Participatory Learning and Action/ PLA
Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is an umbrella term for wide range of similar approaches and methodologies i.e. Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning Methods (PALM), Participatory Action Research (PAR) etc.
What is Participation?

- Participation has different connotations for different people in different contexts.
- Different levels of participation – varying levels of involvement of community from material contribution, to organization, to empowerment.
Stages of Participation

- Passive
- Information giving/sharing
- Consultations
- Material incentives
- Functional Participation
- Interactive
- Self-mobolization
- Catalyzing Change
Barriers to Participation

–Pre-Conceived Ideas

- We know all about it.
- Who can come up with something new?
- It is a waste of time.
PLANNER'S IDEAS

PEOPLE'S VIEWS
“By simply organizing one meeting in the village the administrator would come to know all the problems of the poor”

“Conducting participatory appraisal in the village means ‘dividing’ villagers into caste and class and ‘conflicts’ among villagers will emerge”

“Do you think ‘we’ are ‘dishonest’”
Behaviour and Attitudes (B&A) within PRA
What is Participatory Learning and Action?
An approach for learning about & engaging with communities.

- Collection of participatory and visual method to facilitate a process of collective analysis and learning
- Promotes active participation of communities, shared learning and is flexible
- Community empowerment
A way of learning from and with community members to investigate, analyse and evaluate constraints and opportunities, and make informed and timely decisions regarding development process/projects.
to understand complete relationship between environment, economy, culture and politics in the rural society.

to enable local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge and condition to plan and to act
Enable ‘outsiders’ to begin to see the community through the eyes of local people
More than just learning. Analysis, Planning and Action. It helps us

General analysis of the question

Assessment: Peoples need
Programme/Project Evaluation
Feasibility Project Prioritisation
Three Pillars

Behaviour & Attitude

Methods

Sharing

Start with
Triangulation I

TEAM

Multidisciplinary

Insider/outsider

Men & Women
Triangulation II

Interview & Discussion

Tools & Technique

Observation

Diagram
Triangulation III

Events & Process

Source of Information

People

Places
What is ‘good’ PLA?

People’s/villagers’ knowledge & capabilities

‘We’ and ‘they’

Handing over the stick, They do it : Bottom up

Relaxed rapport between ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’

Humility, patience: Working as the facilitators

Optimal ignorance
Innovative Methods I

* Watch, listen and learn

Flexible, exploratory, interacting

* Inventive, qualitative, holistic

* on the spot analysis

Improving, inventing & adapting
"Visual Literacy", verbal to visual

Diagramming & visual sharing

‘said’ is ‘shown’ and ‘seen’

‘Counting’ to ‘comparing’
We Know

We don't Know

They Know

They don't know

Area to start
Case study of a training programme- ‘village visit’ to study ‘reasons for non-enrolment and ‘drop out’

Before village visit ‘our perception’-

- Poverty of the parents
- Illiteracy of the parents
- Other economic reasons
- Villagers do not know and understand the value of education for their children
- Sibling care
- Agricultural work assigned to children
Case study of a training programme - ‘village visit’ to study ‘reasons for non-enrolment and ‘drop out’

- Learning **after** the village visit
- Teachers’ irregular attendance to school
- Poor quality of education in the school
- Punishment given to the children
- Communication gap between teacher and villagers, especially the poorest
- Lack of facilities in the school - drinking water, toilets
- Sibling care to younger brothers/sisters
Table 4.17: Prioritisation of Problems of Livelihood and Primary Schooling (SC/ST and girl child), as 'observed' by the 'outsiders' and 'perceived' by the 'insiders' 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Prioritisation/Ranking By</th>
<th>Interfaces/Issues related to DPEP/BEP District Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy agricultural Household work*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Convergence, rural development, watershed SC/ST programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. mobilisation awareness #</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Enrolment and retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child marriages #</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Convergence with other development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of financial resources *</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Convergence with rural development, watershed, SC/ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mid-day meal #</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Convergence with non-educational incentives by educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance/inaccessibility *</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No teacher-parent Communication #</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Enrolment, retention and quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No teaching learning material #</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Enrolment, retention and quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender discussion $</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Access and convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No joyful learning #</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Retention and quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water not available in the school *</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Access/enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No/unsafe school building</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of good teacher</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Enrolment, retention and quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>No health centre #</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Convergence with primary health centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High unemployment #</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Convergence with other development programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>No electricity</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Convergence with education department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No motorable road</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Convergence with public works department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of irrigation</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Convergence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * More priority to SC, # More priority for ST and $ More specific to girl child.
Rest of the problems are common to all the sections of disadvantaged group.
Source: Opinion questionnaire and PRA Ranking January, 1997
Within ‘insiders’ - problems related to the elementary education in rural areas

**sc females**
- Punishment to child
- Children do not listen to the parents
- School dress
- Irregular mid day meal
- Illicit liquor consumption by the male members
- Women do not have cash income

