

IMPLEMENTING

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PRA

A Handbook To Facilitate
Participatory Rural Appraisal

This Handbook is in DRAFT form. As with any type of field manual, we feel that the most efficient way to produce an effective product is to test it in its working environment, receive comments and suggestions, and revise accordingly. We request that you send suggestions, additional examples, and comments for improving this publication to Richard Ford at Clark University, Elizabeth Odour-Noah at NES, or Francis Lelo at Egerton University.

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IMPLEMENTING PRA: A Handbook to Facilitate Participatory Rural Appraisal

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Cover Photo: This photograph, taken by Barbara Thomas-Slayter, shows a women's group building a check dam after completing a PRA exercise in their community.

FOREWORD

This Handbook takes another step toward helping communities introduce sustainable development. It suggests how village groups can implement plans they have created using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). It tells chiefs, women's group leaders, farm cooperative officers, teachers, clergy, political representatives, and many informal leaders about the experiences of other rural communities in launching rural development. This Handbook is Volume II of a continuing series, designed to help village institutions plan, organize, implement, manage, and evaluate village-based development projects within their own communities.

Volume I in the PRA series, published in 1990 and entitled *The PRA Handbook*,¹ helps extension officers, researchers, NGO staff, and project officers to join with community groups to design PRA Community Action Plans.² An abbreviated example of such a plan appears on page 30. This volume takes the PRA village plans

and recommendations and offers advice to technical officers and local leaders about how to implement them in ways that the rural community can sustain.

Depending on responses from the field, this volume may eventually appear in two versions. One would be this edition, prepared for field, research, and evaluation staff who seek detailed information on organizing and implementing Participatory Rural Appraisal. If demand seems sufficient, we will produce an abridged version as a companion volume, for those who work directly in rural communities including chiefs, women's group leaders, and other village opinion makers who seek on-the-ground guidance to implement PRA.

A brief background note may be helpful. PRA first emerged in Kenya in 1988, a direct outgrowth of Rapid Rural Appraisal. Its original target was community mobilization for improved resources management. It

¹Kabutha, Charity, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Richard Ford. *Participatory Rural Appraisal Handbook*, WRI, NES, Egerton, and Clark, 1990.

²Originally, the PRA actions plans were known as Village Resource Management Plans (VRMP). PRA field activities of the last two years have indicated that a more broadly based Community Action Plan (CAP) is a better title for the community-based PRA recommendations for action.

led communities through procedures to develop Village Resource Management Plans (VRMPs). Examples of PRA actions and accomplishments are found on page 32. Since 1988, many experiences have revised PRA considerably from its original design.

At least three differences are worth noting. First, PRA has become more broadly based. In its original focus, PRA was concerned mostly with natural resources management -- soil conservation, water development, forestry, and sustainable grazing and agricultural practices. During the intervening years, it has been used effectively in community-based mother and child health, income generation, marketing, and water/sanitation in addition to resource efforts. As a result, the original goals of sustainable resources management are now set more broadly as Community Action Plans (CAP).

Second, PRA has supported sector-specific initiatives in which theme-centered donor agencies have conducted sector-based PRAs. Whereas the original PRA design called for an open-ended, resource-based dialogue between community leaders and the PRA team, the approach has also been used on sector topics. For example, UNICEF staff have been pleased with results in community health and child-centered concerns; extension staff from the Ministry of Water Development are actively pursuing uses for water analysis and implementation; forestry groups have found it helpful for tree nursery and woodland management activities.

Third, PRA is now viewed as a vehicle through which capacity building among community institutions takes place. CARE/Kenya uses it to introduce village training on financial management, technical support, and community leadership. Egerton University has formed a new Centre to use PRA to collaborate with community institutions. While the first view of PRA did not include village institution strengthening, there is no reason why it cannot be used effectively in this manner.

Given these innovations this Handbook too is a document in transition. We urge that field users send comments. It is through direct communication with users that PRA will continue to grow and adapt as field needs change.

The authors wish to thank colleagues who have helped to make this Handbook possible, including: Charity Kabutha, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, Nicholas Mageto, Jim Dunn, David Richards, Joseph Ayieko, Julie Okeyo, and Njoki Mbuti.

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Introduction:

A Rationale and Explanation of Participatory Rural Appraisal

About PRA

PRA is a new way to systematize a very old approach to rural development: community participation. PRA offers a significant alternative to centrally planned and externally managed development efforts, many of which have proven difficult to sustain. Ultimately, among the most important strategies to sustain rural development are approaches that rural communities can manage and control. The methodology of PRA, while one of many village-based approaches to development,³ is a unique approach. It helps rural communities to support activities which they design and implement

Now the community will have water. Before PRA we knew the technical needs but could not mobilize the village groups or get money. Now the village has created a plan, people are prepared to do the work, and community groups are ready to raise whatever money is needed. We will soon have water.

Division Water Engineer

for sustainable production within their community. It also strengthens local leadership and institutions. Four assumptions form the basis for PRA:

ASSUMPTION 1: Rural people have great knowledge – when this knowledge is organized it strengthens communities

PRA believes that rural resource users have considerable knowledge about their problems and are familiar with locally-based ways to solve them. PRA further assumes that rural residents may not appreciate the enormous power that this information can yield nor how best to organize it to bring together interests both inside and outside of their community. As a first step, PRA helps communities to organize and systematize their own information in ways that they will be able to control.

ASSUMPTION 2: Rural groups can initiate action -- when community institutions mobilize through PRA, there is no need to wait for outsiders

Rural communities can introduce projects, acting primarily on their own resources. PRA helps communities to mobilize themselves for effective action. PRA assumes that community institutions are among the most underutilized resources available for development efforts. PRA builds consensus on what a community wishes to do and designates which community groups or individuals will take action. Local leaders are the prime movers in taking such actions

ASSUMPTION 3: Rural resource users can plan and implement actions -- such initiatives become a powerful means to attract outside help

While people can do a great deal to solve their own problems and implement their own plans, they cannot necessarily do the entire job alone. External units such as government extension officers, NGOs, and international groups often can provide critical technical, financial, or managerial assistance that is unavailable to rural communities. PRA creates a setting in which village and outside groups share goals and agree on actions to meet common needs.

ASSUMPTION 4: Farmers will implement tasks which they can sustain -- but require continuous long term relationships with external agents

Sustainability is built in to PRA as rural groups pick projects that they can initiate and manage. Yet community enthusiasm from a PRA assessment may not last indefinitely. New agendas arise, old factions reemerge, and new problems take priority. To maintain the energy of PRA, gentle yet persistent reinforcement from external NGOs or extension staff may be required. While some communities that have been using PRA for three years are still active and energetic in their implementation, this energy may not go on forever.

³In addition to the *PRA Handbook* there is: Raintree, J.B. *D & D User's Manual: An Introduction to Diagnosis and Design*. ICRAF; *The Community's Toolbox: The Idea, Methods and Tools for Participatory Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation in Community Forestry*. Community Forestry Field Manual 2. FAO: Rome, 1990.; and, Mascarenhas, James et.al. "Participatory Rural Appraisal: Proceedings of the February 1991 Bangalore PRA Trainers Workshop." *RFA Notes Number 13*, August, 1991. Published by IIED.

PRA is a new approach which builds on local knowledge, experience, and commitment.

The Nature of PRA: What it Offers

PRA has nine strengths:

STRENGTH 1: Focuses on rural communities

PRA users assume that rural communities and local institutions are the primary building blocks to enhance community development, reverse resources degradation, increase food production, strengthen child survival, or expand income generation projects. PRA therefore places major responsibilities on community institutions and leaders to initiate their own development.

STRENGTH 2: Offers alternatives for marginal areas

PRA is based on a belief that macro development strategies such as structural adjustment or production of high value crops serve a portion of Africa's development constituency. Yet macro strategies may bypass rural communities, especially those in ecologically marginal areas, where population is growing rapidly, where an increasing number of households are headed by women, and where food production has been declining. PRA focusses on these marginal zones.

STRENGTH 3 : Uses approaches that are sensitive to issues of gender and needs of children

By working with local institutions, PRA establishes contact and communication with groups sometimes left out of project design, planning, and implementation. PRA uses techniques such as gender analysis to involve special interest groups in data gathering and analysis as well as in action. Broadly based community interests therefore become part of the PRA action plan.

STRENGTH 4: Systematizes rural participation

PRA provides a structure which brings together residents and leaders from the community, technical officers assigned to the area, and as possible, NGOs. PRA also works toward more equitable participation of unempowered groups within communities. Bridging these gaps between intended beneficiaries and those who manage resources as well as among different interests within local communities introduces practices that village institutions can learn from, use, and maintain.

Viewed in the broader development context, PRA is one of several analytical tools available to bring sustainability to rural communities.

STRENGTH 5: Uses visual materials and group discussions

PRA uses visual data gathering instruments and relies on charts and graphs for data analysis and presentation. Visual materials help rural residents who may lack formal education to participate in discussions with the PRA team in ways that previous approaches have failed to achieve.

STRENGTH 6: Enables rural residents to interact

PRA maximizes participation by gathering data which stay with the community. Discussions about the meaning of these data are interactive. Setting priorities and action plans results from carefully managed ranking techniques to assure that the plans reflect priorities of many elements within the community.

STRENGTH 7: Integrates sectors

PRA integrates development sectors such as agriculture, water, forestry, health, and livestock, using the theme of community development and natural resources management.

STRENGTH 8: Integrates organizations

PRA brings together institutions in unique ways and vests authority within the community. It enables govern-

ment extension officers to join with NGOs in productive rather than competitive efforts. It enables government entities to cooperate, and helps formal and informal leaders within the community to interact.

STRENGTH 9: Concludes with Community Action Plan (CAP)

The final stage of the PRA is the CAP which sets village-based projects in priority order, identifies materials and labor that will be required for implementation, and assigns responsibilities to groups in and outside of the community to carry out the work. The CAP becomes the focal point for the data gathering and ranking and enables communities to control their own development by way of implementing the plan.

The CAP has become one of the most important parts of the PRA process. It focusses community discussion in its preparation; mobilizes community groups during implementation; and helps communities to measure their own progress toward achievement. It serves as a means to attract external support by giving the community a way to bargain with extension agents and NGOs to assure that community-based goals will drive their development. Implementation is actively underway in several Kenyan communities and has demonstrated, in varying degrees, that when participation is organized and systematized, efforts are not only productive from the community's perspective, but sustainable largely from their own resources.

PRA Assessment Criteria

PRA uses criteria taken directly from Rapid Rural Appraisal to assess merits of village projects and action. Three of these criteria have been especially useful to help community institutions think through their needs and what to do about them. They are used toward the end of the village assessment, during the exercise with the Options Assessment Chart (see page 29). The criteria include:

equitability - villagers consider how a particular action (eg. marketing vegetables to increase income) will impact different community groups -- young and old; rich and poor; male and female; formally or informally educated; or different ethnic groups. The PRA process places high value on actions that spread benefit as far as possible within the community;

productivity - villagers also consider the impact that an

action will have on productive use of the resource base. Will a rise in income or increase in crop yield or improvements in children's health or water quantity result from the activity? PRA looks to ways that villages can be made more productive;



sustainability - village organizations discuss whether they will have interest in and ability to maintain the proposed activity from their own resources, without continuing need for outside help, and without depleting village resources. PRA helps communities to think ahead to what they will be able to do to support themselves.

