

Participatory research in Asia

Rajesh Tandon

1980

UNESCO Knowledge Democracy / Participatory Research Hub
Publications

Original citation:

Tandon, R. (1980). *Participatory research in Asia*. Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education.

Downloaded from UVicSpace Research & Learning Repository

dspace.library.uvic.ca



**University
of Victoria**

Libraries

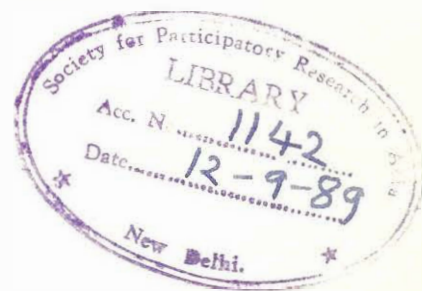


PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

IN

TAN

ASIA



Edited by: Dr Rajesh Tandon

PRIA
1142

PR3:3 TAN
PRIA LIBRARY

ISBN No. 909850 57 7

Printed by: Centre for Continuing Education The Australian National University
on behalf of the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education

CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
PREFACE	iii
ISSUES IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA	1
Issues in Participatory Research in Asia	2
Rajesh Tandon	
THEORETICAL ISSUES	7
Participatory Research: An Exploratory Statement	8
Rajesh Tandon	
Research : A Method of Colonization	16
Zafrullah Chowdhury	
Participatory Research: Ethic or Logic	26
Sushanta Banerjee	
Participatory Research Method	32
Jamileh Abhari	
The Balance of Knowledge	36
"Times of India"	
A Note on Understanding Participation Process in Organisation System Design	39
Nitish R. De	
Participatory Research: A Critique	41
Angjan Ghosh	
Participatory Research: Some Irreverent Questions (A Critique of a Critical Critique)	43
Arvind N. Das	
CASE STUDIES	47
What Did We Learn? Mehrauli: A Literacy Program Which Failed	48
Mehrauli Group	
Organising Mobilising and Movement	60
Nitish R. De	
Experience in Participatory Research	88
Bikram Sarkar	
Grassroot Researchers Training Program	91
Farmers Assistance Board Inc., Quezon City, Philippines	
Agricultural Workers in Action	103
The Story of the Shramik Sangathan	
"How"	
Gonoshasthaya Kendra (People's Health Centre) (Dacca, Bangladesh)	111
Gonoshasthaya Kendra	115
P.O. Nayarhat, District Dacca Bangladesh	

	PAGE NO.
Peer Group Development Project Seva Mandir, Udaipur, India	134
Gram Vikas Mandal Belgaum, India (A report)	147
Participative Development Process in Tribal Areas: Seva Mandir's View Kishore Saint	154
Participatory Research: An Approach in a Tribal Non-formal Education Setting D. Subba Rao	157
Wage Negotiations as Participatory Research? P. Chadha	159
REPORTS ON MEETINGS ON PR	161
A Report on Regional Workshop in Southern India A.V. Natarajan	162
A Report on Participatory Research Meeting in India Prepared by Dr Rajesh Tandon	171
A Report on the Asian Regional Meeting of Participatory Research Prepared by Dr Rajesh Tandon	179
A Report from Regional Development Workshop, Bangladesh Received from Dr Rezaul Haque	183
APPENDIX	
Participatory Research Project: A Note	189

PREFACE

This volume represents a major step in the Participatory Research Project (PRP) in Asia and is the first publication of its kind in the region. It has now been a little over two years since the project was started by the International Council for Adult Education. The PRP has been implemented through the creation and strengthening of five regional networks, and I have been acting as the coordinator of the Asian Regional Network for the past 18 months. A statement of the objectives of the Participatory Research Project and Network is included as an appendix.

This volume draws together emergent theoretical concerns of Participatory Research (PR) in Asia, a set of case studies illustrating some of the underlying principles and methodologies, some short discussion notes, and key reports from regional and sub-regional meetings. The purposes of this volume are manifold: first, this volume will present to the members of the network as well as those interested in PR, the current 'state of the art' in PR: it is intended to initiate a series of such volumes in Asia which will reflect the evolving character of PR as a concept and methodology; second, this volume is intended to stimulate further writing on and documentation of PR. I believe that a significantly greater amount of work is going on in Asia than is represented here. This is a weakness of the present volume: it is heavily biased in favour of some countries, especially India, than others. I do believe that other countries of Asia have a lot of exciting material to contribute to PR. I hope this volume will stimulate a more active circulation of already existing materials. Finally, this volume is intended to be a report on what has been happening in PR in Asia through exchanges across the region. Already four meetings/workshops have been organized on PR in Asia, and it is planned to hold many more within and across the region in the coming years.

This volume is organized in four main sections. The first section provides an overview paper on issues in participatory research in Asia, reflecting on the papers included in this volume as well as drawing on insights into PR gained from knowledge of issues and concerns emerging from other regional networks. The second section draws together those papers commenting on theoretical and epistemological arguments for PR, some of them supportive while others of them are critical in tenor. My own paper provides an argument against classical research and then presents a model of PR. The paper by Chowdury uses medical research as the theme to challenge the colonizing influence of the empiricist paradigm and outlines a strong case against much research undertaken in the name of development, providing background understanding for the increasing interest in alternative approaches to research such as PR represents. Other papers are concerned with the relationship of participatory research and action research, including comment on the dangers and limitations associated with a PR approach. The third section on case studies contains a number of papers that are varied not only in their focus and setting but also in methodology and outcome. Some are attempts at organizing, others at adult learning, and still others at mere understanding. They have been included in more or less their original form, and thus have no uniform content or style. Yet they provide a glimpse into the practical aspects of PR and in the sense that it is the practice and reflection that informs and clarifies the concept of PR, they provide the main body of this volume. The fourth and last section includes reports from various regional

and national meetings in PR in Asia convened during the past year and a half.

It is hoped that publication of this set of papers will encourage further debate on participatory research and its relevance to the Asian region so that a more responsive dialogue can be built around the evolving concepts and practice of PR.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the assistance and support provided by several people in bringing out this volume as well as in the development of PR in Asia. Budd Hall, now Secretary-General of ICAE, has provided major impetus to Asian PR Network. His continued encouragement and support to me has made immense impact on this network. Chris Duke, Director of the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) at the Australian National University (and Secretary-General of the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education) has provided the guidance at all stages in identifying strategies and mechanisms for developing Asian PRP. It is his continued interest in PR that has made several workshops and publications possible. At his suggestion this volume is being published by the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education. Professor Nitish R. De, Director, Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education (PECCE), has lent his most encouraging support to the PR network and projects. Finally, I would like to thank Miss Chitra and Mr Sushil Kumar for their assistance in preparation of this manuscript and in coordinating the Asian PR network.

Rajesh Tandon
New Delhi
January, 1980

ISSUES IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA



ISSUES IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA*

Rajesh Tandon

The papers, case studies, discussion notes and reports presented in this volume provide some important themes for further analysis. In some ways, these materials are peculiarly Asian : rich in experience, diverse in content. Something peculiarly Asian. This prefatory note is intended to summarise some of the key characteristics of PR in Asia -- characteristics which are underlying the various papers and case studies presented here. Another purpose of this note is to articulate some critical issues in PR in Asia. These issues are reflected in this volume and they may be similar to the issues in PR elsewhere. What is intended in this note is an explicit description of those issues that have a bearing on the future of PR and are still eluding solutions.

Characteristics of Experiences of Participatory Research in Asia:

The concept of participatory research, as it is translated in the Asian experience, brings out the following salient characteristics:

- (a) PR has been, in its broad and loose meaning, a historical and ongoing process in Asia. While the label of this approach is relatively recent, it is quite common to come across examples of people engaged in similar efforts in various parts of Asia. The organisation of landless labourers in Dhulia District of the State of Maharashtra in India has used similar methodology in identifying the records of peoples whose land was illegally alienated from them. Similarly, the Rural Development Laboratory in South Korea utilised similar approach to ascertain the extent of functional illiteracy and indebtedness among the villages.

The relevance of this characteristic for PR is to recognise that while the label is new, the approach has existed in practice over the years. Moreover, while the labelling of concepts is an activity of professional researchers, ordinary people somehow do not see their approaches in similar conceptual frameworks. Therefore, PR is a new approach for us; it is an accepted and pragmatic approach for those in the field. This poses significant questions for the development of PR approach. For example, do we have a single, well-defined and well-articulated PR approach? Are we clear that the range represented by those engaged in PR (from professional researchers located in universities to semi-literate field workers in the village) necessarily implies tensions which need to be addressed in an inclusive manner?

- (b) A related characteristic that deserves mention here is the range of people and their diverse motivations to PR. In the Asian context, there are at least three sets of people and motivations.