**sc Males**
- Irregularity of teachers
- Poor quality of edu.
- Poor functioning of VEC
- Irregular supply of books and dress
- Heavy agriculture work load of mothers
- Mothers’ illiteracy
Within ‘insiders’- problems related to the elementary education in rural areas

- **Students of class Six**
- Text books not available
- Sanskrit, Algebra difficult
- Lack of teachers in all the subjects
- No sports facilities and sports teacher
- Broken window and doors of the class
- Furniture not available for 6th class
Community School Monitoring Diary
Janshala Programme, Andhra Pradesh
Basket of Tools & Techniques for Collecting & Analysing Information

- Do it yourself (Learning by doing)
- Physical transect (Transect walk)
- Focus group discussion
- Participatory mapping
- Preference Ranking
- Seasonal Calendar
- Time Line
- Venn Diagram
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LAND PATTERN</th>
<th>UNDULATING LAND</th>
<th>PLAIN</th>
<th>HILLY AREA</th>
<th>PLAIN</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOIL-TYPE</td>
<td>SANDY SOIL</td>
<td>LOAMY SOIL</td>
<td>RED SANDY SOIL + Boulders</td>
<td>CLAYEY</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAND-USE PATTERN</td>
<td>GRAZING GROUND</td>
<td>AGRICULTURE [IRRIGATED + UNIRRIGATED]</td>
<td>VILLAGE + HILL [SMALL HUTS]</td>
<td>AGRICULTURE (IRRIGATED)</td>
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<td>VEGETATION</td>
<td>BABOOL (ACACIA) BERRY, WILD GRASSES, SISAM</td>
<td>GRAM (MOSTLY) BABOOL, SISAM</td>
<td>BARREN HILL, NEEM, SISAM</td>
<td>PEAS + WHEAT, NILGIRI, NEEM</td>
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<td>PROBLEMS</td>
<td>EROSION, DEFORESTATION, [OVER-GRAZING]</td>
<td>EROSION, DEEP WATER TABLE [OVER-EXPLOITATION OF GROUND-WATER]</td>
<td>EROSION, SANITATION PROB IN VILLAGE</td>
<td>BAD DRAINAGE HENCE LAND IS KEPT FALLOW DURING KHAIRIF SEASON</td>
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<td>IMPROVEMENT MEASURES REQUIRED</td>
<td>AFFORESTATION, TEAK PLANTATION</td>
<td>WATER SHED MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>AFFORESTATION IN THE HILLS,</td>
<td>PROPER DRAINAGE SYSTEM,</td>
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<td>WATERSHED MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>PLANTATION AT BUNDS</td>
<td>DRAINAGE SYSTEM IN THE VILLAGE</td>
<td>INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE [THREE CROPS/ YEAR] POSSIBLE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MULBERRY PLANTATION</td>
<td>HORTICULTURE</td>
<td>PLANTATION ALONG ROAD</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DAIRY FARM</td>
<td>SERICULTURE</td>
<td></td>
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GROUP-V
TIME LINE OF INDRABHAWAN COMPLEX

Upto 1971
- Present Complex was a Hotel (Indra Bhawan) and Residence & Owner - L.J. Singh.

1971
- Induction & Inservice Course commenced with about 150 participants.
  - Course held in present office building (Hostel)
  - Residential Accommodation at Mapale Hills (taken on rent)

1974
- Academy acquired both Indra Bhawan & Mapale Hills
  - Staff to run the course hardly changed from 3 nrs to 4 now.

1991
- Major Earthquake occurred but no damages to both building.

1992
- New Hostel Building for trainees constructed.
  - Old building converted to office (GF) and Training Classes (FF)

1994
- Computers introduced and no of trainees increased about 200-250/year.

1997
- 75th Induction Course commenced (7th July - 8th Aug '97)
  - Under Staffed and Overstretched Resource Crunch.
PROCESS OF MAPPING

INDEX

- OTH
- SC
- BOYS OUT OF SCHOOL
- BOYS IN SCHOOL
- OUT OF SCHOOL GIRL
- GIRL IN SCHOOL
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<tr>
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<td>Low Wages</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>IX</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Early Marriage &amp; Dowry</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>XII</td>
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<td>Police Apathy</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>VIII</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
विभिन्न तथ्यात्मक संयोजनों के समुदाय से सम्बन्ध

धातव का नाम: भारती (अलापपुर)
होला का नाम: आफुरीही
हाल देश का नाम: अनुज जाति (सापिक)
पिनाच: 11/01/1998

चौथी क्षेत्र के सुधारकों का नाम
1. गुलाब गोदू भुजानी
2. मजलाल बघू
3. गहा पला दास
4. माजा भरी
5. हेरी काँगर
6. बुंदेलकर भुजानी
7. राम चन्द्र दास
8. विजय उमती
9. पोदा अरुती
10. देबिती देवी
11. जुममुर उमती
12. देवकी जुममुर
13. जीतला जुममुर
14. सैती देवी

