Long discussions took place on the setting up of indicators and ways to measure the fears/expectations. For example, siltation was measured by the use of marked sticks in various places in and around the dam. The marks on the sticks would indicate the quantities of sediments that have collected during the rainy season.

As the process evolved, a whole set of new activities have been planned to sustain the positive impact of the dam. This showed that PIM was enhancing the capacity of villages to analyse and reflect on the impact of their projects and to come up with new incentives.

Enhancing continuity through integration of PIM into on-going village meetings
VECO project staff no longer participate in the PIM process. Most kraals have now integrated the joint reflection meetings into their on-going village meetings rather than having separate PIM meetings. PIM committee members are still responsible for the monitoring but give feedback to the overall village committee which then reflects on the monitoring findings and proposes appropriate actions to be taken. Kraals that have not done this have stopped holding their PIM meetings and only count on the monitoring of the Dam Committee. They continue, however, to attend the joint reflection meetings at Dam Committee level and participate in joint conservation activities.

Challenges in initiating the PIM process: Some experiences have shown that introducing a PIM process creates new challenges in development. There are often tensions between the expectations of individuals, households and the community at large and these need to be addressed, complex as they may be. The experiences with PIM in VECO-supported projects show that expectations are very often geared towards improved technical and economic impact and that fears are often linked to socio-cultural changes. The latter often only come up as the process evolves. The longer the process continues, the more socio-cultural fears and expectations crop up. These are much more difficult to monitor and act upon. At this stage it is important that villagers feel supported by project staff or other stakeholders to enable them to tackle these issues. It is quite common in the first phase of a PIM process for farmers to formulate their expectations in the form of a "a basket of expectations towards further assistance from the donor". This can be handled through experienced facilitation which brings farmers back to impact expectations, and a transparent answer from the donor as regards future support. If this is not done, the PIM process may degenerate into mistrust between farmers and project staff. Project staff should also be careful and attentive to ensure that PIM becomes farmer-driven rather than project-driven, and that farmers can continue the process without them, as well as use it for other community programmes and projects.

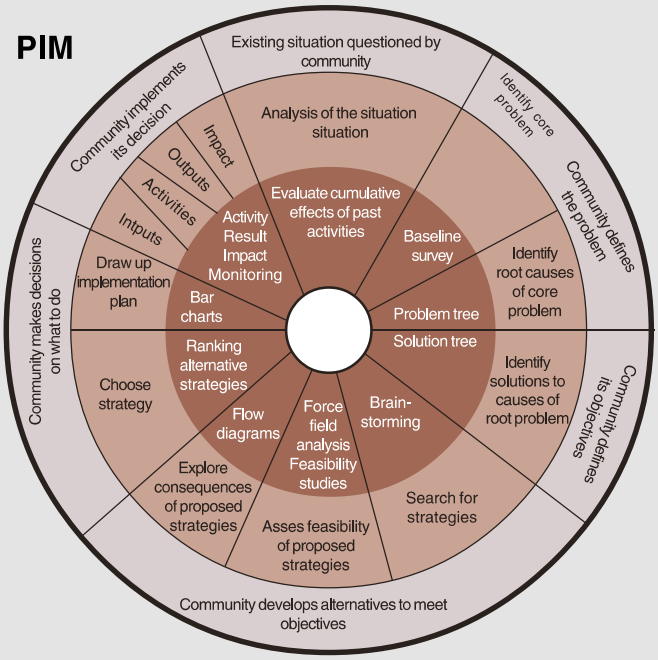


Figure 1: Participatory Impact Monitoring

4.3. COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

Community organisation is a host of planning and arranging activities that are undertaken by a community in its effort to implement the planned activities. It includes the setting up of organisational structures that are necessary and responsible for carrying out the planned activities.

One of the strengths of the participatory empowerment approach to development lies in its focus on the local people and its belief that even the poorest communities can understand and solve their own development problems. This emphasis on local capacity building tends to ignore larger political and economic structures and does little to challenge national or global forces which impact upon communities.

4.4. PARTICIPATORY EVALUATIONS

The participatory methodology used in mid-term evaluations relies upon the close interaction between the external evaluators, the project staff and other involved stakeholders, and the project beneficiaries. It consists of the following steps:

a. Selection of farmer evaluators: In the first phase project staff visit all the areas where the project has been operating to inform the farmers about the upcoming evaluation. The objectives of the evaluation are explained and farmers are asked to select their own farmer evaluators. This is only done after clear criteria have been agreed upon as to who could be a good farmer evaluator.

b. Preparatory workshop to determine indicators: Representatives of all stakeholders – farmers, project staff, service organisations and external evaluators- are invited to a workshop to deliberate on their different expectations and perceptions of the problem areas the project is trying to address, as well as the activities which were organised for each of those areas. A common understanding is reached on the aim of the evaluation and the indicators to be used to measure the impact of the project. Discussions are also held to determine the different perceptions on empowerment, and to agree on some common criteria for empowerment. This is usually done through a brain storming exercise where each workshop participant writes down five elements of empowerment on five different cards. Cards representing the same idea are put together. All cards are finally clustered to derive the main criteria for empowerment as seen by all participants. A similar exercise is then used to develop a common set of indicators for the different empowerment criteria. Instruments and tools for measuring the indicators are discussed. Adapted participatory tools can be used for this purpose.

c. Field training in the use of participatory evaluation tools: Workshop participants are trained in the use of selected participatory tools to collect and assess information during the evaluation exercise, e.g. force-field analysis, gender-specific participation analysis, semi-structured interviews, time lines, transect walks. A practical field exercise is organised to enable participants to learn how to use these tools through field experience with 1 or 2 groups or communities. They are usually informed in advance that a group of learners will be coming to visit them. The field exercise is then evaluated with special attention being given to the right use of the tools and the attitude of the trainees in conducting interviews during the learning exercise.

d. Field evaluation: Evaluation teams are set up based on a fair mix of the different participating parties. The schedule for field visits is worked out so that those farmers participating in the evaluation team do not visit their own areas or groups. The evaluation is done through field visits to different groups involved in the project. The field exercise is based on participatory principles, with daily reviews and triangulation for checking of information collected. The

fieldwork ends with a one-day workshop to compile all findings, make recommendations and agree on the main issues to be included in the report, which is finally compiled by the external evaluators.

e. Feedback workshop for re-planning project activities: As a last step in the evaluation process, the project staff and farmer evaluators organise a feed-back workshop in the different areas where the evaluation took place. The evaluation recommendations are discussed and put into perspective. Some new activities are planned together with the farmers and project staff to comply with the recommendations of the evaluation.

Box 3: Some tips for participatory evaluations

- One of the main challenges is to convince external evaluators that the participation of farmers or project beneficiaries in the evaluation will give extra value to the evaluation findings and recommendations. The participation of farmers makes the evaluation much more farmer-oriented and increases the chances of integrating indicators which are perceived as important by the farmers themselves.
- Sufficient time has to be spent on creating a conducive atmosphere for all categories of evaluators so that they can trust each other and work as a team.
- Participatory evaluation is a process and requires a lot of time and resources for preparatory meetings, field evaluations, feedback, and re-planning exercises.
- It is important to collect sufficient baseline information from the project with reference to criteria and indicators for empowerment/impact assessment as set by workshop participants.
- The process of empowerment/impact assessment should not stop after the re-planning but could continue in the form of a PIM (participatory impact monitoring) process whereby farmers and other project stakeholders monitor, on a continuous basis, their fears and expectations linked to the re-planned project activities.

4.5. EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION

If participation is viewed as a process and outcome it is important to monitor how people's participation in a project evolves over time from an initial more passive involvement to eventual active participation and responsibility. It should focus on the views of the local people. Evaluation of participation should look at the entire process over a period of time, as well as the qualitative and quantitative indicators of participation.

a. Quantitative indicators of participation include:

- Improved and more effective service delivery;
- Numbers of project level meetings and attendance levels;
- Percentages of different groups attending meetings (e.g. women, landless);
- Numbers of direct project beneficiaries;
- Project input take-up rates;
- Numbers of local leaders assuming positions of responsibility;
- Numbers of local people who acquire positions in formal organisations; and
- Numbers of local people who are involved in different stages of the project.

b. Qualitative indicators of participation include:

- Organisational growth at the community level;
- Growing solidarity and mutual support;
- Knowledge of financial status of project;
- Concern to be involved in decision-making at different stages;
- Increasing ability of project group to propose and undertake actions;
- Representation in other government or political bodies that are related to the project;
- Emergence of people willing to take on leadership;
- Interaction and building of contacts with other groups and organisations; and
- People begin to have a say in, and influence over local politics and policy formulation.

