought, and continues to seek, to enable outsiders to gain information and insight from local people and about local conditions, and to do this in a more cost-effective and timely manner. It was, and remains, less one-sided than questionnaire surveys where much of the information is collected by outsiders and not taken by the outsider, and little or nothing is given back. The emphasis therefore was on a nonparticipatory RRA that could be described as extrac- tive, or, more neutrally, eliciting.

In establishing the methods and principles of RRA many people and institutions took part. No account could consider them all or give justice to them, and with imperfect knowledge there is no avoiding significant omissions. An earlier attempt to list countries where RRA had been developed identified 12 in Africa, eight in South and Southeast Asia, one in Latin America, one in Australasia and the Pacific, and one in Europe. Perhaps more than any other movement, agroecosystem analysis in Southeast Asia introduced new methods and established new credibility. In the mid-1980s, the University of Khon Kaen in Thailand was world leader in developing theory and methods, especially for multidisciplinary teams, and in institutionalizing RRA as a part of professional training. The International Conference on Rapid Rural Appraisal held at the University of Khon Kaen in 1985, and the published volume of papers which resulted (KKU, 1987), were landmarks. The practical value of RRA was confirmed, and its underlying theory outlined (Beebe, 1987; Gibbs, 1987; Grassadon and Grassadon, 1987a, Jamieson, 1987). In the latter, especially popular in Africa, RRA was used not only in tropical countries but also Australia (Aspin and Ison, 1989; Dunn and McMillan, 1991). RRA was further developed and disseminated through extensive training by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIEED) based in London, working with 300-odd Indian Administrative Service probationers each year, and by the Xavier Institute of Social Services, Ranchi, which introduced PRA for the fieldwork of its students. The first book about PRA was written by Neela Mukherjee, working at the National Academy of Administration, and published in 1993.

At the same time, crossfertilization and spread took place internationally. The small group of the Sustainable Agriculture Programme at IIEED, with support from the Ford Foundation and SIDA, was decisively influential through its activities in Africa and Asia. In 1989, it undertook a networking role, and started a series of papers (PALM Series 1 —). AKRSP continued to innovate and broke new ground in showing how well village volunteers could themselves do just as well. ActionAid, Bangalore undertook a networking role.

Among others, government organizations in India that received and promoted training included the National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie for the fieldwork of its 300-odd Indian Administrative Service probationers each year, and by the Xavier Institute of Social Services, Ranchi, which introduced PRA for the fieldwork of its students. The first book about PRA was written by Neela Mukherjee, working at the National Academy of Administration, and published in 1993.

In the mid-1980s, the words "participation" and "participatory" entered the RRA vocabulary. They already had an indigenous meaning in the development studies and the nongovernmental development (NGD) sector but also in some government organizations. MYRA, based in Bangalore, trained its senior staff in PRA in early 1990 (Ramachandran, 1990), came to play a role in training government personnel, and started a series of papers (PALM Series 1 —). AKRSP continued to innovate and broke new ground in showing how well village volunteers could themselves do just as well. ActionAid, Bangalore undertook a networking role. Among others, government organizations in India that received and promoted training included the National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie for the fieldwork of its 300-odd Indian Administrative Service probationers each year, and by the Xavier Institute of Social Services, Ranchi, which introduced PRA for the fieldwork of its students. The first book about PRA was written by Neela Mukherjee, working at the National Academy of Administration, and published in 1993.
4. RRA AND PRA: LABELS AND MEANINGS

The question has been raised as to whether it is useful to define PRA as separate from RRA. One view is that labels do not matter. There is a plethora of labels for approaches and methods of learning about rural life and conditions. Many of the sets of practices overlap. There is continuous innovation, sharing and exchange. In this view, the only importance of a label is the sense of pride of ownership and originality which it gives, so strengthening commitment, enthusiasm and good work among its practitioners. Otherwise, there would be no point in defining an exclusive territory of activities for PRA or any other set of approaches or methods.

An alternative view is that careful use of terms can help to maintain and improve quality, both by setting minimum standards for “good” RRA or PRA, and by distinguishing them from each other. The label of RRA has already been used quite widely to legitimate rush development tourism, and unself-critical investigations: see for example, Pottier’s critique (1992) of a quick but heavily biased “RRA” survey in Zambia, and some of the observations in a wide-ranging review (van Steijn, 1991) of RRA activities in the Philippines. The label of PRA has similarly been used to legitimate either bad work or to describe RRA, which has been used to describe data collection which is elicitive or extractive rather than participatory. In this view, then, it makes sense to separate out definitions of RRA as a form of data collection by outsiders who then take it away and analyze it; and of PRA as more participatory and empowering, meaning that outsiders are convenors, catalysts and facilitators who enable people undertake and share their own investigations and analysis.