पहली क्षेत्र के सुधारकों का नाम
1. अभिनव कुमार
2. अमृतेश्वर उमती
3. प्रियसुन देवी
4. राजेश जुममुर
5. शंकर जुममुर
6. आखिर पदवी के उच्च शासन अधिकारी
Ideal objective/Long term outcome

‘Extracting’ to ‘Empowerment’

‘Individual’ to ‘Group’

‘Closed’ to ‘Open’

‘Sustainable local action and Institution’
A Potential not Panacea

* Self critical & responsible
* Welcoming errors
* Using own value judgement
* Right attitude, approach and behaviour are the key to PALM/PRA
Possible dangers I

- **Right Team** (Gender Component)
- **Right Questions** (Intensive Preparation)
- **Too Quick**: Observing Small Part of the Problems & Overlooking Invisible
- **Rapport with and Involvement of the Poorest and the Women**
- **Failure to Listen** (Humility and Respect)
Possible Dangers II

- Value Judgement about others and Generalisation
- Raising Expectation in the Community
- “If the approach is wrong PRA will not work. Right attitude and behaviour are the key to PRA.”
Participatory Learning and Action is what we make of it. It is a potential not a panacea. If you do not like it, leave it. No one will mind. But if you like it, use it and share it, and help others to share.
Thankyou
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Participation</th>
<th>Part played in the process by local participants</th>
<th>'Outsider' control in establishing priorities &amp; objectives</th>
<th>'Participant' ownership of the process &amp; involvement in setting agendas</th>
<th>Mode of research &amp; action, in relation to participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-option</td>
<td>token representatives chosen, but have no real input or power; agency decision-making proceeds in a top-down manner 'in the name of the community'.</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>ON/FOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>tasks are assigned, with incentives; outsiders decide agenda and direct the process; some potential for tactical subversion at community level.</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>FOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>opinions are asked of local people, often through male leaders but also of different interest groups. Outsiders analyse and decide on the appropriate course of action</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>FOR/WITH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>local people work together with outsiders to determine priorities, responsibility for decision-making on action remains with outsiders, who direct the process</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>WITH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-learning</td>
<td>local people and outsiders share their knowledge, to create new understandings and work together towards action. Responsibility is shared, with different roles for outsiders as facilitators and catalysts</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>WITH/BY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective action</td>
<td>local people set their own agenda and mobilise to carry it out. Outsiders may act as initial catalysts, but the process proceeds in their absence</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *</td>
<td>BY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Adapted from: Biggs (1989); Hart (1992); Pretty (1995)]

Andrea Cornwall, April 1995.
What is participation?

“Participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them”
Listening and Consultation

- Essential prerequisite for participation
- ‘Listen to’ and ‘consulted with’ improve learning process - for both who is listening and who is being listened
- ‘Who needs to learn what’?
Social Learning

- Learning about how and why behaviour (both outsiders and insiders) needs to be changed, experience and expertise
- The stakeholders generate and internalize during the participatory planning and/or implementation of a development activity does enable social change.
- Stakeholders themselves generate, share and use information, establish priorities, specify objectives and develop strategies
Social Invention

- Stakeholders invent the new practices and institutional arrangement they are willing to adopt
- Distinguishing between what seem to outsiders to be good ideas and what local people invent as practical
- Expert standing outside of the local system often miss possibilities and opportunities that come naturally to the stakeholders
- Speed and depth - people willing change
Commitment

- Participatory process: people can make informed commitments and by observing the participatory process, assessment can be made of the presence and absence of commitment necessary to ensure the sustainability.

- Financial and other arrangements must be put in place to deliver these commitments.
Building Capacity to Act

- **How we view the people** - as ‘beneficiaries’ - recipient of services, resources and development support - benefits not sustainable

- As ‘Client’ people’s voice begin to heard decentralising authority and resources and strengthening local institutions

- ‘Ownership’ - Clients become the owner and manager of the asset and activities - high intensity of participation, more to be involved in ‘formulation’ process
What we have learnt? If we want…..

- **Every one is correct**
- **conditioning- experiences, attitude, background and ……………..**
- “We see the world not as it is but as we are” .................................
- **Can we perceive different dimensions related to the Elementary Education Planning at local/micro level**
Thankyou
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Sanjay</th>
<th>Niran</th>
<th>Navin</th>
<th>Sanjay1</th>
<th>Rajiv</th>
<th>Rajiv1</th>
<th>Rajiv2</th>
<th>Samarth</th>
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**Source:** Prisoners No. 821 to 830
Graph

- Language
- Cultural
- Computer
- Public Adm.
- Economics
- Management
- Law
- Case Study
- Trek
- P.T.
- Sports
- Fete

Size = impact on the OTs
distance between the circles = interaction set in the subjects