CHAPTER 5:

GENDER AND PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

Mary Kabelele and Rita Keister

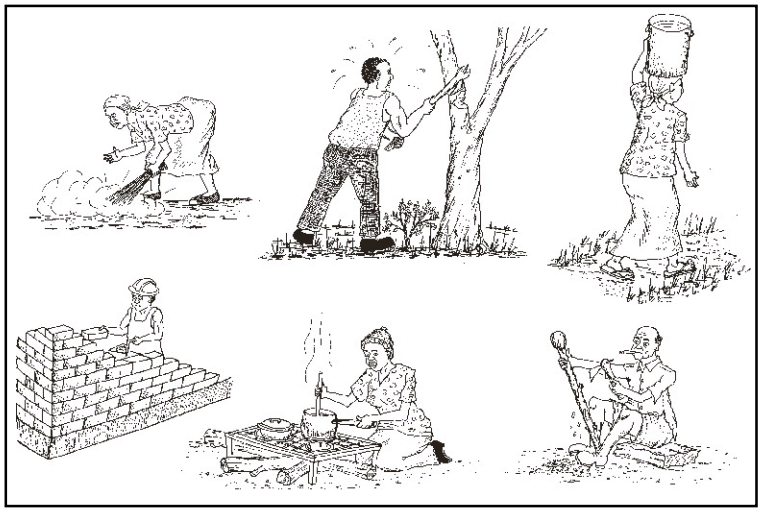
5.1 INTRODUCTION

a. What is gender? Gender is about biological and social differences and the relationships that exist between men and women, boys and girls. These relationships have tended to put girls and women in less privileged positions relative to boys and men respectively. In participatory development, the intention is to seek to understand how these roles are learnt and how they can be unlearnt and improved upon for more productive and harmonious relations between people of different sexes.

Gender is about all the attributes, roles, activities, and responsibilities associated with being a male or a female in a given society. Our gender identity determines how we are perceived and how we are expected to think and act as women or men because of the way we are socialised.

b. Why gender is important? Gender has become an important developmental issue because the limited participation of women has resulted in the limited inclusion of their needs, concerns and interests in most of the development interventions. Gender relations are, simultaneously, relations of cooperation, connection and mutual support, but also conflict, separation, competition, differences and inequality.

Ultimately, gender relations are concerned with how power is distributed between the sexes. These relations create and reproduce differences in men's and women's positions in a given society, and define the way in which responsibilities and claims are allocated.



Gender is about all the attributes, roles, activities and responsibilities associated with being male or female in a given society.

Gender issues in development are seen mainly in the unequal workloads of men and women, in the unequal access and control of resources, and in the unequal decision-making power in the household and formal institutions beyond it.

c. Institutionalising gender: The key is to place the issues that women of particular concern on the agenda of those institutions which shape women's and men's lives: the state, NGOs and training institutions, among others. Gender analysis exposes imbalances that could be addressed by promoting equality. This process entails a clear commitment to work towards gender equality and harmonious relations between men and women while recognising the differences and valuing the complementarity between them.

5.2 GENDER ISSUES

Research into gender issues in African agriculture suggests that there is unequal division of labour on the farm, limited participation of women in agricultural research and information dissemination, limited participation of women in cooperatives and marketing, higher rates of illiteracy among women than men as well as limited agricultural knowledge and skills. Some gender issues are economic and financial. Generally women have limited access to financial services because they do not have assets against which to borrow in many cases. The issues below point to some areas where issues remain unresolved.

a. Link between language/knowledge, power and gender: There is a need for more in-depth analysis of the link between language/knowledge, power and gender.

b. Uncritical acceptance of traditional inequities: The approach needs to be sensitive to local cultures, values and beliefs. This sensitivity to existing social arrangements can, however, lead to uncritical acceptance of traditional inequities, which gender should address.

c. Privacy of gender issues: Gender issues are often regarded as private and outside the scope of economic and social development and thus not challenging to the status-quo. Gender issues are often deeply embedded in the subconscious and often presented as natural, unchanging cultural practices and symbols. This makes it difficult to tackle the issues and bring about desired change.

d. Lack of cooperation between rich and poor women: Women of wealthier groups in a community may align themselves more readily with their class than their sex, while other wealthy women may resent their treatment as women and thus align themselves with other women only on certain gender issues.

5.3 HISTORY OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender and development have gone through a number of stages of development, starting with a narrow focus on providing for the welfare needs of women, to the broad scope of empowering men and women to relate more productively and harmoniously. The table below summarises the various stages.

Table 1: Different Perspectives of Women's Development and Gender

Project Goal	Concept of Problem	Concept of Solution	Examples of Development Intervention
Welfare	Women's poverty, vulnerable groups, special needs.	Position of support services for health, nutrition, child care.	Build maternity clinics, immunisation, health and nutrition education.
Economic self reliance	Women under - & unemployment, economic dependency, lack of productive skills.	Promote self-reliance, independence, provide productive skills, encourage women's productive enterprises.	Income-generating women rojects, clubs, e.g. soap-making, sewing.
Access to resources	Low level of productivity and poor access to resources.	Increased access to resources, enhanced provision of services.	Provision of credit and marketing facilities.
Efficiency	Women are overlooked during allocation of resources in planning; underdevelopment of human capacities.	Identify productive activities and needs; support with capacity-building in relevant skills and knowledge	Integration of women into development planning; mainstreaming external advice; appropriate technology.
Equality	Structures of different sectors in society (e.g. education, employment, housing) discriminate against women.	Equality of opportunity for women.	Affirmative action to promote equal opportunity; increase the number of women in planning positions.
Empowerment	Unequal and oppressive gender power relations.	Conscientisation, mobilisation,solidarity, collective action.	Grassroots organisations and projects, democratisation, support for locally initiated programmes and activities.

Adapted from: "Facilitators Guide to Gender and Empowerment Manual", UNICEF, New York 1993, draft as adopted in TGNP, 1993.

Which of these perspectives have you worked with? Which ones do you agree with? And why?

5.4 GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis is a tool that is used to collect and analyse information on the activities and resources of both men and women, and the opportunities and constraints faced by them. It reveals information about the roles, resources, practical and strategic gender needs, and priorities as defined by men and women. The following elements are important to any gender analysis:

a. Identification of gender division of labour: Examine men's and women's workloads, and time and mobility constraints which can have an impact on the way women can participate in community activities. Also look at the role of women in their homes and at community level.

b. Access and control profiles to resources and benefits: Identify resources that men and women utilise and the benefits they derive from their activities. A deeper analysis should show the capacity of women and men to participate in, and contribute to, development activities. Some women might not have resources or depend on their husbands for financial contributions, joining fees, etc. This could automatically exclude them from benefiting from community development activities. It is also important to know who will likely have access to, and control over, programme resources and benefits in order for the community to design appropriate implementation strategies for all members to benefit equitably from the development process.

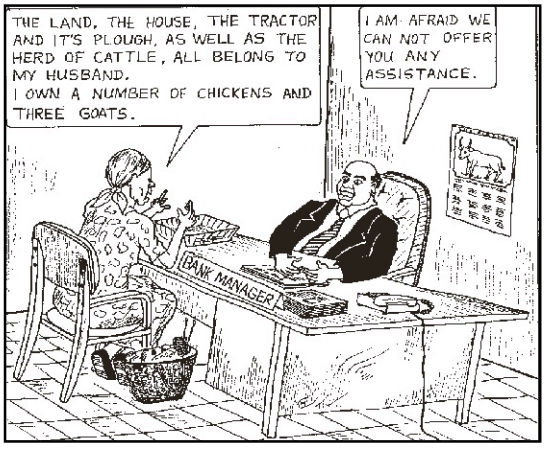
c. Context analysis: Entails a deeper analysis of how gender division of labour and gender-specific access and control over benefits and resources are rooted within, and linked to, influencing factors from outside the community, i.e. social, economic and political influences through national laws and policy frameworks impacting on gender issues. Also included are traditional, customary and modern laws, land tenure security systems, and access to services such as credit and education.

d. Analysis of strategic gender needs: Assess the extent to which men and women are agents or mere recipients of development activities in their communities and looks at issues that are relevant to equality concerns, i.e. social status of women, economic dependency of women and limited decision-making capacity of women. Gender strategic needs have to do with control over power, resources, access to education and other tools of empowerment.