*This is a modified version of a paper presented in the Adult Education Research Seminar held at Kungälv, Sweden, during June 25-27, 1979.

One set comprises of those who have been trained professionally in the traditional empiricist paradigm of traditional social science research. They have moved into PR due to the frustration with existing forms of research. For this set, the reality has remained untouched and unchanged despite tremendous development in research technology. They noticed that despite increased volume of printed material, the life of ordinary people has remained unchanged. Moreover, the institutionalisation of research in the universities and other such institutes has led to a monopolistic control over the research on one hand, and a distance of research from ordinary people on the other. For this set of researchers, such an irrelevance of social science research is intolerable in the context of the poor societies of Asia.

The second set of motivation is related to the need to redirect the processes of development in the various Asian countries. The failure of existing programs and models of development is being well established. These are the activists and field workers who have experienced frustrations and anger over the misdirection of our developmental strategies. For them, PR is a possible alternative to provide momentum to decentralised alternative models of development -- development of the people with their active participation. They are engaged in localised experiments in PR to try out these alternative models of development.

Education as a means of social transformation is the underlying motivation of the third set. For this set of people, research is a learning and educational experience and, therefore, should be attempted in a manner that facilitates society level change. Unless research contributes to learning and unless that learning is wide-spread (to include those who are part of that setting), research is a meaningless activity. To that extent, PR has been found the relevant approach to education and learning.

- (c) The size of rural populations in Asian countries as well as the complexities of developmental dynamics have contributed to the overwhelming rural context for participatory research in Asia. The best examples of PR efforts in Asia are presently available from the rural context only. The Farmers Assistance Board in Philippines, The Peoples' Health Centre in Bangladesh, the Integrated Rural Development Program of Thailand and the Joint Irrigation Systems among Tribals of Southern Rajasthan in India are some of the examples of PR in Asia.

This is an important characteristic of PR in several ways. Firstly, the rural context of PR in Asia has highlighted the relevance of PR in developmental efforts. Secondly, this rural context of PR in Asia aptly compliments the somewhat more urban context of PR in Europe and North America. Thirdly, it can provide for suitable illustrations for future research in other developing countries outside Asia. For example, the efforts of Tanzania, Venezuela and Chile have immensely contributed to our own understanding in Asia. Fourthly, dynamics of research and its costs in poor countries of Asia can be re-examined through these PR efforts in rural contexts. These efforts demonstrate the value of concentrating in the rural context where the pay-off is likely to be more meaningful.

Issues in Participatory Research in Asia:

The Asian experience of Participatory Research to-date brings out a number of major issues which are presented here:

- (a) Participatory research in its attempt to bring about social transformation, has a necessary relationship with social action. While classical social science research has conspicuously avoided any connection with social action, the experience demonstrates that PR invariably culminates in some form of social action. To that extent, participatory research and participatory social action are theoretically and empirically closely linked with each other.

It is this very linkage between PR and participatory social action that has scared many professional researchers from joining PR. It is precisely because of this linkage that many have attacked PR as merely a model of community development and not research. In the Asian context, PR is increasingly becoming synonymous with processes of liberation of people. The involvement of poor, marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers in the twin processes of PR and participatory social action have consequently resulted in enhancing their self-confidence and ability to take collective initiative in their common interest. The PR approach can contribute towards the liberation of people only if it is associated with some form of participatory social action. Are we in a mood to accept this as an operational definition of PR? Are we brave enough to commit ourselves to a research approach which is closely linked with social action? Is it possible to demarcate separate identities of PR and community development without ignoring the elements of participatory social action?

- (b) To the extent that PR in Asia has invariably been associated with some form of social action, there have been clear political implications of engaging in PR. To use PR approach in identifying land alienation with the organisation of landless tribal labourers is to link enquiry with the political dynamics of the setting. To join with the farmers in Philippines to engage in social analysis of their existing situation is to raise political pressures about the existing structure. To develop an alternative health care system in Bangladesh which favours the rural poor is to enter into direct conflict with those whose interests are challenged. The PR approach, by its commitment to the under-privileged as well as to social action, enters into a political arena where questions of method and validity become simplistic.

The political implications of PR, therefore, become more visible in the existing political contexts of Asian countries. While some of these countries are explicitly oppressive in silencing political opposition, others are much more subtle. The consequences of such oppressive political and governmental systems in Asian countries are obvious for those engaged in PR. It is not uncommon, therefore, to come across illustrations of physical injury to some of those engaged in PR.

This situation in Asia has led to a certain amount of hesitation on the part of many to associate themselves with any PR effort. On the other hand, it has made many activists and field workers informed about the value of PR. Most importantly, the information about such

PR efforts and the usage of that information become extremely critical in this context. It is possible that some of us might be acting in a naive fashion by advertising various PR efforts in Asia.

- (c) The rural Asian context is primarily unorganised. The under-privileged, whether landless labourers or urban slum-dwellers or women, are primarily unorganised. In most of these Asian countries, in fact, in a large measure, their state of poverty, exploitation and helplessness are related to this non-organisation. To initiate PR with such groups of under-privileged people in Asia means to initiate the process of organisation-building. Unless there is a somewhat organised group of people in a particular setting, it is inconceivable that PR approach can be applied to that setting. In the absence of an organisation, the PR efforts will become the unilateral manipulation by an outsider. To that extent, initiating PR efforts with such unorganised groups of people in Asia requires an initial effort in developing a rudimentary form of organisation of them.

In many instances, it has been shown that the PR effort itself contributed to the building of an organisation of the people with whom this process was started. By the sheer process of attempting to bring a group of small, marginal farmers to analyse their own situation, temporary organisations of farmers developed in the tribal areas of South Rajasthan in India. This poses some questions about the methodology of PR as well as our definition of it. To the extent that the Asian societies are unorganised in comparison with more developed countries in the world, any PR efforts in such countries has to be simultaneously an effort at building organisations.

- (d) The Asian experience in PR is very diverse in terms of the method utilised as well as the entry points. In some efforts, the entry point has been land; in others it has been health. In some others, PR effort has begun from adult education. There are a number of industrial as well as urban examples of PR.

In terms of the method, some have started with an initial survey and moved on to more dialogical approaches; some others have conducted surveys at the request of the people. There has been, by and large, a primacy of qualitative methods in these PR efforts. Are there any optimal combinations of various methods in PR? Does PR imply a total exclusion of classical methods of research? Are there any guidelines for the choice of entry points as well as methods? These questions acquire a saliency in the light of the wide range of Asian experience in PR.

The question of method in PR becomes a tricky one in many ways. On the one hand, the rigour of method is the hallmark of classical social science research and, therefore, the acceptance of PR is judged on the basis of its methodology. On the other hand, as the Asian experience shows, any rigorous prescriptions for a method in PR might lead to the exclusion of those experiences which are wholly field-placed. What is possible is to define a set of guidelines which are different from those prescribed by classical social science research in evaluating the methodological aspects of PR.