These three concepts are often in conflict with one another. There are trade offs. For example, a water

project that has high productivity may have lower equitability or may not be sustainable. Community groups consider these trade offs when ranking project activity, with the understanding that PRA helps to increase access of community groups to the resource base. Yet PRA adds the awareness that increased access brings increased responsibility. PRA places decisions about trade offs inside the community. PRA assumes that the ultimate sustainability lies in communities assuming such locally-based responsibilities.



1 Getting Started: How to Begin

We wanted a tree nursery. So we planted seedlings next to a well that the government had installed. For two years, we had plenty of water. Our nursery flourished. Then the pump broke. The ministry had no money to replace the broken part, and the members of our nursery women's group would not pay to fix the ministry's pump. For two years, we had no nursery. The PRA plan helped us start a new nursery near a small stream. Now we can grow seedlings whether the ministry fixes the pump or not.

Chair, Sublocation Women's Group

Community Visits

The easiest way to guide rural leaders to a new course of action is to show them what other villages have accomplished with PRA. These exchange visits and demonstrations can be institutional, personal, or political. Several examples follow to suggest a variety of ways to start.

An Institutional Example:

A Technical Officer Advising a Village

Since 1984, women's groups in Mbusyani have helped each other in soil conservation and other resource management needs on their individual shambas. Initially, they organized six women's groups. By 1987, they had started a tree nursery. The following year, the women's groups learned through a Forestry Extension Officer about a nearby community -- Katheka -- that had used PRA effectively. Katheka women's groups had worked with the National Environment Secretariat (NES), using PRA to build soil control measures and raise funds for hand tools and a water pump. Mbusyani women's leaders raised 45 shillings each (then about \$2.00) for bus fare to attend a large meeting in Katheka.

The visitors looked at check dams, bench terraces, and cutoff drains that women's groups had constructed and observed woodland management practices. Perhaps more important, peers talked to peers. The women's group leaders and farm cooperative officers from both villages exchanged views. The visitors liked what they saw and wanted to learn more.

Mbusyani contacted the PRA team through the National Environment Secretariat and arranged for a visit. A few weeks later, two members of the PRA team met with community leaders along with about 500 villagers. They discussed the nature of PRA, what it could do for the community, and what the community would have to contribute. All parties agreed that a PRA could help them and they agreed to get started. The act of the forest officer linking village leaders and enabling Mbusyani to learn of the effectiveness of Katheka's actions was the critical factor in getting Mbusyani started. Since 1988, Mbusyani has been an active and productive user of PRA.

A Political Example:

A Member of Parliament Taking Initiative Within His Constituency

In another case, in Western Kenya, a member of Parliament approached the Director of the National Environment Secretariat about what he might do to solve water, soil, and forestry problems in his constituency. The two had known each other for several years so the contact was partly official and partly old friends. The Director described PRA as it had been functioning for the previous two years and assigned one staff member to travel with the MP to a community where women's groups were looking for projects. After several discussions, the women's leaders, the Assistant Chief, the MP, and local technical officers carried out a PRA, in association with NES. The resultant CAP focussed not only on natural resource issues but on income generation as well. Funding for priority projects, evolving over a two year period, is now in place.



Five years ago a group came to our village to solve our water problem. They said if every family would give them ten shillings (the equivalent of ten loaves of bread), they would bring us water. After we gave them money, they disappeared. We still had no water. With PRA, we make our own plans and raise money which we control ourselves. Using our own plans, we now have water.

Leader, Village Women's Group

Personal Contacts:

Learning From Communities Next Door

In still another example, women's group leaders from Ngumuti became aware of what PRA had been doing in water development in two adjacent sublocations. They contacted both the division water engineer and women's group leaders for conversations. They became convinced that PRA was a productive methodology and would help them. Ngumuti women began meeting with the water engineer and neighboring village leaders in communities adjacent to PRA villages. The engineer designed an informal "shortcut" PRA taking about three days (as opposed to 8-12 days for a full PRA) and succeeded in gaining the confidence of large numbers of women's group leaders. They worked out village plans for their communities. Subsequently the water engineer has assisted them in drafting proposals and they have attracted an NGO because of the sound data and well organized community which the short-cut PRA had facilitated. While the proposals are limited in scope and while the village activity has not yet begun, the experience suggests that there are many styles of village participation and many ways to organize it. The role of neighbors or an individual extension officer using PRA techniques can produce important results.



Review a Sample Community Action Plan (CAP)

Another way to start is for community leaders to examine a CAP from another community. They would learn what the community wanted to do and determine whether similar goals might be appropriate for their own community. While we have no example at present of a

group or sublocation getting started this way, it is at least a potentially effective way of sharing the PRA experience. A full PRA Community Action Plan for Kyevaluki (then called a Village Resource Management Plan) appears in the *PRA Handbook*.



The plan makes the difference. I had tried several times to organize village groups, but success was limited. PRA has now helped us to make water sources reliable, decrease soil erosion, open new lands for growing food, and even to earn some money. The secret is in working together. The PRA plan helps us to cooperate.

Assistant Chief

Learning about PRA through Case Studies

A final means to get going is through case studies. This is useful if there are no PRA villages nearby. There are several documents already available and more coming quickly from the groups listed in the back of this booklet.

"Evaluating Participatory Rural Appraisal: Listening to Village Leaders in Kakuyuni Location," by Richard Ford and Francis Lelo. Reprint from *Forests, Trees and People NEWSLETTER*, No. 13, June, 1991. Paper Number 2, Papers in International Development and Social Change. Worcester: Clark University, October, 1991.

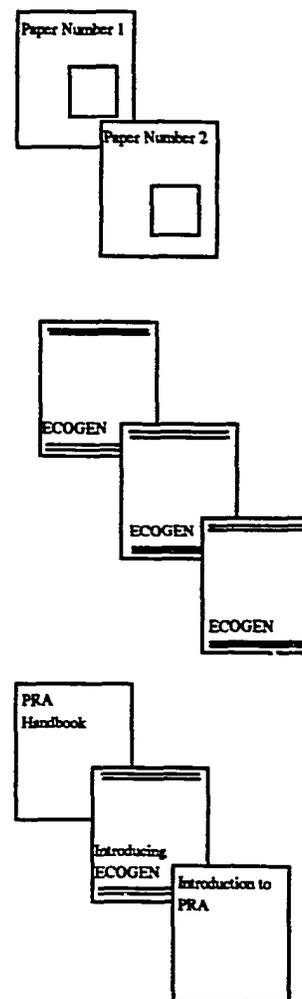
Assessing Mbusyani: Using Participatory Rural Appraisal for Sustainable Resources Management. Charity Kabutha, Barbara P. Thomas-Slayter, and Richard Ford. Paper Number 1, Papers in International Development and Social Change. Worcester: Clark University, October, 1991.

Introducing the ECOGEN Approach to Gender, Natural Resources Management, and Sustainable Development. Barbara Thomas-Slayter, Dianne Rocheleau, Dale Shields, and Mary Rojas. Worcester: Clark University, 1991.

From Cattle to Coffee: Transformation in Rural Machakos. Isabella Asamba, and Barbara Thomas-Slayter. ECOGEN Case Study Series. Worcester: Clark University, 1991.

People, Property, Poverty and Parks: A Story of Men, Women, Water and Trees at Pwani. Dianne Rocheleau, Karen L. Schofield and J. Njoki Mbuti. ECOGEN Case Study Series. Worcester: Clark University, 1991.

An Introduction to PRA for Natural Resources Management. Richard Ford, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Wanjiku Mwangi. November, 1989.



2 Getting Official Clearances and Briefing Community Leaders

Using PRA, our Village Development Committee (VDC) designed a water project and obtained funding from a UN agency. We forgot to inform the Senior Chief that we were discussing funding plans with a UN group. When he heard about it, he became curious. He summoned our VDC to meet with him. While the meeting could have been difficult, it was not. The Chief had previously been involved with PRA and therefore understood what we were doing. Our meeting concluded with the Chief's blessing. The incident reminded us of the need to keep everyone informed at all times. PRA helps us to do that.

Village Elder

Assessing local communities with PRA is not an autonomous process. Each community is connected to an elaborate outside network of administrative, political, economic, and other institutions. These inside and outside elements must be notified and involved, as appropriate. In varying degrees, endorsement from this network of officials and institutions will make it easier

for the community to implement the eventual PRA plan. The following scenario describes one example of setting up a PRA in Pwani village, Njoro Division, Nakuru District during the month of June, 1990. It is presented here because the process of good clearance and advanced preparation for the PRA will make implementing the plan considerably easier.

PRA Secenario:

Pwani Village, Njoro Division, Nakuru District, Kenya

For Pwani, the PRA set-up team included two water officers assigned to the area and two Egerton University lecturers. In other situations, the advance group may be only two people, one of whom should be a technical officer already assigned to the area. The first step for clearance was a letter to the District Commissioner (DC) for Nakuru, explaining the intent of the PRA and the expected outcomes. Following approval, the next step was to meet with the Division Officer (DO) for Njoro. This began with a personal visit, followed by a letter similar to the one already sent to the DC. Further, the DC had briefed the DO so there was a positive administrative environment for the village work.

From the DO, the set-up team went to the Chief of Lare Location and the Assistant Chief for Naishi Sublocation within which Pwani lies. The Chief learned the details of PRA, what it would do for the community of Pwani, what would be expected of him during the course of the eight days of data collection in the village, what the assessment might do in terms of longer range follow-up for the community, and the degree to which the PRA process would build upon and reinforce programs already underway in Pwani.

The Team established a fundamental point with the Chief, to be reiterated at several stages over the set up. A brief digression will help those who will be organizing PRAs in new regions and communities throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

PRA does not bring money. Unfortunately, in many developing countries, the arrival of "visitors" has created assumptions among local village leaders that outsiders visit villages or study the community because they are bringing money. Villagers have acquired skills to anticipate the nuances of such visits and respond with carefully reasoned priorities -- water projects for the water engineer; tree nurseries for the forestry NGOs; and school roofs for the education authorities. Yet these projects are rarely sustainable because they are fitting into the "agency"



PRA Scenario (cont)

agenda rather than finding common ground between local priorities and agency mandates. So strong is the "development tourism" lesson that explicit and repeated mention is required to stress that PRA brings an approach to mobilize communities, not a package of money.

The Naishi Assistant Chief agreed that it was best to bring skills rather than money and commended the set-up team on the approach. He further added that he would support such an approach and, if it worked well for Pwani, encourage it for other villages in his Sublocation.

The set-up team then traveled to Pwani, with the blessings of the Chief. Here meetings were organized with village elders and senior administrative staff in the village including the KANU representative, the elected Councillor for the village, church leaders, women's group leaders, and others. It is important to stress again that PRA works with both formal and informal village leaders. The nature of PRA was presented, using the short booklet, "Introduction to PRA for Rural Resources Management." The brief and visual nature of the booklet helped the local leaders to understand the PRA process, from beginning to end.

The set-up team carefully discussed what would be expected of the community leadership to make the PRA work. The following items were reviewed. They are mentioned briefly here to give an idea of what the community leadership needs to know and how they should prepare themselves for the appraisal. The agenda included:

An opening meeting

Upwards of 200 or 300 leaders and opinion makers from the community were invited. The meeting is a launching ceremony for PRA and is important as a means to tell villagers what is going on. The Assistant Chief was informed well in advance to set up the meeting and to consult with village leaders as to the best time and place;

PRA carries out assessments and creates Community Action Plans (CAP). These plans derived and managed by those who benefit, offer a sound and practical way to help rural communities to help themselves.