Box 4: Suggested questions on gender and development

The facilitator of the participatory process can play an important role by helping the community to reflect on the following issues:

- How will the project affect gender-specific constraints, access and control over resources, and the strategic needs of women?
- Will it be necessary to have separate activities or components for women so as to ensure that their needs and interests are taken into account?
- What mechanisms will allow for changes in project design to address gender issues that might arise?
- What are the gender-specific strategies for community mobilisation, awareness creation, development and dissemination of information using local institutional capacity?
- Which strategies can enhance women's participation in community activities?
- What effect does the project timing, location and length have on women and their participation?
- How can one organise adequately so that women can participate adequately (travel, childcare, etc)?
- Which monitoring mechanisms would help determine whether benefits from community actions accrue to women as well as men, as well as the different kinds of women in the village?



Generally, women have limited access to financial services because they do not have assets against which to borrow.

5.5. MAKING GENDER WORK

While it is important for change to take place at grassroots level where the action lies, it is equally important for policies to be supportive of gender-sensitive development. Most of the recent legislation on Wills and Inheritance, for example, has helped women and girls to access the estate of the deceased with opportunities equal to their male counterparts. A lot of work has been done on the ground but, more recently, some work on gender has also been done on policies as discussed below:

able 2: Key issues and questions on gender policies

POLICY ASPECT	KEY QUESTIONS
Policy statement	Does it acknowledge the importance of both men and women? Does it stress the needs of all people? Does the statement reflect gender disparity?
Background of policy, including contextual issues, justification, and the status quo	Are various groups at particular risk? Are the contributions of both women and men recognised? Are issues of female-headed households recognised?
Policy objectives: Vision, mission,goal, purpose	Do they represent the views of both men and women? Do they recognise household needs at community level as well as economic needs at community level and national level? Do they address policy aspects with regard to increasing efficiency of women's roles, access to information, benefits and income? Do they mention various groups of men and women at risk and how they could be targeted? Have the various groups participated in the development of the policy objectives? Do they recognise the central role of women in the management of indigenous knowledge resources at the household and national level?
Key stakeholders	Is there specific mention of different groups of men and women, especially the disadvantaged? Were representatives of both men and women involved in identifying the key players?
Strategic areas marketing, management, education, training and sustainability- to be addressed through specific interventions	Has the effect on both men and women been considered? Has there been sufficient consultation on the views of both men and women at this stage?
Target group or beneficiaries	How have these been identified? Have the representatives of the identified groups been involved in the policy formulation? Were the target groups determined on the basis of social and economic realities and their specific roles?
Implementation mechanisms: a framework providing for planning and involvement of all stakeholders – men and women	What mechanism is in place to ensure the involvement of both men and women in the implementation? Are there mechanisms to ensure shared control of resources by both men and women? How will all the stakeholders be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of programmes? Is there flexibility in case a particular group is adversely affected?

Gender-responsive policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will require policy-makers first to internalise how gender shapes the opportunities and constraints that individuals face in securing their livelihoods. Both women and men need to be consulted. There is overwhelming evidence that development succeeds only when it addresses the needs and priorities of women and men as equals.

Box 5: Gender Relations in Binga, Zimbabwe

With the objective of analysing gender relations in grain storage management, a study was carried out in Siabuwa Valley of Binga District in Zimbabwe using three household types: polygamous, monogamous and monogamous but with married children living within the same premises as the parents. Using PRA techniques, the gender relations were analysed over several visits, during which detailed discussions were held with husband and wife/wives separately and together at four homesteads.

- It was apparent that 'normal' roles in store management change to suit the different household types and depend on the degree of co-operation between men and women, and between women within households;
- Roles relating to grain storage become more flexible as the household becomes more complex; latitude is found within one gender as factors such as delegation and sharing come into play;
- Household strategies develop from co-operation between husbands and wives as both work towards sustained household food security;
- The strategies employed by women shift and change depending on where their interests lie; whether in promoting their security and/or status within the household or in their level of self-reliance;
- Bargaining in store management remains central to ensuring that the distribution of income from grain that has been jointly produced is fair to the household and the individual needs of both husbands and wives; and
- There is a lot of bargaining with regard to the preferred use of grain (between sales and consumption and between sales and labour payment). Women will try to ensure that their needs are met by trading off one use for another. For instance, a woman with a labour requirement may opt for fewer mid-season sales and use her grain to pay for labour. Although this means less income for her, it does ensure food security, which may be a more important factor to her.

The study showed that although the status of women may be far from satisfactory in terms of equity and empowerment within households and society at large, there are many forces of change and types of 'power play' being employed by women in order to optimise their conditions within the constraints of societal norms.

Source: Manda and Mvumi, 2002.

CHAPTER 6:

VISUALISATION AND COMMUNICATION

John Wilson and Charles Dhewa

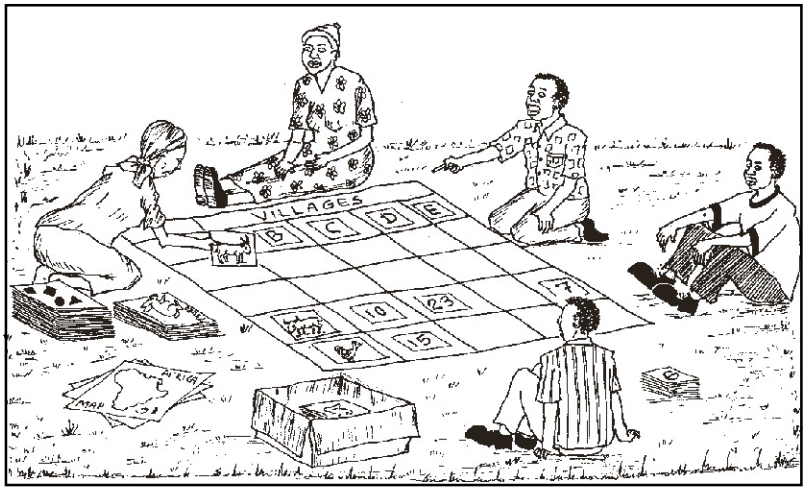
6.1 INTRODUCTION

Visualisation has been one of the cornerstones of participatory approaches to date. Many of the methods that people widely use have the common characteristic of making information visual. Maps, diagrams, pictures, use of cards or flipchart paper, drama, matrices, picture codes, and use of symbols are examples of visualisation. They have played a significant role in deepening all levels of participation of groups everywhere. There are even approaches that specifically use the term in their designation, e.g. Visualisation in Participatory Planning (VIPP).

To visualise a discussion one needs to add more of a visual dimension to it. For example, when using the VIPP approach, someone in the group captures the words or a summary of the words on a card or diagram. Thus one can see the words as well as hear them. Putting the main points of a discussion onto a piece of flipchart is another way of visualisation. Yet another way to visualise a discussion would be to turn it into a drama of some kind.

From the above examples one can see that there are different levels of visualisation. There may be visualisation by using words only, or the visualisation may include pictures and symbols. Using pictures and symbols has the big advantage of making fuller use of both sides of the brain.

If a group is having a discussion, they look at each other and see the expressions and body language of others. Although this body language is important, one only **hears** the content of such a discussion rather than **seeing** it. There is not much visualisation in such a discussion.



Matrices, picture codes and use of symbols are examples of visualisation.