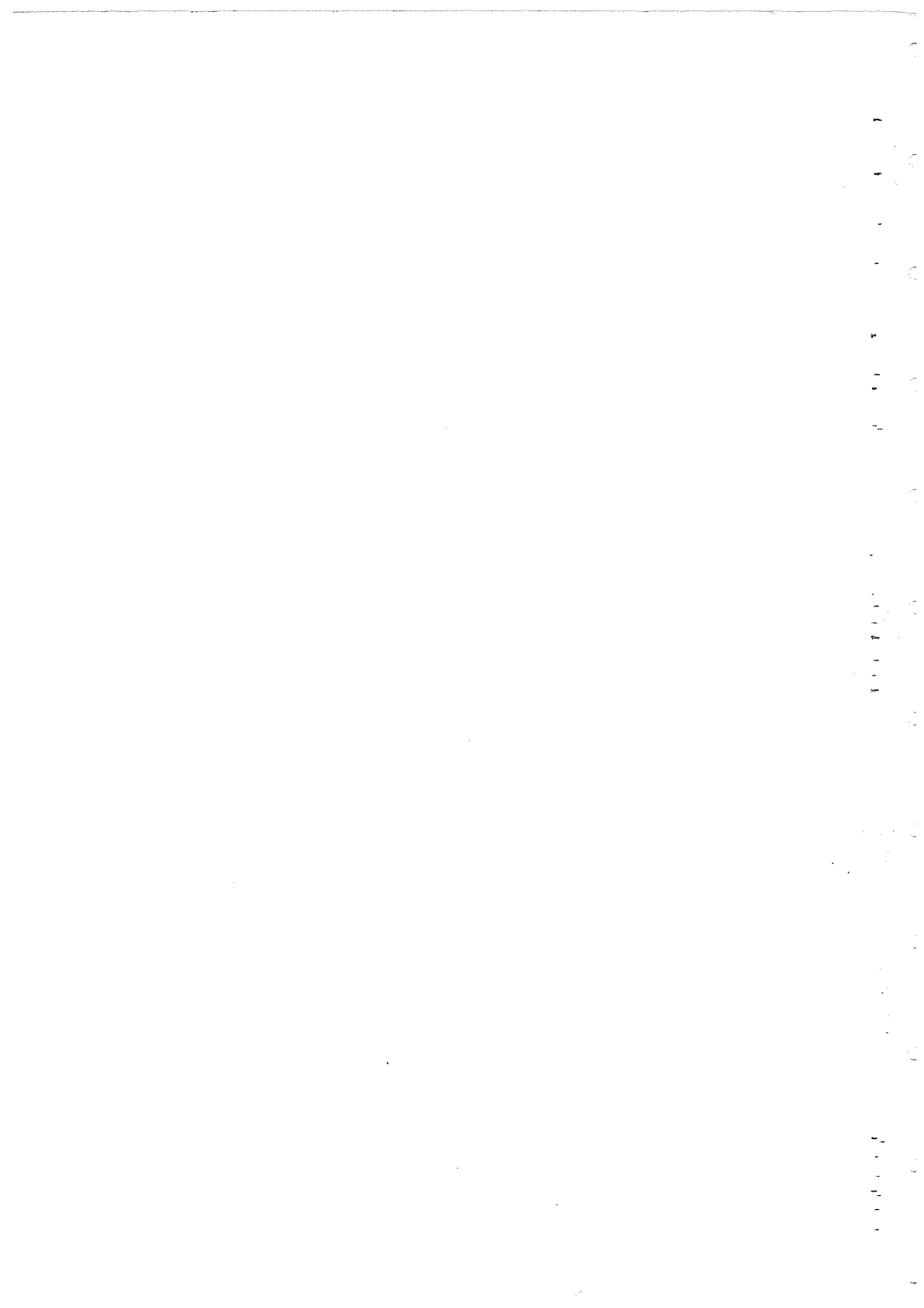
- (e) One of the critical issues in PR which has been repeatedly visible in the Asian experience, is the larger implications of PR to life and

and living. For example, if PR entails participation of the people in the research process, what is the style of the researcher that will make it possible? If the researcher or the activist, as the case may be, practices participation in his/her own life, it is much more likely that he/she will be able to facilitate participation of the people in various research efforts. On the other hand, it is doubtful how an authoritarian personality of the researcher can encourage PR with the under-privileged.

It basically leads to two sets of issues in terms of researcher's skills in PR. First, the values of the researcher may or may not be in congruence with the value premises of PR. The person who believes in the basic strengths of the people and who cherishes democratic values may be more suitable for PR. Second, the behavioural skills required to encourage and sustain participation of people must be possessed by the researchers. These behavioral skills become critical in the context of the focus on the under-privileged sections of the population. Greater effort is required, and therefore, greater skills are needed, to facilitate participation of such sections of the population in Asia because one of the dominant characteristics of the under-privileged is their inability to and fear for participation.

The characteristics of PR in Asia are beginning to highlight the critical issues in PR. The above-mentioned issues are neither exhaustive nor easily amenable to simple solutions. By presenting them, together with a set of papers about emergent developments in PR in Asia, it is hoped that they will be discussed and examined by all those struggling with such issues. And that might provide the impetus for further elaboration and refinement of PR.

THEORETICAL ISSUES



PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: AN EXPLORATORY STATEMENT

Rajesh Tandon*

Participatory Research (PR) approach is beginning to emerge as an approach of inquiry and social change. The emergence of Participatory Research approach is rooted in some basic frustrations experienced in the pursuit of classical research. Before outlining the PR approach, it might be useful to verbalize some of those frustrations:

- (a) Classical research approach in social settings has implicitly borrowed the method of inquiry used in natural sciences. This has led to a distorted emphasis on "objectivity" and researcher-subject differentiation. Classical research approach in social settings has placed primacy on developing research designs (both in the laboratory and in the field) that attempt to maintain the separation between the researcher and individuals in the social system under study. Such an emphasis will seem mis-directed if we examine the three distinctive characteristics of inquiry in social settings:
- (i) Social research means a study of individuals, groups and organizations in a social setting;
 - (ii) The researcher shares his/her essential humanity with the individuals in the social setting under study;
 - (iii) The very act of inquiry tends to have some impact on the social system under study.

One can clearly notice the differences that emanate from these distinctive characteristics between social research and inquiry in natural sciences. To that extent, it is doubtful if social research can utilize a method of inquiry implicitly based on the assumptions of natural science inquiry.

- (b) Another major influence of natural sciences on social inquiry is in terms of the acceptable purpose of research. Research in natural science has been solely aimed at increased understanding of and knowledge about natural phenomena. The utilization of this new knowledge has been the task of the technologists. Social science researchers have assigned similar roles to themselves. Social change based on the enhanced understanding of social systems and phenomena is not seen as an integral part of their role. In the absence of social technologists, the utilization of new knowledge has been neglected.

One may ask why social technologists have not "arrived" so far? Part of the reason may lie in the distinctive nature of social science inquiry. If we assume that it is impossible to control all the spurious interferences in social research (and this is an increasingly documented assumption), then it might be difficult to talk about "reproducibility" and consequent generalization. We only develop a partial understanding

*Fellow, Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi.
Paper presented in the Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi, India during February 7-9, 1979.

of a social phenomenon/setting, and this seriously limits our ability to generalize. Therefore, a major argument against the utilization of knowledge generated by social research in its lack of applicability in particular settings. To that extent, those interested in social change in a particular setting tend to initiate their own research process in that setting.

Classical social research has, therefore, neglected the issue of change in social systems. It has not only been indifferent to this issue, but also actively punished those who attempted to combine the two purposes of understanding and change by labeling their efforts "unscientific".

- (c) Another argument against researchers' involvement in social change is premised on the misconception that research is value-free. Since all change, especially social change, is based on a normative vision of the "desired", and since researchers' task is to be objective and value-free in pursuit of his/her inquiry, how can one expect him/her to combine the process of inquiry with the process of change?

The underlying fallacy in this argument is the naive assumption that inquiry is value-free. Neither social research, nor even inquiry in natural sciences is value-free. The researcher not only believes that the natural phenomena are orderly and therefore can be researched, but he also adopts a framework in order to collect observations. These frameworks are as much normative as those held by social researchers.

Moreover, the myths of value-free inquiry and non-normative role of the researcher have led to the dehumanizing and catastrophic utilization of knowledge. The overwhelming obsession of researchers with "objectivity" and "neutrality" has resulted in the development of nuclear missiles, biological poisons and psychological brainwashing.

- (d) Finally, there is an ethical issue that has been largely neglected in classical social research. The practice of classical social research has resulted in complete and exclusive control of the process and outcome of research by the professional researcher. The researcher develops knowledge based on data collected from individuals, groups and organizations in a social setting. Those individuals, groups and organizations do not have any control over the knowledge generated from the data obtained from them. They are the "subjects" of research.

And the researcher is neither accountable to them nor responsible for the use of knowledge thus generated. A researcher can do that in natural sciences without any ethical consideration because the subject-matter is natural phenomenon. Can we follow the same argument for inquiry in social phenomena?

In the light of above frustrations with classical research approach, it is valuable to analyze the issue of control a little more in-depth. In various types of research approaches, what is chosen and who chooses? If we broadly classify the research types into the three categories shown in figure-1, then it is easy to understand how participatory research approach differs in some very fundamental ways. Academic research is what most professional researchers are engaged in and what most research institutes reward and encourage. Policy/evaluation research has become increasingly popular over the last two decades. An administrator, policy-maker or government agency, commissions a research study in order to satisfy some of the adminis-

control

trative needs. This client is, by and large, outside the problem/area that s/he wants researched by a professional researcher. Participatory Research has been set against these two types on the three key steps in a research act: choice of the problem, choice of the methodology, and choice of the outcome. Figure-1 highlights, somewhat dramatically, this issue of control in research. Academic research has emphasised unilateral control by the professional researcher on all steps of a research act. PR is an approach where this control is jointly shared by the researcher and the actors in the problem situation.

Before going into the details of some of the implications of these fundamental emphases in Participatory Research, it might be worthwhile to enumerate what a PR approach might entail concretely. Figure-2 is an attempt to chart the steps of an "ideal" Participatory Research approach. One major element of Participatory Research that is missing in this "ideal" model is the ideological/normative stance. To the extent that Participatory Research approach is an attempt to break away from unidirectional control of the professional researcher, as is to be consistent in its definition of "actors in the problem situation". Therefore, Participatory Research approach is solely in response to and for the fulfilment of the needs of the less powerful, weaker segments of a social setting.