PRA Scenario (cont)

Group discussion clusters for data gathering

PRA collects data from several small groups on topics such as the seasonal calendar, time lines, trend lines, farm sketches, etc. Each has particular needs concerning numbers, composition, place, and theme. Further, each needs to be scheduled well in advance to assure that the varied distribution of participants will be present.

Farm interviews

The Assistant Chief needs to establish a schedule for these interviews, making sure that different ecological sub-zones, social classes, land use systems, and farm sizes in the community are represented. For a community of 300 to 500 households, probably only 6 to 8 farm interviews are needed.

Wrap-up and ranking meetings

Toward the end of the PRA, there will be need for two or even three large village discussions that will incorporate the data coming from PRA and present opportunities for the village to rank both problems and opportunities. A tentative schedule should be set for these as well as an understanding with the Assistant Chief about how many and who might be expected to attend.

Special Meetings

The team alerted Pwani leaders that there would be many informal discussions and interviews throughout the PRA. For example, in Pwani, some of the women members of the PRA team met with small groups of women leaders to talk about

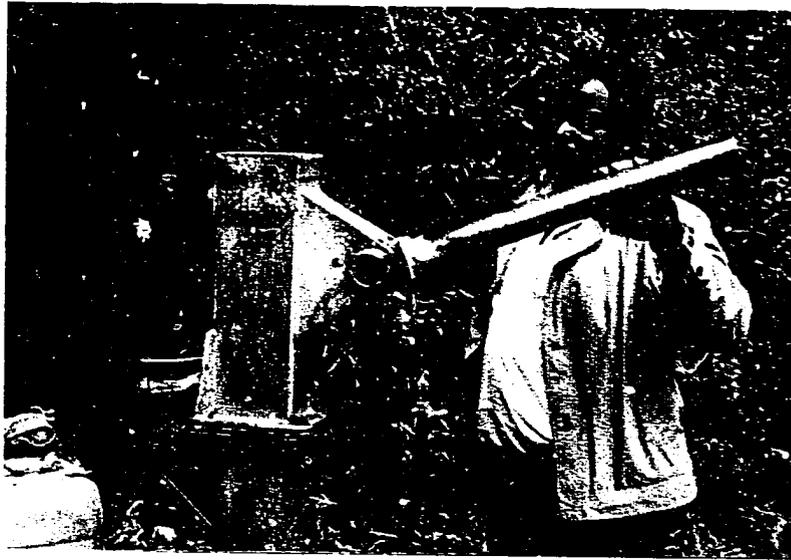
Data inform village residents about the circumstances of their own community as well as help disparate elements within the community know about the perspectives of one another.

PRA Sceneario (cont)

issues unique to women. On another occasion a group met with three elders who had lived in the community since World War I to learn how land had been used during the colonial era.

On still another occasion, a special group met to consider individual water needs, what projects had been tried in the past, and how future water needs might best be met. These special topic discussions are outside of the formal structure of PRA but are perhaps one of the most important elements that PRA can generate.

Once the formal and informal community leadership clearly understand what their roles will be and what to expect, it is time to start gathering data.



3 Data Gathering

Setting Data Needs

PRA is capable of collecting large amounts of data. The *PRA Handbook* describes some community-based data collection methods; a recent publication describing the use of PRA in India presents additional data collection methodologies.⁴ Before embarking on detailed data gathering, it is helpful to discuss why the data are to be gathered and what will be done with the resulting information. There are two different styles of PRA with two different data approaches.

Sectoral PRAs

For those carrying out sectoral PRAs, it will be important to identify, ahead of time, what that agenda is

Our village has many needs. Some of them -- how to use new fertilizers, planting new crops, or digging moisture pits for bananas -- can be solved by individual farmers. But our bigger problems -- soil erosion, scarce firewood, water drying up -- require cooperation among many families. We have often tried to bring 30 or 40 volunteers to build a new well or dig a cut-off drain to slow water runoff. It didn't work. After we used PRA to choose our most severe problem (soil loss), we have had 100 people or more come every Wednesday to dig bench terraces.

Leader, Women's Group

(eg, health, food security, etc.) and to gather information accordingly. For example, in the case of a PRA concerned with food security, there may be very particular information which the team wants to learn through PRA. Themes of farm size, gender roles, mix of cash and food crops, credit availability, seasonal food supplies, or food storage are directly relevant to the task and should be included in one or another of the PRA data gathering exercises. It may be that meetings between village

⁴Kabutha, Charity, Barbara Thomas-Slayter and Richard Ford. *Participatory Rural Appraisal Handbook*. WRI, NES, Egerton, and Clark, 1990; and Mascarenhas, James et.al. "Participatory Rural Appraisal: Proceedings of the February 1991 Bangalore PRA Trainers Workshop." *RRi Notes Number 13*, August, 1991. Published by IIED.

leadership and the PRA team will help to review these issues and what types of information can best be gathered with particular techniques.

Open Ended PRAs

In the case of more open ended PRAs, there may be interest in delimiting data needs at the very early stages of the PRA. For example, in some PRAs carried out in Njoro Division, the PRA team first undertook a regional

reconnaissance to gain a preliminary sense of problems that prevailed in different parts of the division and what data might be most helpful in responding to these problems. Further, the preliminary review for either the sectoral PRA or the open ended versions will help to guide the team as it looks at secondary literature and previously gathered information about the area.

Once data needs are clearly defined, it is time to begin data collection.⁵

PRA differs from most data gathering exercises in that it gathers information primarily for community residents to use to prepare a Community Action Plan for their own community.

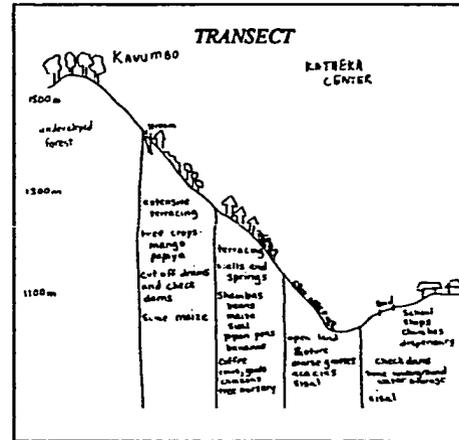


⁵See PRA Handbook for greater detail.

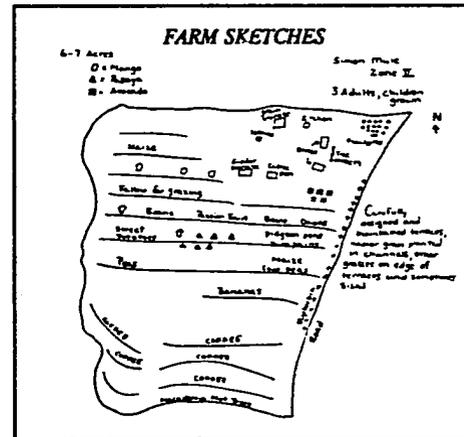
Data Collection: Spatial Data



A village **SKETCH MAP** is compiled in cooperation with village leaders to identify physical and economic details and to locate the community's infrastructure.



The PRA Team prepares a village **TRANSECT**, in cooperation with residents, to identify types of land use, problems, and opportunities to solve problems. The transect also helps the team to determine whether there are sub-zones within the community that require special consideration.

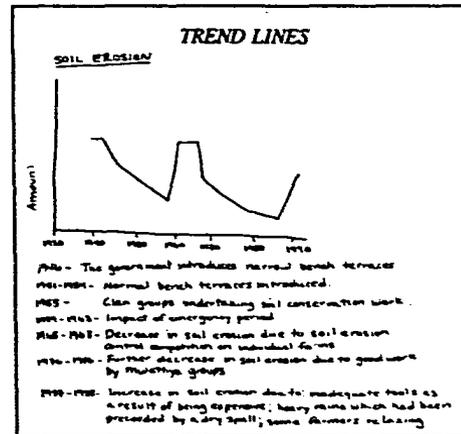


FARM SKETCHES are organized for a representative sample of households in the community. Six to eight farms are identified, with attention to include examples of the variety of ecological, income, land use, and ethnic variation present in the community. PRA Team members prepare sketches by walking around the farm with household heads.

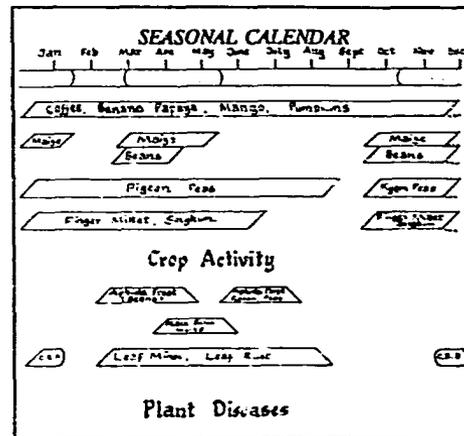
Data Collection: Time Related Data

TIME LINE	
DATE	EVENTS
1834	Tanganyika Famine
1880	Ya Aina
1881	Norobanga
1882	Mwera
1883	Ndala
1895	Lyumbe (disease)
1897	Lyumbe outbreak
1898	Lyumbe/Myiyea Famine; Myiyea/mbaka /kikuyu disease
1898-1900	Migration of Mumbwa-Kangunda
1899	Railway line at Kanga
1902-1910	Some immigration from Mwanzi; Chief Mwakeltha
1910	Ndala in Lyumbe
1910-1911	Mwera ya ndala (malaria) Famine
1912-1914	Money introduced
1914-1915	Destocking by white man - mwaha
1916-1918	Men carried to war
1918-1919	Compulsory school
1919	Dysentery
1919-1919	Epidemic lung disease of domestic animals - mungu ya
1920-1929	Mzalikungye Famine
1930-1931	LOCUSTS
1931	Kuthuu Kikuyuni; fencing with esia!
1934-1940	Mwaha Mbingu forced destocking
1938-1945	World War II
1942	Munyeloko Famine - enforced conservation measures
1943-1945	Mwaha
1944-1951	Dams Started
1950	Mwaha ya Kanga/Mwaha ya Mwaha
1950-1951	Drought after floods; forced destocking

The PRA Team meets with residents to discuss what they consider to be the most important events in the community's past and prepare a TIME LINE. Data are gathered in group meetings which include community residents from different backgrounds and perspectives, including young and old and men and women. Problems and opportunities are discussed.



TREND LINES are developed, based on village perspectives, of a thirty or forty year pattern of changes in resource issues such as rainfall, crop production, soil loss, deforestation, health, population, and other topics of concern to the community. The PRA Team organizes groups of residents and leaders for this exercise.

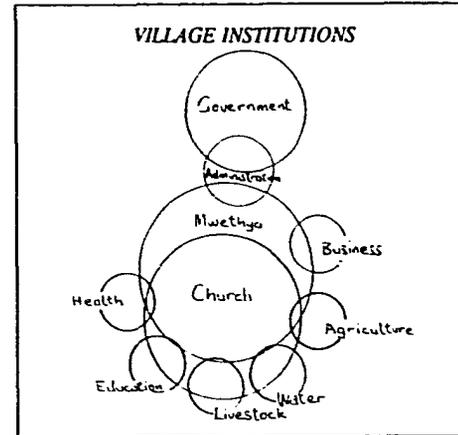


The PRA Team organizes a SEASONAL CALENDAR, using group meetings similar to those for the time line and trend analyses. Data on topics such as land use, hunger, disease, food surplus, and cash availability are organized and entered into a time scale of 12 to 18 months. The seasonal calendar also helps to record village views of problems and opportunities.