6.2 KEY ASPECTS OF VISUALISATION

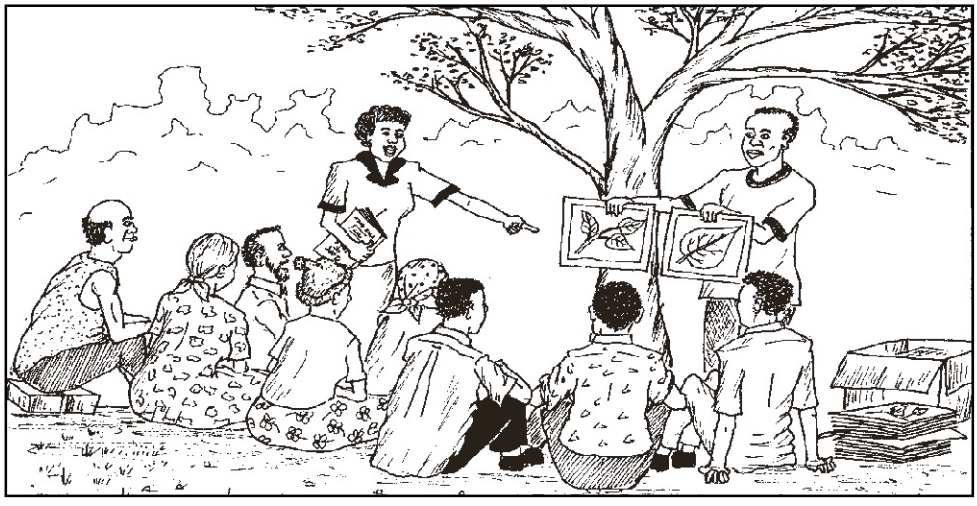
Visualisation has a number of characteristics that are worth pointing out. These are as follows:

a. Speaker focus: In a discussion within a small group, for example, the focus is on the person who is doing the talking. If the group visualises the discussion in some way, then the focus moves away from the individual to the map or diagram or whatever the visualisation is. The group's attention is then on the diagram rather than the individual. This will promote more participation because it is a focal point to which all members can relate. Also, with this external, central focus, there are less likely to be dialogues between a minority of the group, as can easily happen in group discussions.

b. Keeping people's energy levels up: It is likely that the visualisation will add more interest to a discussion. It can enrich the discussion and make it livelier than a purely verbal exchange. Depending on the activity, it can lead to movement, walking around the ground map for example or adding to it. All this helps keep people's energy levels up.

c. Visualisation as a checking procedure: Visualisation provides a checking procedure for what people have said. In capturing a point on a flipchart, people can check what has been said. At the same time, by capturing discussion in a visual form, one has a reference point that helps during the discussion itself. This checking and providing a reference often helps those who might have been slower to understand a point. In this way it promotes participation.

d. Building a vision/picture: When a group visualises information, they are adding on to their information at each point. In more than one way, they are building a picture. It is a cumulative process, a process that adds on.



Using pictures and symbols has the big advantage of making fuller use of both sides of the brain.

e. Rephrase: Where the visualisation involves the use of pictures of some kind, then this brings in more use of the right brain and this in itself leads to greater participation.

f. Increasing involvement: Where visualisation involves finding a symbol or picture to represent what has been said, this process deepens people's understanding and thus their involvement. In discussing and choosing the symbol, those taking part will bring out more clearly what they mean. They will present different opinions in order to decide what would best represent the point they have made. There is also the huge advantage in situations where some people are not literate. It goes a long way towards enabling their greater participation.

g. Visualisation usually makes events more memorable: When one is seeing as well as hearing, one is using more of one's brain. There is more activity and liveliness. All this will help the memory of an event or discussion. As discussed elsewhere, people participate more if they are able to remember better.

6.3 SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK IN VISUALISATION

As a general rule, use visualisation as often as you can but remember the principle of not doing something just for the sake of doing it. Visualisation may not always be appropriate. It may be better to have an uninterrupted discussion at times, a discussion that is not held up by having to visualise it. Be clear why you are using visualisation. Ask yourself:

- What will it add?
- How will it enrich the discussion?
- What kind of visuals are needed?
- What kind of images would be unacceptable in the community?
- Should the visuals be prepared ahead of time or during the discussions?
- Who should develop the visuals?

6.4. VISUALISING PLANNING

a. Find the issue to work with: Have a clear question for the design team to discuss such as: *What do we want to achieve in the exercise to establish a participatory monitoring system? Or, by the end of the two weeks, what will a certain community have achieved in the proposed planning exercise?* The question that you choose becomes the focal question for the following exercise. One needs to keep referring to this question. This procedure to develop objectives can work with a group of as little as six and up to about 12-15 people.

b. Brainstorm individually: Encourage them to think freely. Allow about five minutes, completely undisturbed, so that their thoughts can range.

c. Share in small groups: Participants work in small groups to share what they have come up with. If there are only six participants, then they would work in three groups of two. If 15, then five groups of three. Once they have shared their ideas they should amalgamate them and select a specific number to write on cards. The number will depend on how many small groups there are. Aim for about 20-30 cards. This is just a guideline. You need enough cards to get a good cross-section of ideas while not having too many cards to deal with. A5 is a good size for the cards. The instructions for card-writing are: write big and clear; use three to seven words to capture the idea; and each card should reflect only one idea.

d. Present ideas in the plenary: The next step involves putting the cards up onto a common wall and clustering them under similar headings. The group does this all together. Rather than putting them all up at once, ask each group for two of their cards. Go through these and start clustering them. Then ask for two more. Finally, ask for the remaining cards. To help the clustering process, you can have cards with a symbol (square, triangle, etc) for each cluster.

e. Cluster ideas in the plenary: As a group, look at the loose clustering that has been done and discuss it. Make changes as agreed. If you get bogged down, remind participants that you are not aiming for perfection. This is just a step towards developing the objectives. Looking at each cluster in turn, ask participants to suggest an objective that covers what the cluster is saying. At this stage you could have participants work in pairs to come up with a suggestion to present to the whole group, then modify it as they see fit. Do not get trapped in discussing every last word; you can task a small group to finalise it at some stage.

f. Write the objectives: Draw out all the objectives on another flip chart and have participants discuss in pairs whether they think they reflect what they want the participatory process to achieve. This exercise will take 2-3 hours but is worth the effort in order to achieve a level of clarity among key players.

g. Draw activities for each objective: A group brainstorm is a straightforward way of doing this. *What activities can we undertake to achieve the agreed objectives for the participatory process?* could be the question that guides the brainstorm. Remember that in brainstorming there is no discussion of an idea other than to seek clarification or to enrich the idea with additional suggestions. Someone jots down all the ideas on a flipchart. Allow about 20-30 minutes. Periods of silence are not a problem. Good brainstorming often happens in fits and starts. At the beginning encourage members of the group to let others' ideas stimulate their own. It can help to have a light-hearted warm-up to get people into the swing of brainstorming.

Encourage the group to draw on their past experiences, either as participants or facilitators. This too is the time for them to bring in new ideas that the participants might have thought about but not tried. It is a brainstorm, a time to explore all sorts of possibilities. This means choosing the time of day when people are likely to have energy. Creativity rarely happens when people are low in energy.

h. Choosing the appropriate activities: Key questions include: *Would they work? How would they work? Would they connect to the rest of the programme?* As you are discussing the ideas, you will quickly accept some, while others will need more debate. It is useful to use cards again and have a big sheet of paper with the calendar of the programme broadly laid out on it. Write those ideas that people quickly accept onto cards and think about when they would come in the programme. Make sure you have displayed the objectives prominently somewhere so that you can refer to them regularly. One danger, mentioned more than once in this guide, is using an exercise or method for the sake of it. It must link to the objectives and to the rest of the programme. The amount of time spent will depend on how long and how complicated the programme you are planning is. Do not be afraid to make alterations.

Once you have a broad programme in place, have a short break and then come back and look at it as a whole. Again go back to the objectives and check that your programme will achieve them. Do exercises flow well from one to the next? Have you allowed enough time for each session?

When you are happy with the programme, you will then need to designate roles and responsibilities.

Box 6: Some tips for the facilitator of a visualisation exercise

During the process you will be observing and monitoring how things are going. You will use this to discuss each evening and to make modifications to the programme, presuming something longer than a day. This constant monitoring throughout a programme is essential. You need a way of getting feedback from participants. One way is to have a small, representative group that you meet with at the end of each day in order to get their feedback. You can also give time to the whole group to give their feedback on how things are going. As always, there are many ways to ensure this feedback. In fact, this is something that you need to think about in your design.