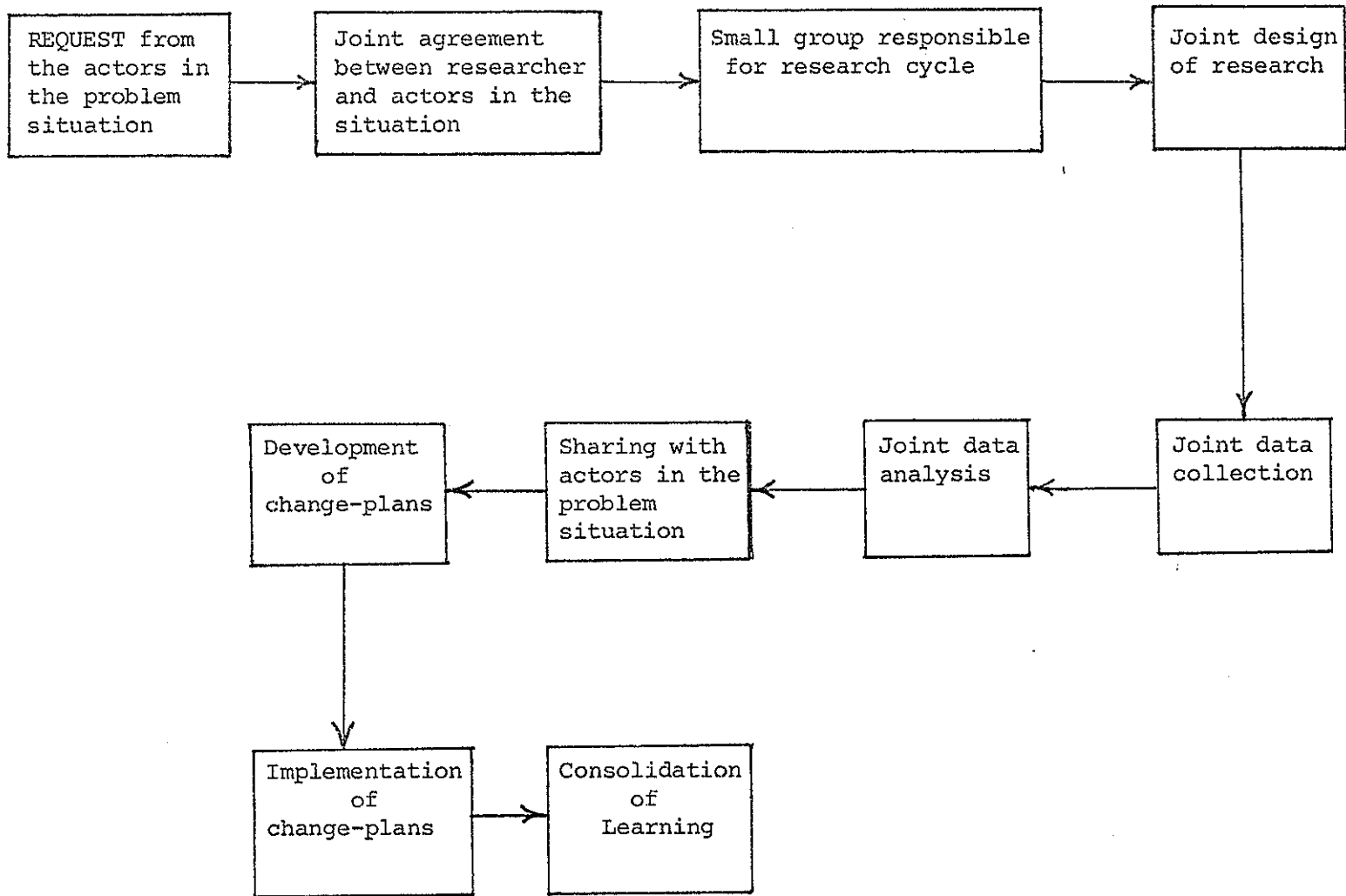
Some comments related to figure-2 are needed here:

- (i) The initial request in an "ideal" Participatory Research process may come from the powerless actors in the situation. But in reality, this may not be so. The request may come from someone powerful within the situation, or outside it. Yet, the researcher can transform it into a Participatory Research approach by following some later steps, provided his/her ideological stance is explicit.
- (ii) Various steps outlined in figure-2 appear to be one-shot, fixed steps. In reality, a Participatory Research process has to be cyclical and iterative. For example, joint agreement may need to be worked and reworked many times, over the entire cycle.
- (iii) As presented here, various steps in Participatory Research process assume the involvement of an outside researcher. In reality, groups of actors in a particular setting may go through the entire process without any assistance from the outsider. In fact, effective Participatory Research process must have the increased capacity of the actors in the situation inquire into and change their situation as a valued outcome. To that extent, an outside researcher will become redundant soon.
- (iv) As presented in figure-2, the Participatory Research process may appear identical to Action Research (AR) approach. However, there are two significant ways in which Participatory Research is different from Action Research. First, the ideological stance and emphasis on making the researcher's value-premises explicit are generally not mentioned in Action Research approach. Second, Action Research can be, and is being, undertaken without the participation and control of the actors in the situation. In essence, then, Action Research becomes another method in the exclusive control of the professional researcher.

Figure 1: Distinctions between three types of Research Processes

STEPS IN RESEARCH	TYPE OF RESEARCH	ACADEMIC RESEARCH	POLICY/EVALUATION RESEARCH (COMMISSIONED)	PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH
1. CHOICE OF PROBLEM	What?	Choice based on the interest and discipline of the professional researcher.	Choice based on clients administrative needs.	Choice based on immediate problem situation.
	Who?	Professional researcher.	Client (who is outside the problem area).	Jointly by the actors in the problem situation and professional researcher.
2. CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY	What?	Experimental research designs, use of reliable instruments, statistical analysis.	Quasi-experimental field research designs, use of reliable instruments, statistical analysis.	Consensual validity based research designs, use of empathic instruments, multiple analysis methods.
	Who?	Professional researcher.	Professional researcher.	Jointly by the actors and the professional researcher.
3. CHOICE OF OUTCOME	What?	Publications (presentations in "learned" seminars).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report (to the Client) - Publication (if the researcher negotiates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in the situation - Increased knowledge base - Increased capacity among actors to inquire into and change their situations.
	Who?	Professional researcher.	Client (primarily)	Jointly by the actors and the professional researcher.

Figure 2: Steps in an "ideal" Participatory Research Approach



The above discussion raises many important issues, which we can only begin to articulate and understand at this stage. Final answers to them may emerge later. Some key issues are being articulated and confronted here; it is hoped that they will generate some dialogue.

- (a) How to develop authentic, valid knowledge? Participatory Research approach tends to lay emphasis on authenticity as opposed to validity. The concept of validity as defined by classical research paradigm is inappropriate for several reasons. Firstly, knowledge about a social setting is not equivalent to information obtained from it, the meaning attached to that information is more important. Any representation of social reality is contingent upon such meanings that actors attach to their reality. Secondly, the impact of historical contingency on knowledge derived from social settings is too critical to apply universal constructs of validity. Existing criteria of validity are concerned with the generalizability of the outcomes of research.

Participatory Research approach is potentially an attempt to generalize a process of research, instead of its outcome.

To that extent, the criteria of validity need to focus on the external generalizability and internal consistency of the research process itself. What can be some beginning elements of such a concept of validity? One can enumerate a few such elements:

- i. Relevance: historical, temporal and spatial.
- ii. Researcher calibration: sensitivity of the researcher. Emphasis on the calibration and reliability of the researcher as opposed to an instrument or a method.
- iii. Convergence: issues, methods and outcomes. Emphasis on consensus of issues, multiplicity of methods and congruence between processes and outcomes.
- iv. Inclusion: context, actors and researcher. Emphasis on looking at the research as a social process and managing the confluence between the aspects of the setting, actors in the setting and the researcher.

How can we build an alternative concept of validity based on the stance that the Participatory Research approach emphasises generalizability of the research process itself?

- (b) If the generalizability of research process is emphasised in Participatory Research approach; what is the outcome of the research itself? The outcomes in Participatory Research process are at several levels:
- i. Immediate social change/action is one such outcome. The actors in the situation engage in an effort to transform their situation.
 - ii. Increased knowledge about the particular social setting is another outcome. This knowledge is available with the researcher as well as the actors of the social setting.
 - iii. Increased capacity among the actors in the situation to enquire into and change their situation is another important outcome. The ability and confidence of the actors in the situation to carry out further research and change is a potentially significant

contribution of Participatory Research. This is the educational aspect of Participatory Research, where the actors in the situation learn how to learn; deuterio-learning occurs in Participatory Research process.