Data Collection: Social Data

FARM INTERVIEWS	
<i>This Household Data Form is to be completed for each interview and submitted to Cheryll at the end of the day. It records basic household data. The remaining information is to be collected at Field Home, using the categories described in the Questionnaire Guidelines.</i>	
Name _____	Position in Household _____ Zone _____
Male _____ Female _____	Age _____ Marital Status _____
Highest level of education attained (f. Husband and wife):	
husband _____	wife _____
Place of origin of: Parents and grandparents	
How many children have been born to you?	
How many children are living?	
How many children are living with you on the farm?	
How many people are living on the farm?	
Does anyone in this family have a job outside Kyvalaki?	
Do they help sometimes with such things as school fees or money for fertilizer?	

Individual **FARM INTERVIEWS** are carried out at those households where sketches are compiled. Details of the sample will vary, depending on the goals of the exercise, but normally will be the same as the farm sketches. Generally interviews last about one to one and one half hours and serve to confirm that the information coming from group meetings is a valid representation of the community's condition.



The PRA Team also gathers data about **VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS**. Groups of residents are asked to rank community institutions in order of importance and to construct diagrams that indicate the relationships between and among different community groups.



Data Collection: Technical Data

Economic and Technical Feasibility

*National Environment Secretariat/Egerton University
Clark University*

(June 1989)

Opportunity	Nature	Site	Potential for Development
ZONE I			
Kathome Dam	Dry		Seek alternative site as dam; doesn't hold water after rains. There may be a broken rock fissure.
Kwa Kathuli Primary School	Seasonal	School	Roof catchment may serve the school and neighbors and also serve as an example.
Kwa Makalya Spring	Seasonal		Presently broken. Rehabilitation by digging, remove the eucalyptus trees from site. Deepen the well. Protect by fencing.
Muu River	Partially seasonal; bilharzia low; population high		Build a dam and river intake. River will feed downstream users by gravity. Protect by fencing.
Kwa Nzambu Dam/Pan	Semi-permanent; good water		Needs protection. Conserve catchment area.
Kithunthi Well	Permanent; good water; Catholic Church aided in 1987		Protect by fencing. Install pump that is already purchased. Repair cover.

In addition to the time, spatial, and social data, technical officers on the PRA Team assemble information on **ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY**, i.e. water or soils, needed to help villagers rank preferences for project activity.

Credit: *PRA Handbook*, p.53

4 Problem Analysis and Setting Priorities for Solutions

Problem solving requires intense discussion. Rural residents are well aware of the causes of their problems and what solutions may and may not work. PRA asks residents about their problems and possible solutions throughout the data collection. Perhaps the most important part of the PRA transaction is the community discussion of these tentative solutions. Residents

will know what solutions have been tried in the past and whether or not they worked. They will have a good sense of what things they are able and prepared to do to implement the solutions. But they will not necessarily have a good background in some of the technical and managerial elements to implement these solutions. That is why it is important for the PRA team to include NGO or extension staff with experience in some of the technical elements in, for example, health. In this way,

We know all about health workers coming to our shambas (farms) to tell us to have our children get jabs for different diseases. We already knew that our children would be better if they received these shots. What the health people never understood was that we mothers are busy and have little time to take our children to the clinic. PRA has helped us explain to the health people that the location and hours of the clinic make a big difference to our children's health.

Mother in PRA community

the local information and community energy from the village can be integrated with the technical and managerial know how of the outside agents. The degree to which some of the solutions will meet root causes of the problems, as opposed to symptoms, will depend on the depth and detail of the analysis that takes place at this stage. Further, the effectiveness of implementation will depend on the validity of the problem analysis and proposed solutions.

There are many techniques for ranking. This booklet is not designed to offer all the possibilities. The most effective tool that PRA has utilized for ranking problems is pair-wise ranking.

More information on ranking can be found in the PRA Handbook, *RRA Notes* published by IIED in London, and IIED publications by G. Conway, J. McCracken, R. Chambers, and J. Pretty.

PROBLEMS	CLIMATE	PESTS	WEEDS	COST OF INPUTS	LACK OF LAND	LACK OF IRRIG.	LACK OF TECH.K.
CLIMATE		CLIMATE	CLIMATE	COST OF INPUTS	CLIMATE	CLIMATE	CLIMATE
PESTS			PESTS	COST OF INPUTS	LACK OF LAND	LACK OF IRRIG.	PESTS
WEEDS				COST OF INPUTS	LACK OF LAND	LACK OF IRRIG.	WEEDS
COST OF INPUTS					COST OF INPUTS	COST OF INPUTS	COST OF INPUTS
LACK OF LAND						LACK OF LAND	LACK OF LAND
LACK OF IRRIGATION							LACK OF IRRIG.
LACK OF TECH. KNOWHOW							

PRA rests on the assumption that the single greatest data store for dealing with local problems rests with the community itself.

PROBLEMS	NUMBER OF TIMES PREFERRED	RANK
CLIMATE	5	2
PESTS	2	5
WEEDS	1	6
COST OF INPUTS	6	1
LACK OF LAND	4	3
LACK OF IRRIGATION	3	4
LACK OF TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE	0	7

PAIR-WISE RANKING

To prepare a pair-wise ranking of opportunities (or problems) use the sample ranking table as a model. Prepare separate exercises for the set of options for the most important 3 to 5 problems. The options for each problem are listed on the top and left side of the matrix. Each open square represents a paired comparison of the points listed at the top and extreme left. For each comparison, ask the group which option is more likely and why. Record the most likely option in the square and develop a list of reasons for the selections. When the chart is completed, add up the number of times each item was identified as more important than the rest, and arrange them in appropriate order. Repeat the exercise for the other major problems and options.

Credit: PRA Handbook, p.64

Setting the Plan

The next step focusses on what a community can do about its most severe problems. PRA incorporates a number of exercises that rank possible solutions. The process of open discussions and ranking of these responses elicits both consensus as well as longer term community ownership of the solutions.

To some, the thought of a "plan" implies a tightly structured blueprint that must be followed. The PRA plans are quite different. They suggest goals, materials needed to meet these goals, and groups in the community to do the work -- all initiated by the community, for the community

BEST BET OR INNOVATION	PRODUCTIVITY	STABILITY	SUSTAINABILITY	EQUITABILITY	TIME TO BENEFIT	COST	TECHNICAL SOCIAL FEASIBILITY	PRIORITY
BOREHOLES	?	0	-	0	3	3	3	6
ROOF CATCHMENT	+	+	++	+	1	1	2	3
NATURAL SPRINGS	+	+	+	++	1	2	2	
REHABILITATE DAMS	++	+	++	++	1	2	2	
SHALLOW WELLS	+	+	++	0	2	1	2	
NEW SURFACE DAMS	++	+	++	++	1	2	2	

OPTIONS ASSESSMENT CHART

KEY

?	UNKNOWN
-	NEGATIVE IMPACT
0	NO IMPACT
+	POSITIVE IMPACT
++	VERY POSITIVE IMPACT

	TIME	COST	FEASIBILITY
3	LONG	HIGH	LOW
2	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
1	SHORT	LOW	HIGH

Credit: PRA Handbook, p. 65

WATER: Zone I			
Source: By Priority	Estimated Requirements	Committee Responsibility	Estimated Time
Kathome Primary School Roof Catchment	1. Ballast (21 tons)	1. Community	Group will work on a weekly basis, using parent volunteers; will start week of 20 June 1989.
	2. Sand (28 tons)	2. Community	
	3. Building Stone (1750 running ft)	3. External	
	4. Cement (150 bgs)	4. External	
	5. Waterproof Cement (50 kilos)	5. External	
	6. Gutter (200m)	6. External	
	7. Facia Board (200 ft)	7. Community	
	8. Round Bars (1200m)	8. External	
	9. Timber (6x1 @ 1000 ft; 3x2 @ 600 ft)	9. External	
	10. Unskilled Labour	10. Community	
	11. Skilled Labour (30 days)	11. MOWD	
Kithunthi Primary School Roof Catchment	1. Ballast (21 tons)	1. Community	Group will work on a weekly basis, using parent volunteers; will start immediately.
	2. Sand (28 tons)	2. Community	
	3. Building Stone (1750 running ft)	3. External	
	4. Cement (150 bgs)	4. External	
	5. Waterproof Cement (50 kilos)	5. External	
	6. Gutter (200m)	6. External	
	7. Facia Board (200 ft)	7. Community	
	8. Round Bars (1200m)	8. External	
	9. Timber (6x1 @ 1000 ft; 3x2 @ 600 ft)	9. External	
	10. Unskilled Labour	10. Community	
	11. Skilled Labour (30 days)	11. MOWD	
Kwa Nzambu Dam Rehabilitation	1. Posts and Wire	1. External	Deferred until site in public trust.
	2. Terracing	2. Community	
	3. Afforestation	3. Community	

Plans are the people's views and interpretations of what is needed, linked to the technical information that NGO or extension people have added.

Credit: *PRA Handbook*, p.73

Communities have implemented CAPs with an amazing degree of vigor. We have yet to find a community that has not implemented upwards of half of the plan and several have not only completed the initial plan but have continued in both formal and informal ways to extend far beyond the original targets.

Even so, plans, by themselves, are not development. The CAP is simply a guideline or disciplining device to enable community institutions to focus energies, coordinate work, raise money, and gain attention from potential external sources for assistance. A number of examples already completed appear on the next page.

In several cases, communities have altered their PRA plans because they learned some things part way into the process. For example:

In one village a reservoir was to be rebuilt. The plan called for a well to be constructed on the down side of the dam. That turned out to be much more expensive than digging a well near the spillway of the dam and diverting the overflow water into the well surround.

In another case, a new gravity-fed irrigation system was producing abundant harvests but farmers could not sell their crops. The plan was changed to include an element for marketing produce.

In still another case, a posho mill was going to be installed in a large market where most of the women took their maize for grinding. Closer reviews found that a smaller neighborhood market would support the mill if all of the women near the small market would use the new location. A change was made and the new location is working well after 18 months of operation.

The PRA plans are a series of working agreements that the village makes with itself. They are not rigid and non-negotiable contracts. Ideally, community groups will learn a great deal in the process of implementing a plan.

CAPs in Action

... a village has raised money to start a paraffin (kerosene) depot, using the example of cooperation on a water project to show that they are a responsible and efficient group;

... a cluster of three villages has now increased income for most farmers through a new vegetable marketing plan that PRA helped to organize;

... eight sublocations have organized community resource management plans and received training in village resources management techniques as well as organizational management;

... an NGO is working with more than a dozen villages, using PRA to implement spring (water source) protection, roof catchment tanks, hand dug wells, and health education. The focus is on both the

products which the village groups produce as well as the process through which community institutions are strengthened;

... an international agency is using PRA to improve health through identifying target groups for training: Community Leadership Training; Community Health Workers; Traditional Birth Attendants; Training of Trainers -- as well as to organize village water management committees and groups for village fisheries development;

... a village has stabilized two small water catchments through mobilizing its own labor and then attracting outside money to desilt the reservoir itself. The united action of the community groups including, organizing data, setting a plan, and starting the work attracted the outside funds.