As well as monitoring a particular exercise, you should always use your experience to learn for the next time. It helps to have a small notebook in which you write any comments about the process as it is happening. Just a short note to remind you of the incident or thought.

At some stage after the event, give some time to reflect on the whole process. The action-learning cycle provides an excellent framework for doing this. This kind of in-depth learning happens all too infrequently in organisations and groups.

6.5 . COMMUNICATION IN PARTICIPATION

a. Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA): is a communication research method that utilises field-based visualisation techniques, interviews and groupwork to generate information for the design of effective communication programmes, materials, media and methods for development purposes, so as to ensure relevance and ownership by the people.

Communication activities developed from PRCA facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences between rural people and other development stakeholders in order for them to reach consensus on actions to be taken within the community to improve people's standard of living. In PRCA, communication is a two-way process in which all the people are seen as important sources of information and have ideas worth listening to.

b. Levels of communication

The different levels of communication are summarized below.

Table 3: Types of communication

Communication Type	Explanation
Intra-personal	Communication one has with oneself, i.e. thoughts, day-dreaming
Inter-personal	Communication one has with another person
Group	Communication one has with a group of people (group discussion, party)
Organisational	Communication within or between organisations (newsletters, memos, meetings)
National	Communication within or between nations (trade, war)
Global	Communication on a global scale that affects all people on the planet

Table 4: How PRCA is unique and different from traditional communication

Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA)	Traditional Communication Research
Holistic – researches community needs, opportunities, problems, solutions and communication issues, networks and systems.	Not holistic – researches only communication issues.
Participatory: The researcher is a facilitator who enables the people to undertake and share their own investigations and analyses leading to sustainable local action and improved communication.	Not Participatory: The researcher is an investigator who is interested in learning as much as possible for his own use.
Empowers and builds capacity of communities and improves communication between them and outsiders.	Extractive and does not empower or build capacity of communities.
Leads to joint planning of both development action and support for communication programme with community.	Professionals plan communication intervention without the community.
Deals with interaction groups identified on the basis of sharing a common problem and segmented according to criteria normally used by the people themselves. People are active participants in the entire research process.	Deals with audiences segmented according to criteria determined by an investigator. People are seen as only passive recipients of messages and not as active sources.
Results of appraisal are presented by community.	Results of research are not shared with community. Investigator analyzes and presents results to outsiders.
Community owns and keeps the results.Emphasis on the use of visual methods, interviews and group work for generating, analyzing and presenting data.	Results are owned and kept by researchers. Emphasis on verbal mode of questioning and gathering data, normally through questionnaire interviews or focus group discussions.
Emphasis on change of attitude and behaviour among facilitators.	Emphasis on finding out ways of changing attitude and behaviour of audience.
Seeks means of creating mutual understanding between local people and development workers in order to marry local capabilities with outsiders' knowledge and skills for more effective problem-solving.	Emphasis on how best to effect transfer of outside expertise to local people.

CHAPTER 7:

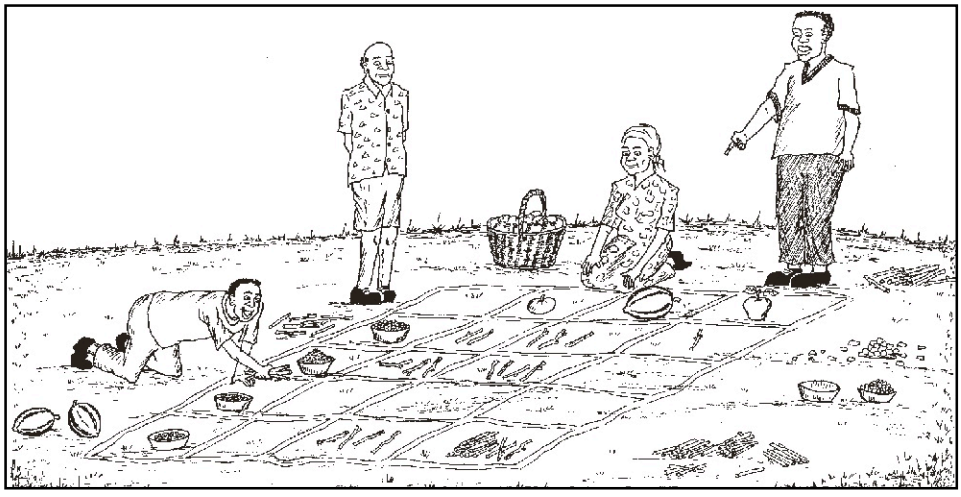
PARTICIPATORY LEARNING AND RESEARCH

Brighton Mvumi and Mutizwa Mukute

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Participatory learning results in theory that is informed by action, and action that is informed by theory. People learn from what they do, from their mistakes as well as from their successes. People learn from being with others, and from experiencing new situations. Participatory learning in rural development can bring the community members to an equal footing with the development agents who are often outsiders with more formal education. Whereas in conventional learning approaches there is the student and the teacher, the one who does not know and the one who knows, in participatory learning the communication and relationship is more horizontal; each partner knows something and each partner will contribute to the creation of new knowledge and to learning. Thus:

- Community members not only provide information but also process it, developing new ideas;
- Community members establish a more equal relationship with outsiders and experts;
- Outsiders, who may also be more formally educated, learn from the people and this increases their respect for them; and
- Community members generate more knowledge and understanding of their circumstances, thus increasing their chances of improving their livelihoods.



Learning together could involve scoring and matrix ranking on the ground using locally available materials such as stones and sticks.

7.2 ELEMENTS OF PARTICIPATORY LEARNING

Participatory learning involves mental change processes that facilitators may need to undergo in order to meet development challenges. Participatory learning is about:

a. Sitting, asking and listening: This approach has more to do with attitude rather than a methodological aspect. Sitting implies lack of hurry, patience and humility; asking implies that the outsider is the student; and listening implies respect and learning. Relaxed discussions reveal questions which outsiders may not know how to ask and may also open up the unexpected.

b. Learning from the poorest: The poorest are usually regarded as the most ignorant, from whom there is the least to learn. However, outsiders know very little about how these people cope and on this the poorest are experts. They know more than the ignorant outsiders who have not bothered to find out.

c. Learning indigenous technical knowledge: 'Nobody knows nothing and nobody knows everything' is a maxim that was generated during the development of the Participatory Extension Approach (PEA) in Zimbabwe. All rural people know things that outsiders do not know. There are several ways that can be used by outsiders to learn from the community.

d. Learning local terms: These include the names of plants and animals, pests and diseases, soil types, measurements, social relations, foods and diets, etc. It can be an interesting exercise which can provide some insights into local beliefs and practices.

e. Games, quantification and ranking: These can be used as a way of learning from local communities and have the advantage of transcending status and social differences, besides being fun. Indigenous methods of counting and quantification are not necessarily inferior; they just need to be understood and calibrated. Local games can be used to help farmers quantify and scale their estimates and preferences. This could involve scoring and matrix ranking on the ground using locally available materials such as stones, sticks or different grain types. Sometimes it is not so much the eventual result of the exercise that matters but the thinking that goes into it and the preceding lively discussion generated in setting their priorities. Approaches such as these shift the initiative from the outsider to the local people.

f. Joint research and development: The need to conduct agricultural research jointly with farmers in their fields and under their own conditions is now widely accepted. However, what is still lacking is the recognition that farmers are partners in the research process and, as such, are fellow experimenters and technology developers. Organisations such as CIAT have, however, embarked on participatory technology development with farmers in east Africa as well as in Latin America.

g. Learning by working: Outsiders stand to learn a great deal by physically working with farmers and others, and doing what they do on a daily basis for a certain period. This approach is quite common among social scientists and more accurate data can be obtained as compared with the conventional questionnaire survey. A similar approach could be used by agriculturists working as farm labour, animal husbandry and veterinary scientists herding animals, or agricultural engineers applying water in farmers' fields; in each case advised by local experts, the rural people themselves.

7.3 PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

a. Why participatory research: Participatory research increases community members involvement in identifying solutions to their problems, and in designing, implementing and monitoring them. This comes from the realisation that the people understand their local situations much better than outsiders.