A balanced view may be that since we are concerned here with static terms — RRA and PRA — for combinations and fluxes of activities which are dynamic and evolving and which take different forms in different places, labels can help to define what belongs where. There can, then, be a distinction between “an RRA” and “a PRA”. An RRA is intended for learning by outsiders. A PRA is intended to enable local people to conduct their own analyses, and often lead and take action. In this sense, PRA often implies radical personal and institutional change, and it would be false the term to use it for anything less than this. The claim that “PRA is a simple methodology . . . ” (PID and NES, 1989, p. 1) is then misleading, since personal and institutional change are rarely simple or easy. Moreover, as PRA becomes increasingly fashionable, some may be tempted to label and relabel their work as PRA when it is still extractive rather than participatory, and when their behavior and attitudes are still dominant, top-down and unchanged. The labels themselves have been questioned. It has been said of RRA that it need be neither rapid, nor participatory, and yet other set of approaches or methods.

In practice there is a continuum between an RRA and a PRA, as illustrated in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RRA</th>
<th>PRA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period of major developments</td>
<td>Late 1970s, 1980s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major innovators based in</td>
<td>Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main users at first</td>
<td>Aid agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key resource earlier undervalued</td>
<td>Local people’s knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main innovations</td>
<td>Team management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant mode</td>
<td>Elective, Extractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal objectives</td>
<td>Learning by outsiders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer term outcomes</td>
<td>Plans, projects publications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL

5. THE MENU OF METHODS OF RRA AND PRA

In its early days, RRA seemed to be largely organized common sense. Within the 1980s, though, creative ingenuity was applied and more methods were borrowed, adapted and invented, many with a more participatory mode. Some of these were codified and written up in guidelines and manuals. One view was that manuals of methods should be avoided; that the PRA principle of “use your own best judgement at all times” permitted and encouraged creativity; that manuals led to teaching and learning by rote, the ritual performance of methods for their own sake, and a loss of flexibility. Basic descriptions of methods (as in Mascarenhas, 1992) were considered enough. In early 1994, most of the leading PRA practitioners were working in this mode but a number of manuals, handbooks and sourcebooks had been compiled.

A summary listing of headings can indicate some of the main modes and methods being used by early 1994. All the methods can be used in both RRA and PRA, but some are more emphasized in one than the other. RRA has tended to stress the use of secondary sources, verbal interaction especially through semi-structured interviewing, and observation: so there are sometimes described as “RRA methods”. For its part, a distinctive aspect of PRA has been the shared visual representations and analysis by local people, such as mapping or modeling on the ground or paper; estimat- ing, scoring and ranking with marks, stones, sticks or shapes; Venn diagramming; free listing and card sorting; linkage diagramming; and presentations for checking and validation: so these are often described as “PRA methods.” A recent paper (Cornwall, Guir and Welbourn 1993, p. 22) has usefully grouped methods under the three headings of visualized analy- ses; interviewing and sampling methods; and group and team dynamics methods. Some methods and sequences overlap, however, they are listed together here, using the categories and terms in common use:

— Semi-structured interviews. This has been regarded as the “core” of good RRA (Grandstaff and Grandstaff, 1987). It can entail having a mental or written checklist, but being open-ended and following upon the unexpected. Increasingly it is using participatory visual as well as traditional verbal methods.
— Key informants: enquiring who are the experts and seeking them out, sometimes through participatory social mapping.
— Groups of various kinds (casual;
Participatory analysis of secondary sources. The most common form is the analysis of aerial photographs (often best at 1:5000) to identify soil types, land conditions, land tenure etc (Dewees 1989; Mears 1989; Sanford, 1989); satellite imagery has also been used (personal communication Sam Joseph);

- Participatory mapping and modelling, in which local people use the ground, floor or paper to make social, demographic, health, natural resource (soils, trees and forests, water resources etc), service and opportunity, or farm maps, or construct three-dimensional models of their land (Hahn, 1991; Paps, 1991);

- Transect walks — walking with or by local people through an area, observing, asking, listening, discussing, identifying different zones, soils, land uses, drainage, topography, local and introduced technologies, etc; seeking problems, solutions and opportunities; and mapping and diagramming the zones, resources and findings (Mascarenhas, 1992)

- Time biographies and change analysis: chronologies of events, listing major remembered events in a village with approximate dates; people’s accounts of the past, of how things close to them have changed, ecological histories, changes in land use and cropping patterns, changes in customs and practices, changes and trends in population, migration, fuels used, education, health, credit and the causes of changes and trends, often in a participatory mode with estimation of relative magnitudes;

- Oral histories and ethnobiographies: oral histories and ethnobiographies (Pratt, 1990); general types of transect walk include slope, combing, and loop. A seabottom transect has been conducted the Philippines (J. Mascarenhas, personal communication)

- Market transactions and change analysis: chronologies of events, listing major remembered events in a village with approximate dates; people’s accounts of the past, of how things close to them have changed, ecological histories, changes in land use and cropping patterns, changes in customs and practices, changes and trends in population, migration, fuels used, education, health, credit and the causes of changes and trends, often in a participatory mode with estimation of relative magnitudes;

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— Adult literacy (ActionAid's pilot programs in Bangladesh, Uganda and El Salvador using PRA training modules as a stepping stone to spelling (personal communication David Archer);
— Participatory poverty assessments (as part of the World Bank-supported Country Poverty Assessments) in Ghana and Zambia, both initiated in 1993.