5 Building Community Support and Capacities

Our village reservoir had become badly silted. We tried to have extension officers, NGOs, or the DDC help. But they would not listen. They told us there were hundreds of similar problems throughout the district. With PRA, we adopted a plan to rehabilitate the reservoir ourselves. Once we started our work, several NGOs became interested. A UN agency came for a visit and we wrote a proposal for them, with the help of the PRA Team. Within six months we had received a grant from the UN to hire a tractor to scoop the silt. The UN helped because the CAP showed we were serious about solving our water problem.

Village Elder, the "Minister of Water" for his community

Implementing CAPs

Once the PRA plan is adopted, attention shifts to implementation. Village committees and collaborative relationships among local institutions are by far the most effective way to get action started.

A small group or committee in the community will have to take the first step, possibly working with an NGO

or local extension officer. The committee may have to work alone, at least for the early stages. No single leader can implement PRA by her or himself. Successful villages are those that have enlisted a broad base of support from within the community and have used this strong internal support to reach out for external assistance. There are several options.

Mobilizing Internal Support

Activating an Existing Committee

If there is already an active committee responsible for some type of development, self help, or community improvement, adapt its structure to implement the CAP. An example of the membership of a sublocation development committee from Kyevaluki (Machakos) indicates how one existing committee has been used. When it comes time for the actual work in Kyevaluki, different

subgroups of the Sublocation Development Committee (SLDC) take charge. For example, several schools built water catchment tanks. The school headmasters helped organize parent groups. In another case in Kyevaluki, a tree nursery was the goal and some of the women on the SLDC joined together to form a sub-group that worked with the forest extension officer.

Membership in Kyevaluki Sublocation Development Committee (SLDC)

Assistant Chief, Chair SLDC.

Secretary, SLDC, Headmaster, Kamwanyani Primary School

Vice Secretary, SLDC

Headmaster, Kyevaluki Primary School

Chairman, Kyevaluki Primary School

Treasurer, Kyevaluki Primary School

Chairman, Kamwanyani Primary School

Chairman, Kiomo Primary School

Chairman, Kilindiloni Primary School

Head, Kilindiloni Primary School

Headmaster, Kiomo Primary School

Chairman, Kathome Primary School

Head, Kwakathuli Primary School

Chairman, Kwakathuli Primary School

Head, Kithunthi Primary School

Chairman, Kithunthi Primary School

Ex-Assistant Chief

Church Leader

Church Leader

Kyevaluki Secondary School

Headmaster, Kyevaluki Secondary School

Family Planning Officer I

Family Planning Officer II

KANU Secretary

KANU Chairman, Kyevaluki

Manager, Kyevaluki Village Polytechnic

Agriculture Officer

Veterinary Officer

Farmer

Kakutha Village Elder

Kiu Village Elder

Kamwanyani Village Elder

Nthwake Village Elder

Kathome Village Elder

Kyevaluki Village Elder

Ngolyau Village Elder

Kithunthi Village Elder

KANU Maendeleo ya Wanawake Chairlady,

(Kyevaluki Mwethya Self-Help Groups)

Forming a New Committee

If the village lacks well organized groups, it may be necessary to start a new SLDC. Assemble village opinion makers and talk about how to do it. Use the CAP as the occasion for getting organized. Determine who should be represented and how to hold elections. There are many examples of how these elections can be held. The CDA will then be able to help register the group.

For example, in one community, there were several active organizations in different parts of the sublocation. But they had never worked together on community-wide projects. As a result, there were a few small efforts underway but nothing that would benefit large numbers in the community. The PRA experience helped the group to form a new sublocation committee, in this case, for water.

The committee consisted of five people from the village -- the Assistant Chief, two women's group leaders, the Chair of the local Farm Cooperative, and one village elder. Technical officers in health and water made a total of seven members. The committee used a bank account that was opened originally for a tree nursery project. The tree project had concluded, but the bank account continued and the three signatories for the account were members of the women's groups now working on water. Adapting a bit of the old and linking it to the new has worked well.

Committee Membership

Whether the PRA implementation group is an old or new committee it is important that many different community points of view are represented. Women are among the most active resource managers and producers in most villages. Poor families have a great deal at stake in sustaining village health, water, soils, and trees. Church groups and cooperatives and schools and women's groups are vital in a village. They all need to be represented.

If all of these interests are included in the committee, there will be thirty or forty members -- too many for effective action. So the large committee needs to create sub-committees for action. Some organize by sectors - water, health, agriculture. Others organize sub-committees by sub-zones such as village units, school zone areas, or groups served by a water point. The point of having a committee is to represent community interests while at the same time having small working groups that will actually go out and organize projects.

Reporting back to the main committee and to the village community as a whole is important. In one case, the subcommittee for health (consisting of 16 members) meets once a week -- often on Mondays -- and reports back to the entire village every Thursday. This way, community residents who want to know what is going on can come to the Thursday general meeting and find out.

Implementation Needs

Once the groups in the community have agreed to start implementation and the committees are in place, there is need to set a specific schedule and to assign actual duties. While work and tasks will vary, depending on the project at hand, generally there are four sets of needs for village implementation. These include:

NEED 1: Sound Technical Advice

Before implementing water, soil, forestry, marketing, livestock, or agricultural projects, it is mandatory to get good technical help. There are many groups and organizations available to provide such help. In addition to these, there are horticulture marketing units, handcraft marketing guides, small project management assistance, church agencies, cooperative societies and much more. Use these technical aides to make sure that the basic design in, for example, a water project, will serve the community's needs and be technically sustainable.

A short digression will help. PRA relies on knowledge and skills of rural residents to get things started. But PRA is also deeply committed to stretch options for rural resource managers. A forester, either government or NGO, may be able to offer several suggestions about how to start a nursery. So the technical advice is an important step both to assume technical soundness as well as to increase options

NEED 2: Materials

Almost every village project will require some type of material ranging from locally available items (gravel or fence posts) to local purchase (cement or hand tools) to more complex technologies (pumps, oil presses, or grain milling machines). In each case, project committees need to work with technical officers to decide what materials will be needed and how to get them. Men and women leaders in the village must be involved to make sure there is good support in the community for the project.

Experience in several communities indicates that PRA actually increases the quantity and availability of materials. In one instance, the division agriculture officer was able to get tools from the Ministry because of a PRA village plan. In another situation, a water engineer made a pump available that was left over from an earlier project. In a third community, building stone that was collected for an unsuccessful project was turned over to a water tank enterprise. In all three of these examples, the materials or tools were sitting idle and probably would have continued to languish. They are provided at no cost to the community. The PRA plan gave focus and purpose to using them in the community project. To this extent, PRA has been effective in utilizing unused or underutilized resources.

NEED 3: Labor

Most communities have abundant supplies of labor during certain times of the year or month. Good management and group leadership can find out when village labor is available and who is prepared to work. Looking back at the PRA Seasonal Calendar will also help to set schedules for work groups.

The most important thing a village leader can do to start implementing a CAP is to hold several meetings to decide who will work and how the necessary technical advice and labor will be obtained. There will be different views on how to do these things. If large meetings become unproductive, meet with smaller groups within the community and talk about how to get started. It may be helpful to bring back one or two members of the original PRA team. If there is a PRA community nearby, ask for one or two of the leaders to come and talk about how they mobilized work groups in their community.

The purpose of starting with the internal community groups first is to find out how much support will be available from community groups. It will also reveal what kind of outside help will be needed.

One suggestion to strengthen community groups lies in training. Use the PRA activities to focus on the very specific skills that will be required. Determine if there are community residents already able to do these tasks and get their help. You can also use these residents to train others "on the job." PRA has expanded villagers skills in terracing, tree management, masonry, and project management.

If skilled people are not available in the village, work with extension or NGO officers to find them. Negotiate for a short course to provide training, for example record keeping, community mobilization, soil management, posho mill operation, etc. The training should increase community self-sufficiencies.

NEED 4: Administrative Backing

On one hand, PRA relies on the energy and commitment of local institutions. On the other, it is essential that administrative officials are informed about and support the enterprise. Earlier chapters have stressed need for administrative clearances and approvals. Such backing is fundamental for successful implementation of a Community Action Plan.



6 Dealing With Internal Problems

Do we have problems? The Assistant Chief rolled his eyes. Then he smiled. Yes, he mused, we have had many problems implementing our PRA Plans. But our committee does not give up. When people do not come to meetings we send messengers to get them. When we have difficulty raising money, we try harder. And when we cannot get the technical officers to come, we send a small delegation from the committee and bring the officer, frequently paying his matatu (bush taxi) fare. Yes, we have had many problems. But we work together until we solve them.

Assistant Chief

If the first few chapters imply that PRA has had no problems, the impression is false. PRA is no miracle cure. It is an analytical tool that is as strong as the person or organization using it. A review of some of PRA's problems and how leaders have dealt with them may be

helpful. While there will undoubtedly be new and unexpected difficulties in the time ahead, the examples of problems actually experienced will suggest at least the types of frustrations that village leaders have encountered thus far.

One frustration has been a time lag between completion of the PRA design and ability to start actual work. If the CAP depends on outside help, it may take several months to get funds and start project activity. For example, in one instance an external agency agreed to match funds for reservoir rehabilitation. Yet it took over 18 months to get the paperwork sorted out for that agency. In another instance, a technical officer agreed to provide skilled labor and then found that his budget for technicians had been canceled for that year and that a delay of 12 months would be required. In still another example, two technicians worked for three months without being paid because of delays in funding approval. They continued working anyway and eventually were paid. But there was a possibility that they would work and not be paid.

Another problem relates to scope of activity. Some groups have tried to start with large and complex projects involving several sectors. In these cases, there have been many discussions and meetings before project activity could begin. As a result, some energy and momentum was lost while the meetings continued. As an alternative, some PRA groups have decided to start with easy projects, at least for the first time or two, and then to move to increasingly more complex issues. Having

success with an easy project builds support and enthusiasm to tackle more complex efforts at a later date.

Still another problem is the funding itself. Those projects that seem to work best are those which rely least on external funds. While PRA recognizes that most of the labor and materials come from within the community, some outside help is probably necessary. To reconcile the balance between inside and outside support is a critical issue.

While there are no simple answers to these or related problems in village-based development, PRA is building a base of experiences that suggest that: (1) local solutions are frequently possible though not always obvious; (2) the solutions become available as a result of the very dialogue and communication that PRA promotes among different elements inside and outside of the community; and, (3) there are often many agencies already on-line with different types of assistance to offer though communities do not always know about these agencies. With these points in mind, three case examples are offered describing how PRA helped communities to solve some problems. In future editions of handbooks such as this, it might be helpful to expand this section with many more examples. Please send us your experiences.

EXAMPLE PROBLEM 1: Sand Scoopers

The Problem:

In one community, there had been difficulty with sand scoopers for several years. Lorries would come in the night and drive to the riverbeds to collect sand. In many cases, they went directly to the areas where volunteer women's groups had built check dams and gabions for soil and water conservation.

The lorry drivers would make arrangements with some of the unemployed youth in the community to meet at the rivers, at 2:00 am. The youths – mostly Fourth Form Leavers – would shovel sand into the vehicle in exchange for about fifty shillings each (between \$2.00 and \$2.50). The money was more than they could earn anywhere else in the village; for the lorry drivers, it was small pay for the seven tons of sand that they would sell in Nairobi the following day for two thousand or more shillings (between \$80.00 and \$100.00).