- (c) If there are the potential outcomes of a Participatory Research process, what happens to the enhancement of knowledge? As mentioned above, the increased knowledge about the social setting is available both with the researcher and the actors in the situation. Is it not enhancement of knowledge? Or is enhancement of knowledge exclusively the task of professional researcher? Classical research, as mentioned earlier, emphasises professional control over the generation, utilization and elaboration of knowledge (Figure 3). Participatory Research approach maintains that the actors in the situation are not merely passive "subjects" of research, but are actively influencing the processes of knowledge-generation and elaboration.

To that extent, Participatory Research is an effort to check the present trends of (a) professionalization and centralization of knowledge, its generation and utilization, and (b) neglecting the actors in the situation not only as sources of knowledge but also its legitimate "owners".

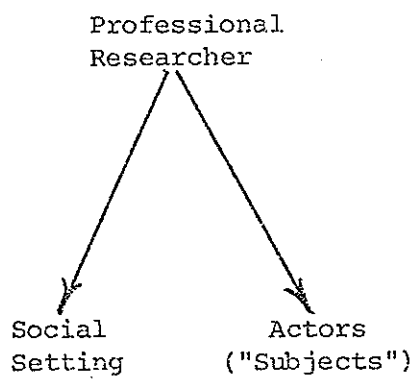
Is it an ethical issue or an ideological confusion?

- (d) Finally, is Participatory Research Process a political process? If we make our ideological stand explicit and if we engage in research efforts that assist the less powerful and the weak, the so-called research process becomes a political one. What are the implications of research assuming a political meaning: for the researcher? for the actors in the situation?

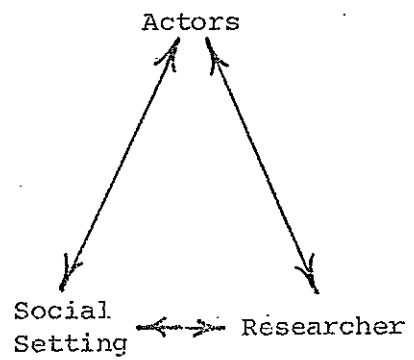
Is this issue of politicization of the research process unique to Participatory Research? Research in social settings has always been political: either to maintain, explain and justify the status-quo or to question, examine and transform it. May be, we have not been aware of the political aspects of our research effort since we never believed that our inquiry was normative or we never made explicit our ideological stance.

These are some of the challenges of Participatory Research approach. By their very nature, these are macro challenges. We can attempt to deal with them at the macro level; or, we can analyze and resolve them by our micro actions in the context of a specific, concrete Participatory Research effort.

Figure 3: Control over knowledge-generation and elaboration process



CLASSICAL RESEARCH



PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

RESEARCH : A METHOD OF COLONIZATION

Zafrullah Chowdhury*

Bangladesh, we say, has suffered from wars, poverty, over-population, and natural calamities. Now we are coming to see that it has suffered as much if not more deeply, from invested aid, or, aid given to primarily benefit the wealthy country. Let us look specifically at what has been developing in the area of medical research.

In 1905, Frederick T. Gates, main administrator of the Rockefeller assets, and a former Baptist Minister, informed Rockefeller that "Quite apart from the question of persons, converted, the more commercial results of missionary effort to our land is worth a thousandfold every year of what is spent on missions... our export trade is growing by leaps and bounds. Such growth would have been utterly impossible but for the commercial conquest of foreign lands under the lead of missionary endeavour. What a boon to home industry and manufacture."¹

Medicine Force for Colonization

But it did not take long for these concerned imperialists to see that medicine could accomplish even more for them than the missionary. Throughout the under-developed areas of the world, the great philanthropic foundations became aware that "medicine was an almost irresistible force in the colonization of non-industrialized countries".² But, this medical care must remain in their control if it was to continue primarily for their benefit. In the Rockefeller international health programs, it was assured that "the entire control of all the money would be held by our people and not the natives".³

In pre-Mao China, the Peking Union Medical College which had been removed from the control of missionaries and placed under the direction of Rockefeller Foundation "was conducted entirely by their own staff from New York and a local office in Peking".⁴ The endeavour met with marked success. It was William R. Welch, the first Dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, who lauded American medical scientists for their part in their country's "efforts to colonize and to reclaim for civilization, vast tropical regions".⁵

A New Imperialism

Now a new age has set out to 'reclaim' a new republic, Bangladesh. In the past, as now, the gluttoned American market cried out for colonies to consume its goods. The medical research situation in the United States today contains the same urgency to find regions for expansion.

*Project Director, Gonoshasthaya Kendra, Dacca.

Published in the Bangladesh Times, 13/14 January, 1977.

The phrases within parenthesis were omitted from the published articles.

First, the U.S. professional in the area of medical research finds himself in a highly competitive system. Experience, not easily obtained at home, is required to gain positions, promotions, etc., and often just to "stay afloat" in his professional field.

Second, universities in the States are presently in dire need of funds, and increased prestige. Research work offers the opportunity for both. And third, the large drug companies seeking to increase their profits are out to expand the market.

Bangladesh, because of the difficulties that it has faced in health and population, offers unlimited opportunities to each of the three groups described above.

The Third World as Laboratory

The procedure is somewhat standardized. The large university offers job opportunities and attractive side benefits to young professionals, and approaches the underdeveloped, overpopulated country with a plan related to health, nutrition, and family planning, financed in large part, if not entirely, by the U.S. Government officials from the host country. This gives the project the necessary 'in' with the local government while at the same time not being required to sacrifice any real control. No national is trained to the point where he could assume responsibility for the project, independent of the foreign power.

The project gains in stature and fame. Studies are made and published, reports are given, statistics are compiled, with the local population all the while furnishing an excellent laboratory for ambitious young foreigners and the prestige and fund-conscious university.

Avoiding Solutions

What are the benefits according to the underdeveloped host nations? In the line of scientists trained to carry on the work, it is nil. Further, the preponderance of foreign research stultifies any growth of local efforts, making a monopoly of health science. The population is used, while effective solutions to the problems of health and family planning are subtly avoided. This avoidance of the real solution is an art that American medical researchers are often forced to practice in the U.S. Incredible sums of money are spent seeking cures for such killers as hyper-tension and cancer - cures which the scientists know must be avoided. For, in the U.S., as here, discovering the real solution would lead to a radical change of life style and economic system, and place in a rather uncomfortable position, those men who control research.

John Hopkins Again

This past year, the Deanship of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health was offered to a medical man with a missionary background who refused it, opting instead for the office in Dacca, (something that could

eventually lead to more than a Deanship. From here he will help to engineer a new plan for the old imperialism).

Recently, he and some former members of the Cholera Research Laboratory (CRL) staff, presented the Government of Bangladesh with a proposal for what the authors call an International Institute for Health, Population, and Nutrition Research. The Government has been asked to consider the proposal in light of the fact that funds for the Cholera Research Laboratory will no longer be forthcoming. A subtle but nonetheless insidious pressure. And it might be noted that one expatriate will receive over the next six months, 1.5 million taka from the Ford Foundation for the work of arranging with the Government the drawing up and finalizing of the proposal's official and legal aspects, without delay. (It was Ford Foundation which also, in 1974, sponsored a 'trip abroad' for a former minister of health and family planning, who did not agree with the 'advice of the experts' to split the ministry. The Foundation still continues this same procedure.)

The proposal for the Institute is a clear example of national interests in the areas of health, population, and social services, being absorbed into the control of a foreign state. Let us look more closely at the proposal itself, which step by step illustrates how the institute, primarily planned for the benefit of U.S. researchers, will cripple any attempt on the national level for an effective, independent health and family planning program. Bangladesh will serve as a laboratory whose population may or may not benefit from the experiments. And all will be done in collaboration with, under the management of, through funds and personnel in the control of, the U.S.

(In the Interests of U.S.A.)

The proposal contains the following quote: "Establishment of a training program for young investigators from developed countries such as the U.S. will require development of direct institutional ties with U.S. or other universities and training institutions. These ties should be encouraged in order that young scientists from the developed countries can gain the skills and the expertise necessary to address health, population, and nutrition problems in the developing world."⁶

It is not experienced scientists who are being sent to offer expertise. It is young men, needing experience, and who, if they follow the pattern of the Cholera Research Laboratory scientists, will only be speaking English when they address the health problems of the developing world.