(d) Health and food security

— Health assessments and monitoring with applications to women's reproductive health (Tolley and Bentley, 1992; Cornwall, 1992), disease problem ranking (Welbourn, 1992), unemployment and health (Cresswell, 1992), identifying major illness, healthcare providers and costs (Joseph, 1992), and testing methods for establishing baselines and monitoring (Adams, Roy and Mahlub, 1993), planning health projects (Francis, Devavaram and Erkinke, 1992); (see also Hewer, 1992 and RRA Notes 16, pp. 101-106 for a fuller listing of actual or potential uses).
— Food security and nutrition assessment and monitoring (Maxwell, 1989; Appleton, 1992; Buchanan-Smith et al., 1993; Lawrence Haddad personal communication)
— Water and sanitation assessment, planning and locating water sources.

These lists illustrate the main known applications. They are not comprehensive. A further application has been the appraisal of organizational cultures (Kiewelitz and Reincke, 1993) and more applications can be expected.

7. SPREAD AND IMPACT OF PRA

For several reasons, there are still, in early 1994, few case studies of the impact of PRA as development process. First, PRA is recent, and many PRA processes are still in their early stages. Second, responding to demand and their own sense of priorities, experienced practitioners have been mostly engaged in training and appraisal rather than monitoring and evaluation, and this emphasis is reflected in the reports they have written. Third, in the first years of PRA, academic researchers were slow to recognize what was happening. These were conditions in which negative experiences were liable to be overlooked. In the mid-1990s more feedback is needed from failures, those who have experienced PRA and not subsequently adopted it, and from organizations where attempts to introduce it have not been successful.

That said, evidence takes two main forms: first, the scale of adoption and use; and second, reports of practical use and evaluation.

First, the number of countries in which PRA appears strongly established and spreading is rising. Any listing will be based on incomplete knowledge, liable to error, and soon out of date. Early in 1994 such countries and regions include Bangladesh, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, India, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe, not to mention countries in Latin America. The number of organizations across a much larger number of countries which have to some degree adopted PRA is large and growing. Southern NGOs which are using PRA (mid-1993) and other national NGOs and International Agencies have now supported the spread of PRA. Universities were at first slow to recognize PRA or adopt PRA methods, but now tests of universities and training and research institutes have some staff who are exploring and using it. Government and parastatal organizations, all or parts of which have espoused PRA, are a similar number. Among these, a few have sought to introduce it throughout their programs on a national or statewide scale. These include the Soil and Water Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture in Kenya, which has officially embraced PRA; and, in the Philippines, a few provinces, a district; the District Rural Development Agencies, Andhra Pradesh, India; and the Forest Departments of several Indian States. Government programs with whom PRA has appeared include assistance to NGOs and approaches, as with IFAD-supported programs in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, the ODA-supported Western Ghats Environmental Programme of India, the SIDA-supported Vietnam-Sweden Forestry Cooperation Programme in Vietnam, and UNICEF-supported programs in India and Kenya.

Because the PRA label, and to a lesser extent its substance, appeared early 1994 to be spreading exponentially, the scale of applications is difficult to assess. In 1992, ActionAid Nepal completed participatory mapping in approximately 130 villages as a means of monitoring and evaluating the utilization of services (ActionAid, 1992). In 1993 ActionAid Pakistan completed wealth/well-being ranking with 38,000 people as a stage in identifying the poorer people (personal communication, Humera Malik). UNICEF, Lucknow, is reported to be planning one thousand PRA training sessions over the next five years.

Despite these examples, the actual spread and use of PRA in large field agencies, whether government or NGO, is easily overestimated to the extent that as PRA becomes "politically correct," so reports of PRA are more likely to be welcomed. Sometime a reaction has occurred. Much depends on personal orientation and choice, and on rewards. In smaller organizations with committed leadership, adoption has often taken place quickly. In large organizations, it has not been by administrative fiat, but by consistent high-level support, widespread training of good quality, and appropriate systems of rewards, that actual (in contrast with apparent) spread has occurred. Despite the slow spread implied by these conditions, the number of people in large organizations who have now chosen to use PRA as approach and process, and not just PRA methods, probably runs into thousands, and is growing.