When women's groups would get together to build more dams or repair the roads, frequently the young men who did sand scooping by night would walk by and make derogatory comments about the women. These were village youths. A generation earlier, village social controls would have made such disrespect from the young people punishable with severe sanctions. But by the 1990s, young people were saying and doing many things not tolerated twenty years ago.

The Solution:

The Assistant Chief and other interested parties helped some of the teenagers organize a rock and roll band – The All Star Rock Band. Funds were saved and, in cooperation with money the boys had earned (maybe from sandscooping), they bought two or three guitars and started the band. As the All Stars became better known, they

Sand Scoopers (cont)

obtained work at weddings and parties in nearby villages, and earned some money. The members of the band also started working on soil erosion control -- as volunteers -- as a means of becoming part of the larger village effort to increase water and agricultural output.

The lesson learned is that the perceived problem -- undisciplined teenagers -- in implementing the PRA became part of the solution because village leaders were able to harness and focus the energy of the young people. While some youths still worked for the sandscoopers, at least ten decided they would be happier as All Stars and helping with soil control.

Tips to Make PRA Work Better: Lessons from the Field

... during project identification, the PRA team should try to use visual aids whenever possible. The exercises for data collection shown on pages 23 - 30 of this handbook offer some examples. It is also helpful to have pictures of different kinds of water projects or cropping practices or bench terraces to focus group discussion with specific example;

... the PRA team needs to place special attention on listening to women. Sustainability is a factor of how strongly individual people feel ownership for a project idea. If women's groups participate actively in the design and planning, they are more likely to help to sustain the ideas and actions;

... remember that communities want to know how they are doing in implementing PRA plans. Think about using the PRA to gather baseline data on the status of water, soil, food production, nutrition, and employment. They can check a year later on how they are doing to implement their Community Action Plan. The possibility of villages monitoring their own progress is an important dimension of PRA;

... keep in mind when NGOs participate in PRA planning there may be a bias toward the specialization of that NGO -- eg. water or health. Be aware that village groups know about these specializations and may steer discussions toward what they think the NGO wants to hear;

... when implementation is about to begin, think through what kinds of training different members of the community will need -- technical skills, management skills, financial skills -- and have the community identify people who would be good candidates for training;

... some groups have found that using PRA at a sublocation level is fine for the analysis. But they have learned that when it comes to implementation, the plans should be constructed at a village level or sometimes even at smaller levels such as hamlets or local clusters of households. PRA offers such flexibility for implementation in that the CAPs can be prepared at whatever level communities think will work.

EXAMPLE PROBLEM 2: A Controversial Chief

The Problem:

In carrying out a PRA in one community, the team became aware that most people in the villages did not trust the Assistant Chief. There had been some money problems earlier and a strong factional schism developed within the community, with the Assistant Chief at the core of the problem. The PRA team learned during the data collection (the two exercises that brought the information forward were the trend lines and the institutional analysis) that there was bad feeling within the village and that many earlier projects had failed because of deeply held animosity.

The Solution:

One option was to abandon the PRA and write it off to bad luck for that village. Instead, the PRA team talked through different management models with the informal and formal leaders of the sublocation. The group decided that the best way to set up a plan -- in this case for water development, soil renewal, a tree nursery, and agricultural demonstration plots -- was to organize a strong committee with the Assistant Chief as advisor. Actual action was initiated by the division water engineer for water collection and by the leaders of the women's groups in the case of the soil conservation and tree nurseries. The Assistant Chief was part of the action, but he was not in charge of any money or any work assignments. PRA was able to decentralize the plan. Using this plan, the potential conflict between the Assistant Chief and the community has been totally avoided and the projects have moved forward essentially on schedule.

The lesson learned is that previous failure does not guarantee future failures. Analysis carried out through PRA can achieve understanding of previous failure and put new management models in place.

EXAMPLE PROBLEM 3: Water and Posho Mills Don't Mix

The Problem:

A sublocation completed its PRA plan with several different water options as their highest priority. Within a few weeks, they had gathered materials and organized labor to dig a well at the bottom of a long ravine where spring water often appeared in the wet season. The Ministry of Water Development agreed to provide cement rings to line the well and cement to build a facing to protect the water source.

Seven different women's groups cooperated to organize the project. Several men came when it was time to do the actual digging. The entire project was completed in about three months. The project was so well designed and implemented that no pump was needed as water ran out of a half inch pipe installed near the top of the cement rings.

Success with the well brought interest in new action -- beyond the PRA plan. One women's group proposed a petrol-powered posho mill (maize mill) to grind grain and earn money for the women's groups. While five of the seven groups agreed, two did not. The location was a long walk for members of the two dissenting groups. They wanted the mill closer to their homes.

The Solution:

The women's groups met endlessly and tried to work out a compromise. Even though they had worked effectively together to install the well, they were unable to reach agreement about the posho mill. Eventually, five of the groups broke off and established their own posho mill unit. They organized fund raising and wrote proposals for external help. After about 9 months of fundraising, they had enough money to pay for about 2/3 of the posho mill. The Nairobi dealer agreed to make a loan for the final third, with the mill itself serving as collateral.

Water and Posho Mills (cont)

The women bought the mill and have been paying off the loan with the profits coming in from the grinding. There have been some problems. The drive belts have been breaking more rapidly than they should, perhaps because the alignment of the machine is not quite right. One mill operator was doing some grinding for personal customers and either not charging or pocketing the money for his own profit. And there have been some disputes between the different women's group as to who is putting in more time for management versus who is deriving the profit and how it is divided among the cooperating groups. Even with all of these problems, the women's groups are learning a great deal and, at the moment, running a successful posho mill.

The lesson learned is that there may be some projects for which several groups can cooperate but that the record of achievement for one effort does not automatically mean that the same group will cooperate for a second and different project activity.

Citing examples of problems suggests that implementing PRA will take patience, energy, and hard work. Yet the above cases are typical of the kinds of problems that will arise in dozens of communities. Too often problems of political conflict, strong personalities, changing social values, or cross-generational tensions overwhelm the capacity of fragile community institutions. In these cases where conflict or tension undercut community action, the people and the environment are the losers. While PRA does not bring answers or solutions, it does contribute a process of dialogue which opens village problems for a wider clientele and encourages larger numbers of community members to participate. PRA assumes that increased participation brings about higher levels of ownership. Expanded ownership yields increased community commitment and support. The community backing becomes an essential element in sustaining the enterprises.



7 Increasing Effectiveness of Community Groups

Rural communities abound with opportunities to increase production and improve natural resource conservation. Several examples have already come to light, through PRA, in which village discussions, planning, and implementation have established common ground to bring together different elements within the community. While there are many different types of village institution that can be strengthened, four come immediately to mind. They include: retired professionals who have returned to their "home" villages; interface with extension officers; elders; and young adults, both male and female. In very different ways, each of these groups has considerable potential to contribute, a potential that is not always realized. A few case examples illustrate the

My village has untold wealth in its old people. They know about the health of their animals, planting times for crops, medicines from the forest, and when it is going to rain. Some of them also know about government procedures because they used to work there. We need to find ways to call on the wisdom of our elderly, just as they did a generation ago.

Kenyan University Professor

point. They may compel others to think of additional ways to increase village productivity by strengthening present groups and institutions.

Retired citizens

Many villages in Africa have retired residents who have had some professional or commercial experience

for a portion of their adult lives. In one community in Kenya a retired policeman had become an active force on the village water committee. In another, a retired school teacher helped to write proposals for different self-help project needs -- cement, a posho mill, wire fencing, plastic bags for tree seedlings, hand tools. In a third, a retired clerk for an embassy in Nairobi had become the assistant chief, and in a fourth example, a retired bookkeeper for an insurance company had become secretary for the village development committee. In each case the contributions were considerable as they were able to bring skills of organizing, note taking, writing, managing, supervising, and planning that they learned in their previous jobs. And yet many communities regard their retired residents as excess baggage to support rather than a vital force to help take the lead in launching community development. PRA has helped integrate retirees into village planning and action.

Some examples of the contributions will be helpful. In one case, the retired person took minutes of every meeting of the sublocation development committee. The fact of the minutes made the meetings official and created a sense of importance. The minutes also enabled the group to look back over its previous discussions so that when disagreements developed, they could refer to the minutes to determine precisely what had previously been agreed. The concept of minutes has spread in this particular community so that each women's group now keeps records of the work performance of their group. When they get together to manage a posho mill, dig

bench terraces, or develop a water point, they record how much work was done (ie number of meters of terraces constructed on a particular day). This record makes formal the group's accomplishment and at least for this community brings a sense of dignity and achievement to the groups and to their leaders.

Retirees have helped to write several proposals as they bring skills of organizing and written expression. They often have a broader view of the way outside groups can help. Utilizing the capabilities of these retired residents has made a big difference in the life of these groups. It has enabled the sublocation committee as well as the women's groups to achieve more because of their organizing help.

Extension officers

Technical officers in water, agriculture, forestry, and related sectors generally have good field experience and advice about physical design. Yet most technical officers suffer from two constraints: small budgets for project implementation and unreliable transportation. These constraints hold back capacities of officers to carry out their normal duties and, in some cases, limit field visits to rural communities.

PRA has addressed this problem in several villages. In some cases, the community groups in PRA villages contribute a few shillings to raise a small "technical

officers matatu fund." The cost per family may be one or two shillings (about US \$.10). The result is that technical officers will be reimbursed 40 shillings for their transport costs to come to a village. Once in the village, the previous PRA work will have put plans or at least tentative plans in place and the technical officers can work with village or sublocation committees to take action.

Once the officer visits, there may still be a constraint of insufficient materials. Again, PRA can help. In several cases in Machakos, the technical officers have been able to work closely with women's groups to raise funds for water, forestry and income generation projects. In one case, an NGO has come because of the proposal. In another case, the collaboration resulted in provision of hand tools for a village. And in still another case, materials for water tanks were acquired as a result of technical officers and women's groups working together.

In all three of these cases, project activity was then possible because the technical officer had materials to work with that were previously not available. The officer was able to turn in monthly project reports, noting that new water projects were undertaken. The new funds identified through PRA made such action possible. This situation is one in which everyone wins — the women's group because they have new water sources; the technical officer because he has produced water projects in spite of a minimal budget; the provider

of funds because they were able to "contribute" a water supply to a village at about 1/4 of the actual cost; and the village's natural resource base because soil loss was greatly curtailed as a result of the watershed rehabilitation.

The strength of these groups working together was what made the difference, not the individual performance of any of the elements. PRA brought the groups together.

Young People

Most rural communities have abundant supplies of unemployed young people. While they may aspire to external wage employment, they have potentials to do much in the village. They represent a powerful but generally underutilized resource. One PRA example has already been cited noting how a village teen age rock band turned to soil erosion control. Another previously cited example found young people patrolling the fence of a national park, in exchange for access to water from a borehole inside the park fence.

No easy or simple solutions exist in working with young village residents. The drive for cash income is overwhelming for young people and the opportunities are slim. PRA has had limited success with income generation in some areas by developing marketing plans for cash crops, organizing posho mills, sponsoring

paraffin depots, and initiating handcrafts. But these are preliminary steps in what becomes a much larger set of exercises. The point is that young people are greatly underutilized in rural communities and PRA has worked well to take first steps in income generation. Cash generating activities and rural employment creation may be a productive area for NGOs, CDAs, and technical officers to pursue, using PRA to develop new approaches and applications.