The proposal goes on to say that, "The key to the development of the proposed research program will be recruiting of expatriate scientific manpower to conduct the research program."⁷ And that, "This research program does not envisage the requirement for expanding the local technical and supporting staff."⁸ It then notes that "There are very few other Bangladeshi professionals that can be recruited in the requisite careers."⁹ It fails to further elaborate that there are three Bengali scientists at the lab who were trained elsewhere before the inception of CRL. However, the quotes do indicate quite clearly what has happened in regard to the CRL training of Bangladesh scientists, and what will happen with the new proposal. In both

instances, - nothing. If during the 1960's alone over 100 U.S. scientists were trained at the CRL, why after the sixteen years of its existence are there no Bengalis trained for the required positions. Certainly not because capable people can't be found. (The intent of the lab had never been to train Bengali scientists. And neither is it the intent of the new proposal.) The new proposal intends to maintain the hospital and field work as these areas where the Bengali staff can be absorbed and they need not infringe on the scientific end."¹⁰

However, there is one special post for a senior Bengali administrative official, who will be "fully responsible for all of the administrative activities associated with local operations in Bangladesh." This can be seen from a few perspectives, but mainly it will serve to keep government officials at arms length. Having such an official on the payroll who will not have to answer to other Bengali officials in regard to the laboratory, will create the desired situation for unfettered, unchecked research. But why a senior official? In the youth-workshipping U.S. it is not the senior man who holds the responsible position, or is given the real work. More often he is given the door. Why will Bangladesh get the senior? Such a position is designed as bait for the government official or his friends who are on the verge of retirement, and will spot in the proposal, if not the opportunity for an effective post, at least for a flattering one. Of course the seniority will offer some weight with the government.

But weight with government will come from other areas too. The proposal tells us "Unrestricted funds must be available, so that the scientific staff can be recruited from any national where they may be available."¹¹ The program is envisaged as operating with "multiple sources of funding from a variety of international agencies and governments".¹² With over 50% of the funds, all of which will be controlled by the 'international' board, coming from the U.S. This is real power and weight with any government. Further, the proposal reads that "Crucial to the successful operation of the lab is adequate administrative back-up support in the U.S. for management, procurement, shipping of supplies, and equipment, as well as of management activities related to the expatriate staff."¹³ Procurement, shipping, supplies, equipment, - new market for American products and inappropriate technologies, is opened up. And the U.S. will manage all, even the activities for the expatriate staff.

Why Bangladesh?

"...in conjunction with studies of immunological responses to naturally acquired infection," the proposal tells us, "there will be a program of studies of the human response to artificial immunization by a variety of routes". The study has begun with animals in the U.S. The next step will be the human population of Bangladesh.¹⁴ (Why is it that Americans so fond of the "sacred rights of individuals" see only masses when they are looking east? Bangladesh, too, is a country whose people have individual longings and fears, and even individual rights.)

Once the individual is lost sight of medical research becomes pointless. There is no one to serve, only the ego addressing the statistics. Further, once the individual is lost sight of, scientific truth cannot be maintained.

Perhaps we should have known it all along, but now the 'proposal' spells it out for us. The purpose of the Cholera Hospital was not primarily to serve individuals, but rather for the support it gave to the lab.¹⁵ As for the field surveillance operation in Matlab, "it is absolutely fundamental to the entire epidemiological research program as well as to all population related studies".¹⁶ (Does it matter that it might have possibly been an opportunity to help people?)

And then one comes across such a statement as the following, in the proposed program: "Improving the nutritional status of lactating women will lead to shortening of the period of amenorrhea resulting in birth at shorter intervals. This would not only be detrimental to the welfare of the infant, but would also lead to rising birth rates and more rapid population growth.¹⁷ Chronic malnutrition may be effective in suppressing fertility by prolonging the duration of lactational amenorrhea."¹⁸ What is the author trying to convince us of? That we should strive to maintain a malnourished Bangladesh? It is hardly sick people, or hungry people, or people that is the concern here. It is such things as "an understanding of the biological and social changes affecting human reproduction performance during times of famine". Research and study nothing beyond. The plans and the experts who deluged the country after the war of liberation, did nothing to prevent the famine in 1974, but then, perhaps the aim was only to understand the biological change taking place in the inhabitants.

Unapplied Research

The older cholera vaccine has proven virtually ineffective in preventing the disease. A later experiment with a cholera toxoid vaccine has proved equally ineffective. Now a study is being conducted that will further observe the two ineffective vaccines: 50% of the deaths in the nation are due to diarrhoeal disease. Over 60% in the case of children. The major achievement of the CRL is simplified oral therapy, but this remains unavailable throughout most of Bangladesh, to patients in serious conditions. Intravenous fluids for cholera were introduced in 1830's but remain unavailable to rural Bangladesh even today. An editorial in the November 27, 1976 issue of LANCET, an international medical journal, points out how the record of cholera research has been marred by this failure to apply the same. It has also been noted that villages whose water is contaminated by material from Matlab cholera hospital have attached rates for cholera and diarrhoeal disease that is twenty times higher than the average. It illustrates the efficiency of research, that can create and perpetuate an endemic area in which to observe the ineffective vaccines.

And all of this accomplished on an annual budget of 1.7 million dollars. One million going toward financing the home leaves, vacations, education, recreation, elaborate homes and furnishing, etc., of seven expatriate staff while the treatment of diarrhoeal patients and a Bengali staff of 770, share the remainder. The new proposal calling for 25 million in the next few years, with an additional twelve expatriate staff, and no more Bengalis - but for the senior official - is a budget obviously designed to alter the life style, but only in the direction of added luxury.

Because of the framework of the proposal and existing institutional links with Ford Foundation, World Bank, and USAID, all research in areas covered by the

Institute have to pass through the program. Monopoly is the result. A monopoly of science, stifling any growth of the Bangladesh scientific institutions. And the institute is not primarily, nor secondarily concerned with training Bengali scientists.

The large amount of foreign funds remaining in the full control of foreign groups will serve consciously or unconsciously as a pressure on government and state institutions. The result is freedom in Bangladesh for American research universities. And freedom in Bangladesh for American exporters of medicine and medical equipment, who may be researching new products for undesirable side-effects.

The following is an example of what can happen, except that it will be more difficult to challenge abuses of the Institute as it will have been granted prior controls.

The Johns Hopkins Fertility Research Project in Bangladesh, found in one of their own studies done in Matlab on the use of the injectable contraception, Depoprovera, that it disturbed menstruation radically and lessened lactation. In another area of Bangladesh, the only other study done in the country on Depoprovera, this one on a much larger scale, came up with the same indications in regard to menstruation and lactation. However, the Johns Hopkins Project, after changing the authorship of this larger study, deleted facts pertinent to the point of decreased lactation among Bengali women, and vaguely cited studies from "other countries" to tell us that they do not report a decrease in lactation, but rather "an increase".²⁰ In this instance we risk making a failure of a very promising method of contraception, the Depoprovera injection, by a too hurried approach, without the proper back-up services and follow-up.

Another instance of researchers and advisors acting with apparent disregard for the people and the environment is the (World Bank) idea of putting a laproscope, a highly sensitive sophisticated instrument requiring both electricity and gas in order to function, into every Rural Health Centre (RHC) in Bangladesh. Even every hospital in Britain does not have a laproscope.

We must become aware of the fact that medical researchers are "experts" operating primarily for their own interests.

The Experts

Recently in Dacca airport, I met an acquaintance who said to me in the course of our brief discussion that he had counted seventy-two experts in Dacca on that one day alone. And yourself, I asked. "Seventy-three", he admitted. It will be an uphill road, overcoming this favourable bias toward the wisdom of the west. For a long time to come we will continue to credit foreign expertise unquestioningly with any knowledge they may lay claim to.

Who are these experts that come from thousands of miles away with the perfect plan for a village they have never seen, a culture they have never lived.

One such expert on smallpox eradication qualified as a motor mechanic. But then, he was a foreigner.

Our "western trained medical profession sanitary inspectors originating in the British Empire, the malaria program established by WHO...the Rural Health Centre devised by western public health experts and most recently, the family planning programs,²¹ all are forms of expatriate expertise that have left the health and family planning system of Bangladesh crippled, confused, and utterly dependent.

The present split of the health and family planning ministries is the result of "expert advise" from World Bank and USAID planners who felt the population problem would be effectively met in this manner. Now we have doctors being hired for family planning work and paid 30% higher than the health ministry doctor who is working in the same rural area within another narrow field. One can foresee the difficulties that will arise here without too much imagination. We will have family planning offices in each union, and a sub-centre in each union, and offices for the health ministry. There are 92 maternity centres with twelve rooms each, and 205 Rural Health Centres (RHC). In another five years there is to be another 150 RHCs, but these, with their 30 rooms each cannot be used for the family planning work. Nor can the Lady Health Visitors (LHV), who are working in the Maternity Centres and are designated as family planning workers, be able to count on the doctors of the RHC for the back up and support needed if their work is to be effective.

The family planning ministry envisions one worker per 5000 people, an impossible task for someone with one month training and no support or guidance in the field. If the government had continued with its original integrated scheme, it would be in a far more effective position to deliver health and family planning services.