Second, reports of practical use are innumerable but scattered in a large, inaccessible grey literature; and in early 1994 evaluations are still few. Most reports have been positive. There are dangers of selective perception and reporting, but some reports (including those from IED see e.g., Guji, 1992) gain in credibility through self-critically presenting and discussing problems and errors.

By early 1994, the most systematic impact analysis of PRA compared with alternatives has been a participatory study conducted in Kenya in April-May 1993 (Pretty and Thompson, 1993). Six areas of the Catchment Approach Program of the Soil and Water Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture were studied. Performance indicators included maize yields, diversity of crops, reappearance of springs and some other signs. A control approach used a catchment, an indicator of activity by a catchment committee, and awareness and adoption in neighboring communities. The study showed that performance had been worst in a catchment where committee support had not been different participatory. The impact indicators were generally higher where catchment committees were freely elected, and where farmers had participated in planning, managing and monitoring their communities. As NGOs, and/or increased the scale of adoption and use; and second, reports of practical use and evaluation.
1. Any listing of the NGOs that pioneered at an early stage in India would include (in alphabetical order) ActionAid, Bangkok; Arisivos for Social Alternatives, Trichy; the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (India); Krishi Gram Vikas Kendra, Ranchi; MYRADA, Bangalore; Seva Bharati, Midnapore District; SPEECH, Madurai; and Youth for Action, Hyderabad.

2. Among international foundations, agencies and NGOs active in supporting and promoting PRA at an early stage were the Ford Foundation (in India, Bangladesh and East Africa), Winrock International (in Nepal), Intercorporation (Berne and in Sri Lanka), the Overseas Development Administration (London and in South Asia, West Africa and elsewhere), the Aga Khan Foundation (in India), the Near East Foundation and the Centre for Development Services (Cairo and the Middle East), the World Resources Institute (Washington and Latin America), and in various countries CARE, Save the Children, OXFAM, UNICEF and World Neighbourhood; while others including GTZ, IDRC, IFAD, NOVI, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, SAREC, SDC and SIDA provided support.

3. Several manuals, guides and handbooks have, however, been compiled. In addition to a number of RRA, others have used a PRA label or have been in a PRA tradition. In English these include a step-by-step manual Participatory Rural Appraisal Handbook (NES et al, 1990) based on early PRAs in Kenya, Participatory Rural Appraisal for Communication in Developing Countries (Campbell and Gill, 1991) based on experiences in the Middle East and North Africa; an illustrated guide to PRAs in Nepal: Concepts and Methods (Campbell and Gill, 1991) based on field methods and applications of PRA for Joint Forest Management in India (SPWD, 1992); a resource manual of papers for trainers and practitioners of PRA (Leons, 1993); a manual for productivity systems assessment and planning in the Philippines (Dilig, 1993); A Handbook for PRA Practitioners, based on PRA training in South Africa (Participants in Balwin Workshop, 1992); an introduction to Rapid and Participatory Rural Appraisal in BRAC (Hoves, 1993); and Rapid Appraisal Methods for Coastal Communities (Townsley, 1993). Others have been published and made available in French (Gautre and Freudenberg, 1990, 1991), Spanish (Reiberger-McC rackin, 1991), and German (Schonbuhl and Kuesten, 1993); and in early 1994 the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIEED), London, is in the late stages of preparing several source books for PRA methods and training.


6. For applications of PRA see, in particular,13-18, 19-23, 24-29.

NOTES

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Beneficiary Participation in Development Projects: Empirical Tests of Popular Theories*

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Development projects have had disappointing results despite the acknowledgment of past mistakes and significant evolution in development strategies. A major disappointment has been the failure of most development projects to benefit significantly the poor majorities in developing countries. Criticism against trickle-down aid strategies gained official acceptance during the mid-seventies. The New Directions legislation governing the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), and the enunciation of the Basic Human Needs (BHN) doctrine by the International Labor Organization, the World Bank, and other international organizations were explicit efforts to redirect bilateral and multilateral aid toward the poor and to increase the participation of beneficiaries in projects aimed at their own development. The philosophy behind these changes is that real development must be people-centered instead of production-oriented.¹ In fact, some critics define beneficiary participation as integral to authentic development.² Joining in the chorus of those supporting increased participation are bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, private voluntary organizations, grassroots organizers, global-humanist scholars, and development management consultants. In sum, the call for participation comes from a broad spectrum of those concerned with development and for a wide variety of reasons.

In this article we use a set of 52 AID development projects to examine several theses about whether and how participation contributes to project success and what conditions encourage participation. We begin by describing our methodology and sources of data. The second section establishes the benefits of participation by summarizing the major findings of a previous article we wrote on this issue.³ Participation is not always necessary or helpful. It has much

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