Elders

One often overlooked dimension of a community are the elderly. They represent a knowledge base of the community that is invaluable. A generation ago, the knowledge of these elders would have been called upon and used in vital ways for the well-being and production of the community. In recent years, a feeling has grown that new, western technologies are best. While new

technologies are important and helpful, so is the lore that the older generation brings about medicines, farming practices, pest control measures, food storage technologies, mulching, plowing, and more. PRA creates a setting in which young and old can meet on equal terms in the village and consider the merits of alternative options to solve village problems. Using the criteria of productivity, sustainability, and equitability (see page 29), communities develop decisions in which the wisdom of the elders becomes one important component.

This approach is neither "pro new ways" or "pro old ways" in its conceptualization. Rather, the PRA methodology assumes that many different elements within the community have experience and wisdom to contribute, that PRA can help communities get beyond stratification within the decision making process, and that the full discussion of these alternatives brings ownership that will help local institutions to sustain the interventions.

8 Mobilizing External Support

Most often, a village cannot implement a CAP totally from internal resources. While a few rural groups can manage PRA plans by themselves, most cannot. When looking for external help, villages that have participated in a PRA can present their Community Action Plan to an external agency as proof that they are committed to their development as a community. There is increasing evidence that participation by the project beneficiaries has a positive effect on the implementation and sustainability of that project. As the resources of development agencies working in Africa are directed to other parts of the world, a partnership between external agencies and village resources becomes essential.

Because of its "grassroots" characteristics, PRA is attractive to both governmental and non-governmental

We have needed help on our roads for as long as I can remember. Our PRA identified transport and marketing for our crops as our first needs. Soon after the CAP was in place, we worked out an arrangement with a donor agency to help on the roads. We do the work and gather the ballast; the donor and the County Council share costs of the road grader. Without the PRA, I don't think we would have been able to get all three groups to cooperate.

Village Elder

institutions. It is particularly attractive to NGOs because it sets out a plan of action that has sector specific (eg. water, health, sanitation, etc) components.

Over the course of the Kenya PRAs, at least five models of these outside helpers have emerged. A brief review of this external support provides examples of some of these effective models:

MODEL 1: Local NGOs with Resources

NGOs survive on overhead earned from projects that they manage. They are therefore interested in finding rural communities that are well organized, have their priorities in order, will turn out large numbers of people for community work projects, and will participate in cost sharing. Hence, PRA is ideally suited for NGOs, as both villages and NGOs benefit. Technical advice, management training, monitoring and evaluation, how to write proposals, and bookkeeping are some of the more obvious skills that NGOs provide. A natural partnership can emerge between communities and NGOs.

In one instance, an NGO provided fencing material to help a village take the first step in implementing its CAP. The NGO and village then joined forces to raise money. Funds have since been awarded and considerable work accomplished. The joint village-NGO efforts have worked well in other instances: KWAHO (Kenya Water for Health Organization) served as liaison between Africa 2000 and the village of Mbusyani during its dam rehabilitation and spring protection projects. KWAHO also provided technical assistance. CISS (Community Initiative Support Service) of Kisumu provided technical support to a village in Kisumu during the PRA there. NGO and village alliances have succeeded in many areas including: water, transport, forestry, posho mills, hand tools, school construction, soil contouring, health, and nutrition.

If a PRA community is not working with an NGO, the village development committee might think about finding one. There are church related groups in virtually every part of Kenya as well as many local and international groups. A good bet in Kenya is to make contact with KENGO (Kenya Non-Governmental Organizations) to determine what NGOs might be available to join with community organizations in particular areas. In other countries, there may be an organization such as KENGO which can supply a list of NGOs available.

MODEL 2: International Agencies and NGOs with Resources

Other groups that can help are international NGOs and organizations. For example, CARE Kenya has been using PRA in Western Kenya with good results. Community organizations and CARE have joined forces to identify needs, design plans, and implement action. When funds are needed to support training or materials, CARE works with local committees and develops a cost sharing package which local communities can support.

Another example is UNICEF, also working in Western Kenya. As a result of a 1990 PRA, UNICEF and community groups have designed packages including health education, nutritional programs, water development, and child health monitoring. In these cases, the PRA plan has provided common ground for community groups and UNICEF professionals to join forces.

UNICEF has provided trainers, water pipe, cement, and tools. The community has provided labor for digging trenches and contours. As a result, the community now has three new water points and is building two more. Water is sold from each of the points and the funds reinvested by the water committee into new project activity.

Both the CARE and UNICEF examples suggest that PRA can help to forge alliances between communities and international organizations that bring both technical assistance and design along with access to funds to support cost sharing activities.

MODEL 3: Indirect Institutional Helpers

There are other groups beyond local and international NGOs that may have indirect interest. For example, PRA has been effective in attracting the attention of groups like Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). In one instance, a PRA helped KWS to run a pipe from one of its boreholes through a park fence to a village water

point. In exchange, the village patrols the fence for KWS at no charge.

In another example, the National Horticultural Marketing Board was happy to work with two communities that were producing surplus vegetables with a newly installed irrigation system. The Marketing Board provided a technical assistant for several days in order to help farmers work out a contract with a wholesaler. Once in place, the contract has enabled farmers to meet weekly delivery schedules with the wholesaler.



In each case, the needs of the village fit into a larger picture for the cooperating institution. Interests of both inside and outside institutions were well served. The secret in each case was that it took little new money or energy for a group, eg. Kenya Wildlife Service, to assist a neighboring village. The return favor was large stores of goodwill and local cooperation.

Village leaders might consider whether there are organizations in their areas that might have interest in joining forces with village institutions, including: (1) large parastatals such as Kenya Pipeline, Kenya Meat Commission, Kenya Cooperative Creameries, etc; or (2) private corporate entities such as British-American Tobacco, Esso, or horticulture exporters; or (3) research and educational units such as the International Center for Research on Agro-Forestry (ICRAF), International Laboratory for Research on Animal Disease (ILRAD), or a university such as Egerton. In each case, the institution will have its own agenda but may have need for cooperation with rural communities as well.

MODEL 4: Extension Officers

Considerable help has come from extension officers who see how PRA can assist in their work. Many examples exist in which an agriculture officer working with PRA groups has raised money for hand tools; a water officer has helped to implement a CAP and used the community's accomplishment to raise money for

cement and iron bars for rooftop catchment tanks; and a transport and public works officer joined with a community to find funds for road maintenance. In each case, the technical officers had no budgets of their own. Yet by joining with the community groups and armed with the PRA plans, they have been able to accomplish a great deal.

Procedures for this technical assistance vary. In one case, the extension officer has helped women's groups write proposals to an NGO. In another case, the extension officer has advised village groups about making their own contacts. In all cases, it has drawn extension and local groups closer together.

MODEL 5: Locally-Based Proposals

Some communities have learned to write their own proposals. Several things are important about taking on this task. First, there is need to know where to write and to whom to direct the proposals. One group succeeded in getting a posho mill from the US Ambassador's Self Help Fund. A retired teacher joined with the Sublocation Water committee. Whereas the water committee had done well in initiating a new irrigation system, they had not paid close attention to income generating options now available to them due to their increased harvests.

Discussions about how to attack the problem followed. A Peace Corps volunteer (not assigned to this

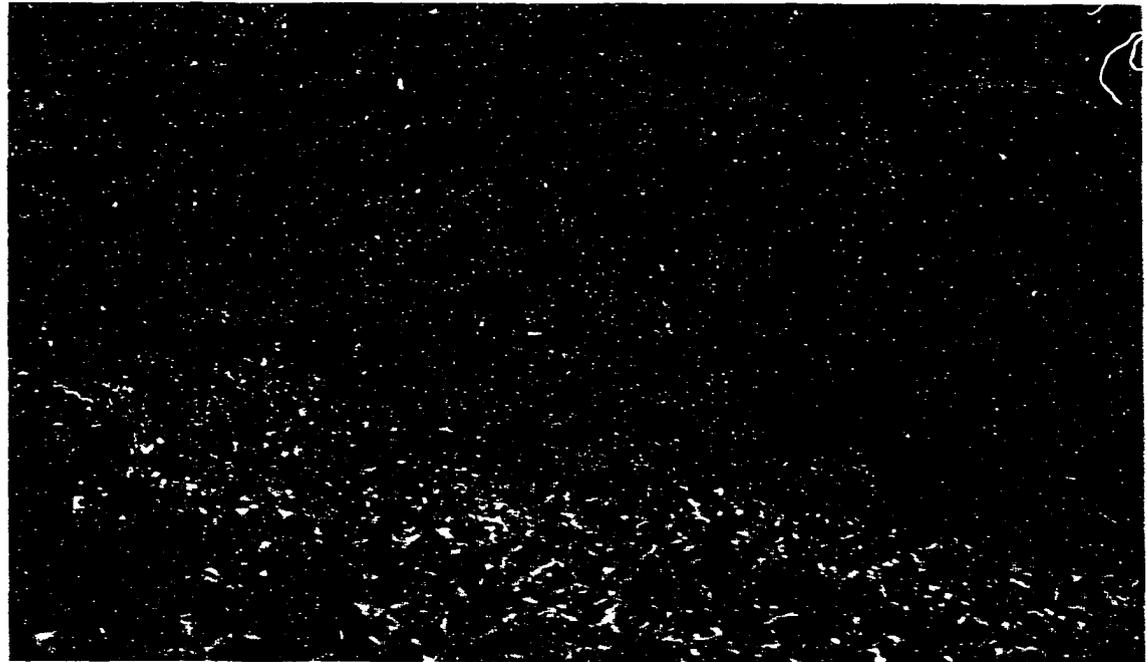
area) happened to be meeting with village leaders and suggested the Ambassador's fund. The group agreed, sought the help of the retired teacher, and set about getting started. The actual proposal preparation took several days – spread out over a few weeks – as the teacher had to talk with several different women's groups to learn exactly what they had in mind. When the proposal was submitted, it was well received by the Ambassador's Fund. Support came within a few months.

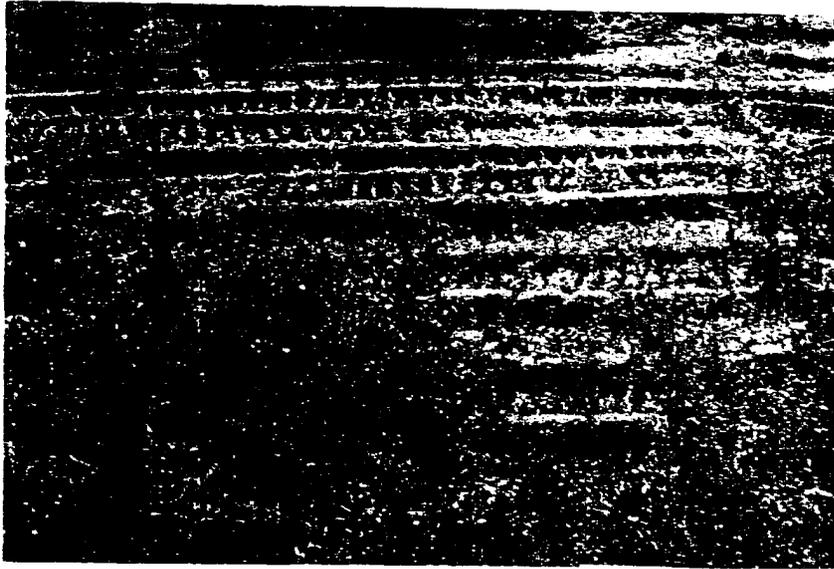
In another case, already noted above in a different context, a PRA community approached a donor organization with a proposal that the Assistant Chief and three village leaders had prepared. The result was a three way agreement among the donor, the community, and the local County Council to improve roads for better access to markets. All these parties are now working jointly.