It is accepted that Bangladesh needs barefoot doctors, people trained in the village to meet the needs of the villagers but the World Health Organization experts proposed an elaborate three-year program to produce medical assistants. This training will take place in the towns, and most of the students will have a background of twelve years formal education. In one centre visited, 65 out of 80 enrolled had had twelve years or more educational background, and nearly all felt that the course itself should be four years or more if the program was going to equip them to "better serve the people". Serve, no doubt in Dacca, or Libya as experience attests. But the expert advisors of WHO refuse to see any other way.

These are the experts. They have been with us, as was noted earlier, for sometime. Will we sell ourselves out to them unconditionally now? There are real experts, however, and there is such a thing as appropriate aid. And neither is it impossible to discern the real from the 'invest aid'. Does the plan provide for local responsibility in the foreseeable future? Does it reach the real problems with realistic solutions? Is it honest in assessing its weaknesses as well as its strength? The Companyganj Integrated Health Project in Noakhali is an example of appropriate aid. Now, under Bengali leadership which has been capably trained to assume the responsibility, it is meeting real health needs in a practical way.

The nutrition and women's programs of UNICEF were also attempts in the right direction.

And as we acknowledge the truly beneficial and helpful work of certain foreign assistance, neither can we fail to accept the fact of our own weaknesses, which surely exist. Yet we do not want to compound and nourish these weaknesses by importing others.

(Death Blow to Bangladesh Health Care)

But 'inappropriate' aid is concerned with its own purpose. The proposed institute will give researchers free rein to use the people of Bangladesh and the institutions of Bangladesh to further the purposes that suit them. And it may well be the death blow to our own health system, whether scientific research or delivery of services.

In a review of a book edited by the man now employed to draw up the contract for this new international proposal, we can see that this is no spur of the moment inspiration, but something a long time germinating. Referring to the editor's plan for an international group designed to meet disasters. Malcolm Segall of the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University in England remarks, "All the material resources are in the hands of "prospective donor groups" and the international body, and the national coordinating body is entirely at the mercy of inappropriate foreign technology, being guided by "management experts" (we know where from), "data processing equipment" (we know where from), and even computers stationed abroad. A better prescription for dependency could hardly be imagined.

"One day we hope that true internationalism will be a reality. But the "internationalism" of this book, of the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and in important respects, of some of the United Nations technical agencies, hides imperialism. It takes as given that the rich capitalist states are rich and the poor people of the world are poor and the relief must come from the former to the latter with the paternalistic help of the former's "technical advisors".²²

The proposal threatens the sovereignty of Bangladesh. It perpetuates the image of starving baby syndrome and basket case Bangladesh to attract funds for foreign researchers. It disregards the fact that there is talent and ability in Bangladesh, and there is a dignity both among our professional who will no longer tolerate being treated like school boys, and among our people in general who will not much longer tolerate being treated as mere statistics at the cost of their better health.

* * * * *

Acknowledgment: The assistance of Sister Mary-Clare is gratefully acknowledged.

FOOTNOTES

1. F.T. Gates to J.D. Rockefeller, Dec 12, 1910, (Record Group 2) Rockefeller Family Archives.
2. B. Richard Brown, Ph.D., "Public Health in Imperialism; Early Rockefeller Programs at Home and Abroad".
3. J.H. White to W. Rose, Aug 14, 1915, and W. Rose and J.H. White, Aug 17, 1915, International Health Commission files, Rockefeller Foundation.
4. B. Richard Brown, Ph.D., "Public Health in Imperialism".
5. W.H. Welch, "The Benefits of the Endowment of Medical Research". In Addresses Delivered at the Opening of the Laboratories in New York City, May 11, 1906.
6. W.H. Mosely, "Proposal for a Five-year Research Program for the Cholera Research laboratory Dacca, Bangladesh", April, 1976, (p.61).
7. As above, (p.62).
8. As above.
9. As above.
10. As above, (p.10).
11. As above, (p.62).
12. As above, (p.58).
13. As above, (p.63).
14. As above, (p.28).
15. As above, (p.64).
16. As above.
17. As above, (p.43).
18. As above, (p.50).
19. As above, (p.38).
20. "Contraceptive Use of Medroxyprogesterone Acetate (Depoprovera) In Rural Bangladesh", (falsified paper on study results).
21. Colin McCord, "What's the Use of a Demonstration Project", 1976.
22. Malcolm Segall, Review Articles, International Journal of Health Services, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1975.

REFERENCES

- Brown, E. Richard, Ph.D., "Public Health in Imperialism: Early Rockefeller Programs at Home and Abroad", Paper delivered at the 103rd annual meeting of the American Public Health Association, in Chicago, Illinois, November 20, 1975. (Accepted for publication in the American Journal of Public Health.)
- Chon, Lincoln C., (Ed.) Disaster in Bangladesh Health Crises in a Developing Nation, Oxford University Press, New York, 1973.
- Gates, F.T., to J.D. Rockefeller, Dec. 12, 1910, Record Group 2, Rockefeller Family Archives.
- LANCET, Editorial, November 27, 1976.
- McCord, Dr Colin, "What's the Use of a Demonstration Project", The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, Department of International Health, Baltimore, Md.
- Mosely, W.H. "Proposal for a Five-year Research Program for the Cholera Research Laboratory, Dacca, Bangladesh, April, 1976.
- Segall, Malcolm, "Review Articles", International Journal of Health Services, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1975.
- Welch, W.H., "The Benefits of the Endowment of Medical Research", in Addresses Delivered at the Opening of the Laboratories in New York City, May 11, 1906.
- White, J.H. to W. Rose, August 14, 1915, and W. Rose and J.H. White, August 17, 1915, International Health Commission files, Rockefeller Foundation.

Enquiries to

Gonoshasthaya Kendra
 (People's Health Centre)
 P.O. Nayarhat via Dhanrai
 Dacca District
 Bangladesh.

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: ETHIC OR LOGIC

Sushanta Banerjee*

Classical research in the social sciences has essentially set itself the target of defining and describing reality by explaining observable phenomena. In the process it has operated from the standpoint of an "observer" on the assumption that a given reality can best be defined and described by staying outside of it. This has implied two further assumptions, first that an entry into the situation (or reality) by the researcher will distort (or disturb) it and second that this disturbance itself should not form part of the study. Quite clearly one can see that these are principles drawn from physics. The Heisenberg principle is one of the pillars on which research methodology in the physical sciences rests. Crudely stated, the Heisenberg principle says that no system measurement is 100 per cent accurate since the very act of measurement is a disturbance of the system. In this principle lies the seed for the pursuit of "objectivity".

However, I am tempted to see this chain in the reverse order. That is - to my mind the cry for objectivity - the patent for which invention belongs solely to linearised western thought - is really a solution to cover a host of problems that post-renaissance western culture created for itself in order to solve the (at that time) continuous riddle (or need?) to see the world as chaos. "The nineteenth and the first half of twentieth century conceived of the world as chaos -- (it) appeared to represent ultimate reality".¹ The social scientist in all fairness therefore, in order to hold back his own chaos while defining, describing and discovering "social order" had to take on an "observer" stance. The reaction to the image of the world as chaos was to take the elemental view in the mode of analysis and search for a deterministic ultimate truth or ultimate order. The elemental mode of analysis postulates that in order to understand a system the only way is to understand the behaviour of the elements of the system. The sciences were also therefore more deterministic rather than probabilistic in their statements.

Looking at the world as chaos led further to the model of man where subsistence and survival were hypothesised as the prime driving forces. In order further to gain some control over the chaos it was necessary to generate a construct of social order demanding compliance. The model of man therefore followed four principles.²

Environmentalism Principle:

This said that man is totally moulded by his environment and that his attitudes and frames are totally shaped by outside influences. Thus the human mind is nothing but a computer that gets programmed -- the most prominent example of this assumption is psychoanalysis which says that personality is essentially formed by early childhood experiences. In this assumption, in fact, lies the greatest paradox of western democracies where everyone is born equal but where also there exists an almost pathological

*Centre for Educational Policy & Management, ASCI : Hyderabad, February, 1979.

concern with "abnormalities".....particles in Brownian motion outside the thirty limits. Protestations such as those raised by Ronald Laing² are increasing in momentum. If an "abnormal" is identified the society puts in tremendous effort in bringing him back to the fold.

The second principle is the stimulus-response scheme. All behaviour of man (and for that matter animals too) is seen as responses to external stimuli only. This has led to the school of "social engineering" and so forth plus the whole belief in reward and punishment as the sole vehicle of motion of any kind.

The third principle evident in the classical social sciences approach (illustrated by Freud) is that of the principle of homeostatic equilibrium: that all behaviour is towards reduction of some tension or other giving rise to schools of thought such as needs theories.