Box 7: Key elements of participatory research

Participatory research is action-oriented, reflexive and comes with change. It allows action and multi-disciplinary research to be achieved at the same time. It is intended to create win-win situations and increase research relevance. It usually constructs knowledge that is context- specific and intends to lead to growth and development from experience for improved action and impact. It is predicated on the notion that people can learn from what they do, feel and think.

This research approach is concerned with purposeful action that informs thought and thought that informs action cyclically. This kind of research is participatory and collaborative and is made up of four interrelated phases that are cyclical, namely: plan, act, observe and reflect and back to planning. There is reciprocity between the stages. Reflection feeds on observation and informs action; action is preceded by reflection and is prospective to reflection; observation is informed by action and in turn informs reflection. Dr James Yen of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction once said, "Action without research is stagnant, research without action is sterile."

Adapted from M. Mukute, 2005.

b. Key principles: Participatory research and technology development is built on four main principles. These are concerned with building on local knowledge and skills. This component has already been discussed in the earlier chapters of the guide. The second principle is about increasing the technical capacity and technological choice of local people. This refers to the people's ability to identify, adapt and innovate technology that they need to use and includes the organisational capacity to manage and use that technology. The third principle is about building local groups to bring about this participation. This puts the users of research results and experiments at the forefront of the research process. The strengthening of local institutions is critical to achieve participation. The fourth principle is about building the farmers' ability to influence their policy environment, basically so that it becomes supportive of participatory research in particular and of their living conditions in general.

c. Advantages: Some of the advantages of participatory research are that:

- Research work is more aligned to the interests and needs of the people and thus more relevant;
- Local knowledge is harnessed and inappropriate solutions are identified in good time;
- Immediate feedback on performance of solutions is given and necessary improvements can be made in little time, cutting down on the length of research cycles;
- It increases farmers' ability to carry out research and develop technologies; and
- It enhances people's capacity to make demands on research and extension services.

d. Models of farmer participation: Four models of farmer participation in research as suggested by Biggs are: where farmers provide labour and other needed services to the researchers (***contract);*** where researchers consult farmers on the diagnosis of farmer issues and problems and look for solutions (***consultative);*** where researchers and farmer are equal partners throughout the research process ***(collaborative***) and where researchers support farmer initiated research and experiments (***collegiate).***

e. Some key features of participatory research: In a meeting that was organised by PELUM Association and the NGO Committee of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in 2001, and which was attended by farmers, researchers and development workers, it was recommended that research in agriculture should:

- Address the interests and needs of family farmers;
- Be identified by farmers;
- Take into account the social, economic and ecological conditions of the people;
- Be carried out with the farmers; and
- Address the food needs of the people and contribute towards farmer empowerment and food security.

f. Role of the development worker in relation to farmer groups: The role of the development worker should be to:

- Ensure adequate and fair representation of farmers;
- Provide training to farmers in specific research aspects;
- Conduct regular reviews of research priorities with them;
- Establish and support village information systems and stimulate farmer-to-farmer exchange visits;
- Discuss and agree on ideas for experimentation;

- Encourage farmer groups to develop and implement self-regulating mechanisms;
- Facilitate the meeting of different farmer groups to share their learning processes and products; and
- Facilitate the scaling up of promising experiments and technologies.

g. Participatory monitoring and evaluation of research: While monitoring is continuous and evaluation is periodic, it is valuable to look at what each of these activities entails. A DFID and NRI publication of 1999 points to some important elements as outlined below.

Table 5: Comparison of Participatory Monitoring and Participatory Evaluation

Participatory Monitoring	Participatory Evaluation
Are the agreed inputs being delivered on time? To what extent are the farmers adopting and adapting experiments?	What is the relevance of the research or experiments to the community? How well are the project partners participating?
How is the community at large viewing experimentation as a development process?	How are the experiments and the research responding to the changing needs and interests of the people?
How well are the farmer groups, NGOs and research organisations working together?	How are collaborating organisations benefiting from participating in the process?

Source: Adapted from DFID & NRI, 1999.

h. Indicators: One of the cornerstones of monitoring and evaluation are indicators. The indicators basically show the standards against which you will measure success. Indicators are more valuable when they are developed with and by the people concerned. Indicators can be about quantity as well as about quality, process or product. Indicators are easier to follow when they are developed against a stated community objective. For example, the objective might be "to strengthen community cooperation". The indicators which could be quantified would include such aspects as: number of new groups formed, assisting one another with draught power, successful conflict resolution, organizing and attending shows and fairs and information shared.

i. Motivators: Studies carried out in Zimbabwe suggest that farmers are more likely to be motivated to do research if there is a clear need for it which is expressed through, e.g. need for new varieties, cash or food. Another motivator is mere curiosity, and the desire to learn and find out why things are the way they are. Then other farmers are simply ingenious. In Mutoko, for example, a farmer developed a way of raising an avocado tree so that it bears fruit within three years. Other farmers get involved in research because they want fame, achievement and to surpass others. Finally, some farmers experiment because they have been exposed to new ideas, to other farmers who experiment, and to different ways of doing things.

7.4 . SUPPORTING FARMER EXPERIMENTATION

Participatory research involves partnerships between the people, NGOs, government and research and extension organisations (Figure 2). Since this is a relatively new way of going about development, the development facilitator has a role to help farmers organise themselves for such relationships.

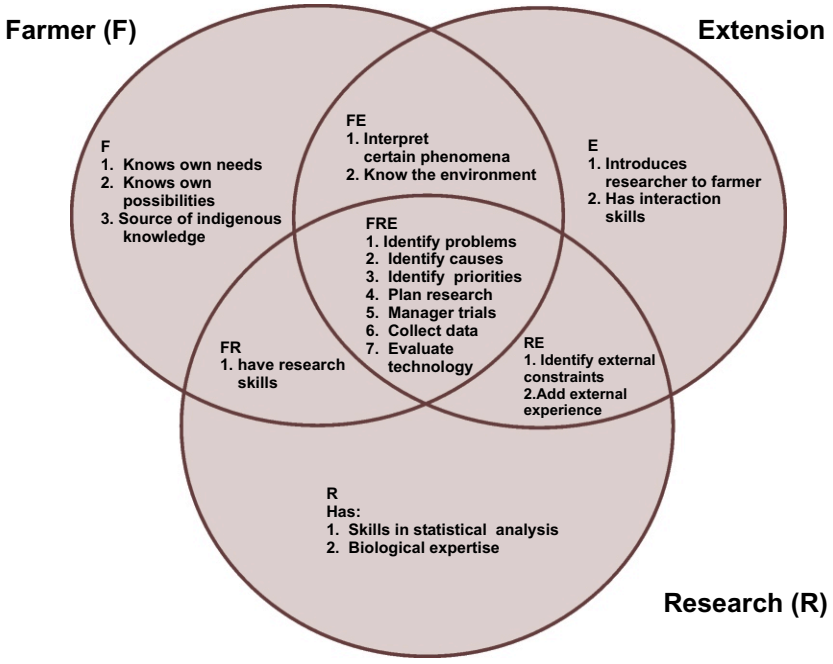


Figure 2. Relationships between research, extension and farmers

Strategies for linkages and partnerships include:

- Carrying out a stakeholder analysis to understand who may be involved;
- Partners should be chosen against some specific criteria which may be expressed as values, guiding principles or questions so that there is enough basis for partnership;
- The partnership should then be formalised through such instruments as a Memorandum of Understanding;
- Carrying out joint planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation activities; and
- Assessing the partnership itself as part of the process of monitoring and evaluation and improving upon it.

In Zimbabwe, the concept of farmer experimentation was first developed and extensively tested in Masvingo Province, during the 'Conservation Tillage project'. Dialogue and farmer

experimentation was for the first time being encouraged in an environment where for nearly three generations, a very powerful top-down extension service had considered farmers' knowledge to be backward and of no importance, and where farmers had been conditioned to accept externally developed standardised technologies.

The experimentation process was a partnership between government through AGRITEX, GTZ, a German funding organisation, the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) and local farmer groups. The Conservation Tillage (ConTill) Project, which was about improving soil and water for better productivity, used a participatory research approach. Farmers were encouraged to develop and improve their own techniques through trial and error. Most of these technical options built on indigenous knowledge and were developed, adapted and tested by farmers. Towards the end of a cropping season, farmer groups analysed this performance, discussed the problems, and suggested solutions, modifications and new experiments to be implemented in the next season. The project led to the development of several options for soil and water conservation originating from traditional farming practices and adapted to the present farming systems.