In both of these instances, the community had had the potentials to write proposals all along. What they had not understood was the organization to which the proposal should be directed and the ways in which the PRA had gained solid support among the community for the specific work. PRA Team members helped. In the two above cases the donor came because of the PRA proposal and, once there, saw that work had already started on different aspects of their PRA plans. The combination of a well

presented proposal, a mobilized community, and action already underway was irresistible for the donor. Support followed within a few months.

Village leaders should consider whether there is an energetic extension officer who will be interested in increasing the work he or she can do by joining forces with local villages. There are case studies available describing such action as well as extension officers who know about these examples. Publications and names of these extension officers are available by making contact with Egerton or Clark Universities (addresses at back).





9 Handling Money

No topic is more sensitive than how local communities handle money that is raised for a self-help project. There are at least three levels of action.

Where has the money gone? We have had several community fund-raising activities. We have contributed for our children to have water. Yet we see no results. And we have no more water. How do we know you are holding the money? How do we know you are telling the truth?

LEVEL 1: Having a Bank Account

One community elder challenging another

No matter how funds are raised, they should not be kept as cash. If a community group (not an individual) already has a bank account, see if it can be used for implementing the PRA project activity. In every case the account should be monitored by the implementing committee and funds should be withdrawn only in a public transaction, including the signatures of the account trustees -- ideally the officers of the group that owns the account.

The reason for multiple signatures is clear. The reason for a committee (3 to 4 people) going to the bank

for each transaction is to enforce the concept that these funds belong to the entire community and the project is supported by all members of the group.

If a group has no bank account, discussions should be started about getting one. There are several issues to consider here. First, is there a bank within 25 or 30 kilometers? Second, do people have a way to open an account? If not, get advice from the CDA (Community Development Assistant). Banks sometimes want to see money before they will open an account. The CDA may

be able to help with these kinds of arrangements. Finally, make sure that several members of the committee (not just the officers) are fully familiar with the account procedures so everyone will be well informed about how the account works and who is legally authorized to sign for it. Learning these bank procedures is a vital part of implementing Community Action Plans (CAPs).

In the case of a community that is many kilometers distant from a bank, there may be problems opening an account. Perhaps a special trip can be arranged and then all transactions carried out by check and sent through registered post or express mail service. But checks by post are second and third choice options to having a bank nearby. If any users of PRA or this Handbook have experience with community fund accounts when banks are many kilometers distant, your thoughts would be welcome, either to NES, Egerton, or Clark (addresses at the end of this booklet).

LEVEL 2: Monitoring the Account

Every bank will issue periodic statements – monthly, quarterly, or whenever a customer requests one. Experience in several PRA communities indicates that there will be many, many rumors about the money and the bank account. The PRA teams have watched as accusations circulate that the Chief has run off with the money; that the chairlady of a women's group is using it to pay school fees; or that the leader of the cooperative has

purchased a piece of land. In virtually every case, these rumors have been false. Yet they do circulate.

PRA experience suggests that the best thing to do is make the community bank account statements available to any who wish to see them. One means is to have a bulletin board near the Chief's office or the cooperative office or some other central location in the community. If necessary, ask the bank for two copies every time the statement is distributed so that one can be displayed and a second kept in a permanent file.

Use the occasion of the bank statement to help committee members and all interested residents understand how the bank account works. The team has found that the more transparent the bank account statement is, the more will be known by the entire community. It is a public account; it should be treated as a matter of full and public information. Public knowledge of bank statements reduces rumors and friction.

LEVEL 3: Contracts and Funds from Outside Groups such as NGOs

Another area of sensitivity is managing money that has been raised jointly with an NGO. The combined strength of an organized community and an active NGO working together can bring great achievement to a community. But it can also create unbelievable misunderstandings. Rather than stop raising money to prevent

misunderstandings, it is better to establish procedures that anticipate whatever misunderstandings might arise.

For example, in one community, the sublocation water committee and an NGO raised money from a UN group. The NGO submitted the jointly written proposal directly to the UN; the village received no copy of the budget. Several months later the UN awarded funds, and because the proposal was sent by the NGO (though prepared jointly), the funds went to the NGO. The community still had no copy of the budget and did not know the amount of the full grant. Further, there had been a change in project officers within the NGO and the new project manager knew nothing of the history of the joint preparation of the proposal.

The project officer ordered equipment and hired technicians, as stipulated in the contract. But he failed to review these steps with the water committee. To make matters worse, he did not indicate how he was managing the funds or how he was choosing suppliers of materials or services. Tensions mounted. The project officer felt that the community was getting too nose (he did not know about the previous agreements); the community felt the funds were partly theirs and that they should be consulted. While the NGO was doing an effective job and while no funds were misappropriated, the community organizations had no way to know that.

Meetings were eventually held involving the original NGO project officer. All misunderstandings were resolved. Yet about three months of unnecessary ill feelings and sensitive relationships emerged as a result of the process. While things are now running smoothly once again, and while good trust and confidence have returned, the sticky patches could have been avoided.

As a general rule in operating joint PRA-NGO project activity, it is strongly recommended that all financial and management concerns be fully shared with a full village management committee as well as with an advisory committee within the NGO. While the procedure may take more time and the involvement of many money managers may detract from energy that could be spent with projects, the investment is worthwhile. In PRA communities where such public fund management has been used, the relations are working well. Further, such public or transparent management avoids gossip, rumors and charges of financial mismanagement.

A slight variation of Level 3 is for an NGO to manage the external funds by itself. While this model may sound more efficient, it may lead to rumors and mistrust. Hence, it seems best to have joint village and outside NGO people on the money management committee. With this option, the actual paperwork and payments may stay with the NGO, but the supervision will be joint.



10 Epilogue

The most important lesson to learn from using PRA is that communities can act on the basis of their own priorities, skills, experiences, and resources. This approach differs from present practices in many parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in which development professionals -- donors, governments, NGOs, researchers, and universities -- assume that rural residents should wait for outside experts to come help.

PRA does not wait for outsiders to come. PRA begins with the people who are the resource users and managers. Experience from the twenty villages where PRA is underway indicates that plans and projects designed by outsiders tend to be less sustainable than initiatives that local communities design and implement. This does not suggest that there is no need for outsiders; quite the opposite is the case. It does imply, however, that the role of outsiders in promoting sustainable development is to facilitate local aspirations rather than to import external strategies and technologies.

The PRA approach therefore differs substantially from most present practices. PRA suggests that effective project action:

1. starts with community groups;
2. utilizes methodologies to structure, organize, rank, and plan;
3. relies on local leadership to take initiatives;
4. depends on community institutions to carry out much of the project activity;
5. brings in outsiders for advice, facilitation, training and materials not available locally.

There is need to think about what new information and expertise will be required to make village-based development even more effective.

Four areas where additional research is needed are:

Stratification

One of the most difficult problems when mobilizing communities is the division within the community. These divisions are based on many elements including class, gender, ethnicity, age, land holdings, and levels of education. PRA has made good progress in dealing, for example, with divisions of gender. Considerably more research and field trials are needed to find ways for all members of a community to participate equitably.

Scaling Up

Communities acting locally can design and implement sustainable activities. But all problems do not lie within the scope of individual communities. Issues such as transportation, pricing, infrastructure, or education have concerns at district, regional, and national levels. PRA assessments have integrated local aspirations and data into regional data bases, using GIS, with encouraging results. More needs to be done to build local priorities into regional and national planning.

Implementation

PRA has done well to get communities to agree on a plan, and is now getting started with the implementation of these plans. This handbook is part of that

effort. Training for local leaders; clear understandings of ways in which inside and outside entities can work together; policy settings in which village-based projects can flourish; and donor programs to support village initiatives are but a few of the areas where new insights and experiences are called for.

Baseline Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation

To date, almost all assessments of the PRA experience are anecdotal and impressionistic. The very nature of PRA as a "process" approach to development makes the accumulation of hard data difficult. Work is necessary to use PRA assessments to collect baseline information on how the community perceives of its own situation and how a PRA process, over time, has changed these village-based measures. Participatory evaluation exercises are available. For the present, however, much more needs to be done to determine whether PRA is in fact a more effective approach to sustainable resource use and whether it offers promise for longer term policy and program mandates.

Given the initial promise of PRA and the need for greatly increased recorded experience of its use, the authors close with a request that field users of this and similar approaches write to us so that new elements can be included in the continuing evolution of "Implementing PRA" and in subsequent versions of this handbook. We will appreciate your assistance.

Glossary

ACTS - African Centre for Technology Studies

ballast - sand and gravel

CAP - Community Action Plan

CDA - Community Development Assistant

gravity fed irrigation - irrigation without mechanical or fossil fuel powered pumps to lift water.

ICRAF - International Centre for Research on Agro-Forestry

IIED - International Institute for Environment and Development

ILRAD - International Laboratory for Research on Animal Disease

KANU - Kenya African National Union

KENGO - Kenya Energy Non-governmental Organizations Association

KWS - Kenya Wildlife Service

Matatu - bush taxi

NES - National Environment Secretariat

paraffin - kerosene

petrol - gasoline

posho mill - maize grinding mill

RRA - Rapid Rural Appraisal

shamba - farm

SLDC - Sublocation Development Committee

Sublocation - smallest administrative unit in Kenya

VDC - Village Development Committee

VRMP - Village Resource Management Plan

For Further Training:

Certificate Course in Gender, Resources Management, and Development

This course offers mid-career development professionals opportunities to gain the theoretical base and applied skills for analyzing gender, community organization, and natural resources management in the context of sustainable development objectives. Gender Scholars will be in residence at Clark University during the Fall academic semester (September - December), 1992.

There are two basic objectives:

- * to provide an understanding of gender as a key variable organizing rural livelihood systems with respect to natural resources management; and
- * to impart skills of gender analysis into policies and programs as well as project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Certificate Course in Participation, Resources Management, and Development

This course combines theoretical constructs and applied skills to analyze and plan community action. The course will be held during the Spring semester (January - May), 1993

There are two primary aims:

- * to provide an understanding of participation as a key variable in organizing rural livelihood systems for sustainable natural resources management; and
- * to impart skills of using participatory methodologies for programs and project design, implementation, monitoring, and

Participatory Rural Appraisal

Egerton University (Kenya) and Clark University (USA) will hold a training course in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), emphasizing village level natural resources management. Typical participants are government extension officers and NGOs involved in rural development.

Course Objectives:

- * to provide skills on how to carry out PRAs;
- * to conduct a PRA;
- * to prepare a Community Action Plan with the community;
- * to promote an integrated approach to natural resources management.

Both Certificate Programs will be held at Clark University during the 1992-1993 academic year.

The course will be held August 2-22, 1992, at Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya. It will be conducted in English.

Those who wish additional information should read:

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Porten, David C. *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, CT, 1990.

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Rocheleau, Dianne, *Land-Use Planning with Rural Farm Households and Communities: Participatory AgroForestry Research.*, Working Paper No. 36, International Centre for Research on AgroForestry, Nairobi, Kenya.

Thomas-Slayter, Barbara P., *Politics, Participation, and Poverty: Development Through Self-Help in Kenya*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1985.