In this process, the role of the extension agent was to encourage farmers to experiment with ideas and techniques originating from their own experiences as well as from outside. The role of the farmers was to experiment, apply their traditional and indigenous knowledge, to combine it with new technologies and modern science. As an overall effect, the knowledge and understanding gained through this process strengthened farmers' confidence in their own solutions and increased their ability to choose the best options, and to develop solutions that are appropriate for their specific ecological, economical and socio-cultural conditions and circumstances.

During the implementation and experimentation process, new questions and problems arise and become the community's 'action research agenda'. In addition, development workers from government and ITDG learnt how to work with farmers as equals.

Learning by working: outsiders stand to learn a great deal by physically working with farmers and others.

CHAPTER 8:

PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPROVED CAPACITY AND IMPACT

Tafadzwa Marange

8.1: INTRODUCTION

The earlier chapters have synthesised and crystallised various participatory development approaches, principles, methodologies and tools. As highlighted earlier, it is important for readers to note that the useful recommendations proposed throughout this guide are not a blue print. They should be used as a guide to design, implement and evaluate projects to suit the various environmental, social and institutional contexts.

In this concluding chapter, we wish to explore one more area where participatory practice is needed: institutional partnerships. One Pocciotto defined it as, " A means to an end, a collaborative relationship towards mutually agreed partnership objectives involving shared responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations." Increasingly, development workers need to have a good understanding of the institutional framework in order to build a platform for effective participation. Participation and partnership can be ends in themselves. We need to view innovative participatory partnerships as an evolving process and as a means to a greater end. We should consider them as a way of generating productive, complementary and synergistic relationships that draw on partners' diverse strengths. The dynamics of this process are expected to contribute to better problems and opportunities identification.

The evolving development arena and, donor landscape have seen a general move towards multi-institutional and multi-sectoral initiatives. The private-public-NGO-farmer organisation sector partnerships are also increasingly becoming an integral component of development initiatives.

This chapter mainly focuses on why and how partnerships can be an important development strategy.

8.2 WHY FORM INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS?

Most development work in Africa is geared towards alleviating poverty. Poverty itself is multi-disciplinary but an organisation focuses on a few themes. This could be livestock and not crops, water harvesting and not seed security. The reason for forming partnerships is therefore to be able to address many development matters at the same time, to adopt a more holistic approach to development. The other reason is that organisations have different strengths:

some are good at conceiving ideas; others at implementing, some have vast experience while others are green. Institutions working on the same themes can also form partnerships.

Box 8: Reasons for and Characteristics of Partnerships:

- Partnerships are entered into to improve capacity and impact, as well as to increase reach, overcome fragmentation, learn, increase prospects of sustainability, broaden client participation and become more responsive.

- Partnerships have become an important way of development to curb competition and duplication and to marshal forces for solidarity and sizeable social change. They build on the notion of solidarity as seen in the 1960s. Sometimes valuable resources and time are wasted through deliberate neglection of relevant participatory assessments done by others.

- Partnership denotes parity, sharing, being part of, having a common purpose. It is both a process and a product.

- Partnerships differ in degree of mutuality and power. On one hand we can have sub-contracting, direct funding and networks, while on the other we can have consortia and joint ventures. The kind of partnership being discussed here is where there is a high degree of mutuality and shared power.

- The kinds of capacities that may be enhanced in partnerships include: *Conceptual*; *Social;* and *Technical*. *Conceptual capacity* is the ability to forecast, compare, synthesize, organise and plan. It is the ability to work creatively with knowledge, information and ideas. It results in vision, mission and policies. *Social capacity,* on the other hand, is the ability to build, maintain and manage relationships in the institutional environment. It includes the capacity to manage conflict as well as to balance professional and personal interests. *Technical capacity* in this context is the ability to design, plan and implement activities as well as to set up systems that support these.

- Another school of thought, as expounded by Olive of South Africa indicate that there are three additional areas of capacity in partnerships: *Organisational, Informational* and *Economic*. *Organisational* is about being able to mobilise and organise groups and teams, as well as maintaining and developing the organisation's capacity to reposition itself if need be. *Informational capacity* refers to the ability to obtain the information needed, and being able to process it appropriately for effective decision-making. *Economic capacity* is the ability to generate or obtain the necessary resources and to remain accountable.

- In partnerships, resources flow in both directions. These resources are linked to the different capacities discussed above: information, knowledge, skills, equipment, funds, credibility, legitimacy, returns on investment, empowerment influence, status etc.

8.3 SOME FEATURES OF ENABLING PARTNERSHIPS

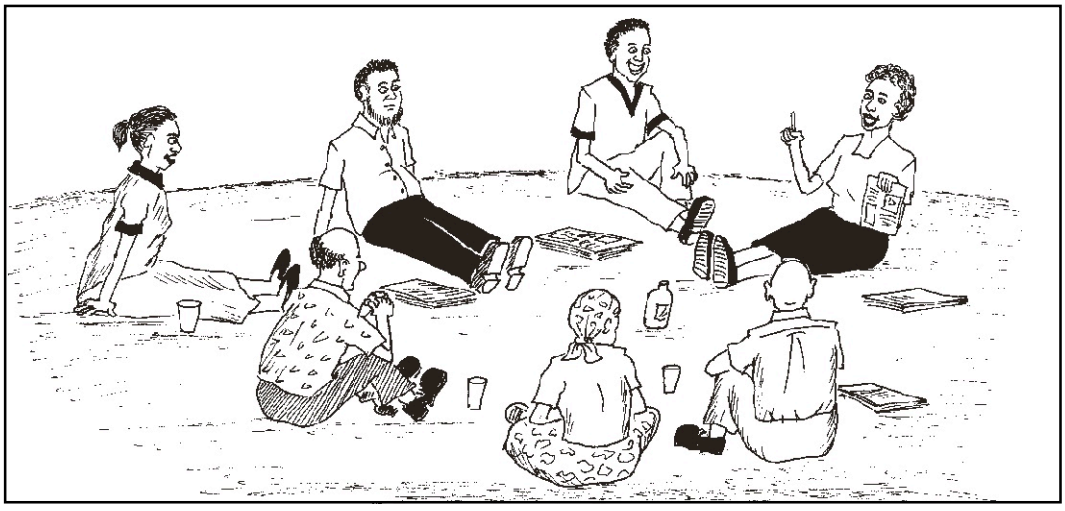
Here are some suggestions concerning how partnerships can function effectively and bring about the necessary improvements in people's lives:

- **Availability of resources to** support the partnership;
- **Reciprocal transparency and accountability:** This means that partners are accountable to each other, not just one to the other. The values of participation therefore underpin partnerships;
- **Mutual trust.** Again partners should develop trust in each other. There should be enough trust at the beginning to create the partnership but as it takes off the way business is conducted and the meeting of promises should be used to foster trust;
- **Since a partnership defines common goals,** these need to be reached jointly. The decision-making processes should also be joint;
- **Regular communication is** essential so that progress is shared, problems are identified, monitoring is done and decisions are made or unmade. The communication channels should be clearly defined and evaluated over time;
- **Accepting each other is** another important part of partnerships. Imagine you have a spouse who does not accept you. There are bound to be problems. No acceptance, no trust, no partnership;
- **Commitment:** There will be instances when the going gets tough, when problems arise, when the partnership demands more time and resources than was planned for. Commitment to the shared cause certainly helps;
- **Equitable distribution of costs and benefits.** One of the major sources of tensions in partnership is concerned with fairness in the sharing of costs and benefits. If someone is not pulling his or her weight, the best thing to do is to confront him or her and discuss the matter. It is the responsibility of each partner to ensure that they are not letting others down;
- **Performance monitoring mechanisms** are essential for tracking progress. The monitoring should look at whether plans have been met but more importantly, whether the correct processes have been used to design, implement, and evaluate. Have the processes involved all relevant partners? Has there been domination by some partners? Is the partnership making a difference on the ground?
- **Finally partnerships need to have mechanisms for resolving disputes.** The mechanisms should be developed collectively so that each partner buys into them.

8.4 CHALLENGES

a. No culture of working with each other: Some organisations have no history of working in close partnership with others. They have operated as islands. This is a problem if they perceive themselves as above or better than others. The current drive for research institutes to partner with farmer groups and organisations has been problematic because of such attitudes. The farmers, on their part, have generally developed little confidence to interact with researchers. This is where respect for each other is an important approach to doing business together.

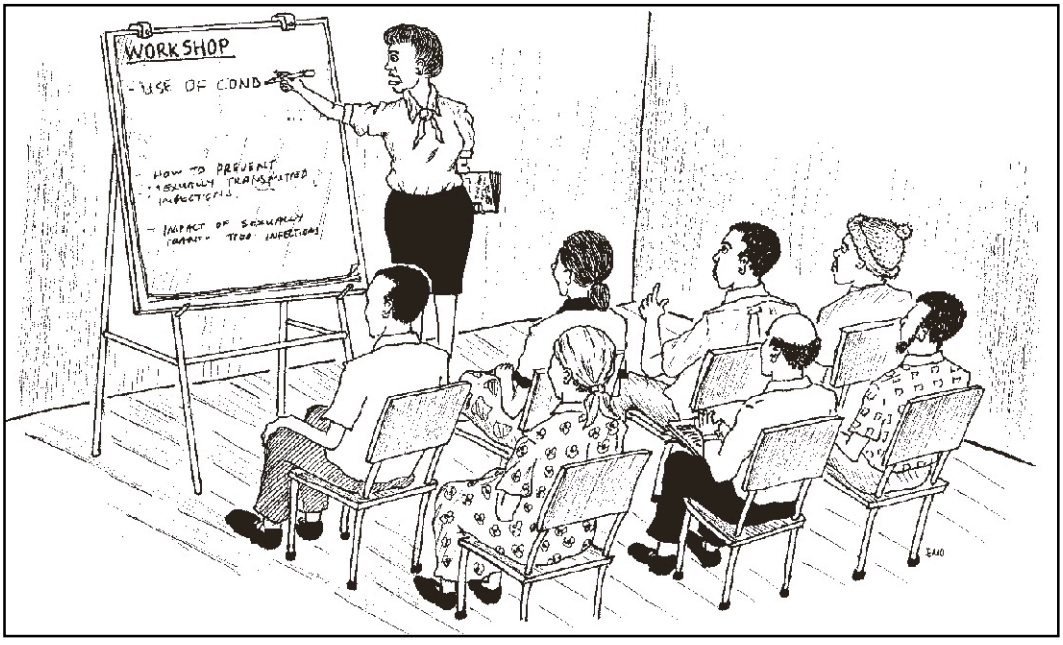
b. Communication: Where the partnership is between and among organisations with different communication approaches and even language use, different writing cultures, tensions might arise as to whose communication culture should prevail. Sometimes interpreters have to be used, two or more reports of the same meeting have to be compiled for different audiences in the partnership, which can hamper effectiveness of participative processes. Large distances between partners where meetings are expensive can worsen communication challenges. The use of the Internet and e-mail has reduced the problem but there are usually some partners without access to the facilities or unable to use them. However, there are examples of dotted success all over sub-Sahara Africa. Development agencies particularly NGOs should also harness their documentation potential.



People need to be properly positioned to dialogue effectively.

c. Institutional relationships: Human interrelationships are essential to successful partnerships. The attitudes and perceptions among development partners (private and public research and extension and private sectors) sometimes hinder effectiveness of the participatory process. Whilst the relationship between the farmers and development workers are important it is also necessary to be aware of the other inter-institutional linkages that exist in any community. This is best achieved through an institutional mapping process that can draw from secondary data and interviews with key informants and farmers.

d. Power relations: The CPHP has tried to take a much broader and longer-term perspective to include overcoming institutional barriers within the national innovation systems. Addressing the bottlenecks within a system improves the relationships between organisations and their individual capabilities. It involves organisational culture and interacting, as well as new skills and infrastructure. Very often development workers are expected to think and do things differently without the adequate backstopping training support. Whilst continuing to support the traditional capacity building, the CPHP has looked well beyond individual organizations to strengthen the institutional context within which projects operate. Power relationships between the different players in a participative process are often imbalanced. The CPHP strategy has been to actively support weaker groups to negotiate research outcomes that are important to their livelihoods.



Human interaction is essential in building successful partnerships.

e. Participation as the panacea: It is important to acknowledge that there are instances where a participative approach is not the most effective and appropriate way to deal with certain issues. There are instances where someone has to make firm decisions that may not necessarily please everyone as long as the principles of transparency and fairness are applied. We at the CPHP have learnt that an all-inclusive policy is only effective if there are clear and transparent guiding principles and selection criteria. We have come across projects that are disabled by trying to get everyone agreeing to a particular suggestion. Whilst the democratic principles are generally good there are clear instances where the majority might be innocently misguided. Whilst needs identification and solution generation should be participative, we should also realise that we are all limited by the scope of our experiences and exposure. There is nothing inherently wrong in a development worker proposing new or unfamiliar possibilities and opportunities.

Box 9: Innovative research and development

The CPHP through its Partnerships for Innovation Strategy of 2002 introduced a research paradigm, which emphasised the importance of understanding and working with national institutional systems in order to convert research into successful innovation. Best practice from its portfolio convinced it that the organisational and institutional contexts were key components of the innovation process.

The projects were conceived within a more strategic context, and with a wider set of stakeholders assembled and ready to play more active roles. Project design needs to take into account more flexibility in operation; more advanced planning for uptake, and with monitoring extended to embrace the softer issues of institutional and partnerships outcomes. The experiences reveal that partnerships, being looser projects actually require stronger, not weaker, leadership and management skills, and accountability should not be obscured.

8.5 CONCLUSION

Partnerships for the sake of partnerships are of no use and have high transaction costs. Participation and partnerships should not be viewed as an end in themselves but as means to impact positively on the livelihoods of those we care about. According to an IRRI study, *"Participation lies in the heart of research partnership with NGOs. In this regard, it is important to recognize that it is not a substitute for science. It is a way of enhancing the practice of science."* Organisations participate in a particular initiative sometimes for completely different reasons. The basis of this participation in the partnership and associated benefits to each part should be discussed.

It is important to keep in mind that participatory tools, principles, concepts and techniques are as good as the people who implement them. As long as these participative processes do not have the desired impact on the livelihoods of those we care about, our investments go to waste. Farmer concerns and NGOs protectionism attitudes are sometimes justifiable: **After all whose life is on the line?**

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BEYOND PARTICIPATORY TOOLS

Field Guide

This field guide is primarily intended for development facilitators who work directly with communities. It seeks to provide participatory development ideas and suggestions for a development worker to consider using when working with communities. Its primary focus is to explain why and how participatory concepts, tools and techniques can be used effectively in development work. More specifically, the guide seeks to synthesise and crystallise various participatory development approaches, principles, methodologies and tools; and expose and share relevant experiences from eastern and southern Africa. It further aims to stimulate creativity and adaptive use of approaches and tools; raise interest in a more holistic approach to participatory development and integrate gender into participatory processes.

This field guide was written against growing evidence that many of us who use participatory tools need more understanding of the why, in addition to the how. Unless we understand enough of the reasoning behind the use of a particular tool or set of tools, we are unlikely to generate accurate information and the desired change.

The above limitation has resulted in the ineffective and rigid use of tools such as semi-structured interviews, transect walks and force field analysis. A good understanding of the techniques and approaches, and what lies behind the tools, should enable us to question them, to adapt them to different situations and to develop them further. Continuous reflection and action can bring about personal development that increases one's potential to make a difference in one's personal and professional life.

The other reason for production of the guide is that while there have been many experiences in participatory rural development in Africa, there has been limited gleaning, crystallisation and sharing of these experiences. The guide therefore makes a determined effort to pull together regional experiences where the social, ecological and political conditions are similar to our own. This manual is experience-based and draws on the various experiences of the three organisations and the partners they have worked with. We acknowledge that we have benefited from the documented lessons and experiences from other continents. We also realise that we have a responsibility to share our experiences among ourselves and with others. Where necessary, we have drawn upon experiences outside southern and eastern Africa.

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