The fourth principle is that behaviour is governed by economy of mental or other energy. The exemplar outcome of this line of thinking is to reduce education to the minimum needed otherwise you warp personality, raise demands and so on.

The basic paradigm from this sum total is really a robotic image of man and a randomised existence which requires the establishment of a social order and stability. The philosophical ramifications aside this also determines the paradigms in use in social inquiry, some of the highlights of which are, a front of value neutrality, normative analysis, the postulate of a social order being a distinct reality (as opposed to a negotiated one) and so on.³ Needless to say, this approach has inexorably led the development of manipulative psychology to make man fit more and more closely to the model of a robot and converted the social sciences to a "handmaiden of pecuniary and political interests".⁴

A Paradigm Shift

We have been examining a dichotomisation which seems to be increasingly proven false. The dichotomy that has been drawn is the essence of one of the basic differences in eastern and western epistemology. The western thinkers took the stance of saying that there exists a definite reality distinct from its participants which generates stimuli while eastern thought followed the line that what one perceives as the world is the creation of the perception alone. While one line of thought produced the megamachine and robotic images of man the other produced the concept of maya. An attempt at generating the third alternative is what creates a new paradigm. This paradigm rests on the foundation that the nature of the world is organisation and the nature of man is active and self-diverting. This does not fall into the classical either-or of seeing the world as chaotic or ultimately ordered and allows the inclusion of the evidence of man taking on active as well as passive, responding-only roles. In short, it is more inclusive in nature, not resting on dogmas for compartmentalisation.

This generates a whole new world of sociological inquiry methods. Participatory research is the logical outcome of this new paradigm. In fact, the

paradigm we are now talking about is not all that new and glimpses of it are available in the literature. The most compact statement of this is found in Driggers (referred to earlier).

While western literature, in part continuation of its tradition has focussed only on the approach paradigm the eastern literature has largely focussed on the "researcher". While it is usually left to the reader of the western literature to deduce and infer from the statements of the approach paradigm as to what kind of frames of reference, values and attitudes of the individual "researcher" would be consistent with it, the eastern literature's focus has been at the other end of the continuum. Sankhya literature has done this most vividly wherein we find statements regarding the nature of phenomena, causality and relationships. Its flavour of focussing on individual development has then led to its close linkage with theories of individual growth and concern for the enlightenment of the "researcher". In following its own concern western literature has moved towards technique development to the extent of cook-book recipes for practical application of the "participatory" paradigm.⁵ Looked at objectively in fact the participatory paradigm leads to a dissolution of the "researcher-researched" differentiation altogether. As such, it becomes incumbent upon the "researcher" to examine, state and define continuously his own value frame, action goals and modes of analyses. This is not merely the statement of a value but logically consistent outcome of the participatory paradigm. In accepting the assumptions that the nature of the world is organisation the researcher is automatically a representative and an agent of a microcosm of the organisation. In accepting that man is self-directing and active the researcher is no longer in a position to linearise the "researched" into a particle, for just as he the researcher is his own representative so is the respondent. In terms of research outcomes as such the focus on causality and the need to prove with finality disappears except when the research is for political purposes. This is again only a logical outcome of the principle that there exists no one unique reality, and that the perception of reality is also rooted in the perceiver himself.

In summary then we see that the researcher-researched differentiation is invalid if the increasing data base about the nature of the world and the nature of man are taken into account. We can also postulate that the task of theory building shifts in focus from a search for the validity of singular hypotheses to the identification of isomorphies, patterns and part-whole relationships. And that the nature of the theories so built will be probabilistic and contextual when stating concrete interactions and about the nature of phenomena when describing the "wholes".

Towards Some Methodological Rules for Participatory Research:

The prime epistemology of the present paradigm is that no data are inconsequential. It is based on the clear primacy that data are given over the theoretic framework of the student-actor. The hierarchisation of the data is the result of a consensus about goals and boundaries reached jointly by the student-actor and the community. The emergent methodological rule then is a warning light that should flash in the student-actor's mind when he finds that every new action arena is reinforcing and repeating rather than adding to or modifying his theoretic framework. There are two fallouts from

this broadly defined rule. The first is that since the mind is being used to study the action and interaction of minds there is a significant possibility of psychological collusion, and self-reflexivity. The hypothesised Archimedean point of the structuralist classical school of research called this, "subjectivity" but really covered what they saw as a problem instead of solving it⁶ by generating the concept of objectivity. In order to take this self-reflexivity into account and in order to identify multiplicity of processes in the research situation all data require examination and integration with patterns being observed and formulated. The second fallout of this rule is that relationships between identified patterns are open to continuous modification with incoming data.

The second rule is emergent from the focus on process identification rather than event explanation. The shift away from event explanation to process identification and understanding leads to the possibility of multiple meanings of and linkages between actions and even structures. The student-actor thus needs to continually re-evaluate the meanings that are manifest with those that are latent, and work with the next broad rule that to every event there are theoretically at least infinite meanings.

The above rule seems to appear more mind-boggling than it really is. The process of selection is done through the identification of redundancies or patterns,⁷ into which the available data seems to juxtapose itself in the eye of the student-actor. For instance, while identifying potential action directions for the study of higher education systems by an examination of the existing literature Banerjee and Malhotra⁸ identified that all the literature they had isolated for study were in a normative mode, looked at Universities and colleges as closed systems (in system theoretic terms) and used the cybernetics feedback model for proposing changes. An alternative mode of examining the literature could have been to examine the substantive issues and their reality orientations and to highlight the differences between the books. This simplistic example has been used to indicate the process of pattern identification. This is the third rule, identify patterns rather than check substantive issues against some concept of external reality.

The fourth rule is, for want of a better expression, self-awareness. In his monumental work on language and perception Whorf⁹ points out the difference between knowing a language and knowing about it, "Scientific linguistics have long understood that the ability to speak a language fluently does not necessarily confer a linguistic knowledge of its background phenomena and its systematic process and structure, any more than the ability to play a good game of billiards confers or requires any knowledge of the laws of mechanics that operate upon the billiards table (p.213)."

The rule therefore implies two levels of self-awareness, one "that which I am and that which I am attempting" and two "the background phenomena I am living with during my action involvement as a student-actor".

The final rule for the student-actor is the rule of creativity. Creativity as defined by Koestler is the "perceiving of a situation or idea in two self consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference....." He distinguishes between the two frames of reference or planes as "between

the routine skills of thinking on a single 'plane' as it were, and the creative act, which.....always operates on more than one plane. The former may be called single minded, the latter a double minded, transitory state of unstable equilibrium the balance of both emotion and thought is disturbed".¹⁰ The student-actor thus is charged while adopting the participatory paradigm with the responsibility of continually keeping his creative potential in an activated state in perceiving the same phenomena through multiple frames simultaneously.

In summary these set of rules, provide the direction of shifting from the classical mode of differentiation-control to integration-direct, and attempt to integrate the approach paradigm with the personal stance of the student-actor.



REFERENCES

1. Von Bertalanffy, Ludwig; "General Systems Theory", Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1968.
2. After von Bertalanffy op.cit.
3. Laing, R.D.; "The Politics of Experience", Penguin Books, Great Britain, 1967.
4. Driggers, Preston F., "Theoretical Blockage: A strategy for the Development of Organizational Theory" in Benson, J. Kenneth (ed) "Organizational Analysis, Critique and Innovation", Sage Contemporary Social Science Issues, No. 37, Bereely Hills/ London, 1977.
5. Banerjee, Sushanta; "Book Reviews 'Participatory Management' Anthony W.P., A-W, 1978 "in" ASCI Journal of Management" March 1979, (under print).
6. From conversation with Garg, Pulin K., who postulates that one of the frequent outcomes of the researcher-researched differentiation mode is the generation of "solutions to cover/hide problems" (rather than solve them).
7. Watzlavick, Paul et.al., "Pragmatics of Human Communications", Faber and Faber, London, 1968.
8. Banerjee, Sushanta and Malhotra Ashok, "Higher Education; Frames of Reference in Existing Literature", in Journal of Higher Education, UGC, New Delhi, Spring 1979 (under print).
9. Whorf, Benjamin Loe, "Science and Linguistics" in Carroll, John B. (ed) "Language, Thought and Reality, Selected Writings of Benjamin Lew Whorf", John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1956.
10. Koestler, Arthur, "The Act of Creation", MacMillan & Co., New York, 1964.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH METHOD

Jamileh Abhari*

During the last decade there has been a shift in the concept of development from 'people to be developed' to 'people can only develop themselves'. In this new concept, people's participation is the key element. Participation is considered as a development tool to help communities toward self knowledge and to act consciously in the transformation of their society. It is believed that people have their own motives, desires and expectations and only they themselves are able to analyze their social reality. It is believed that changes in traditional communities can occur upon community consensus and such consensus can only be obtained through participation and commitment in the diagnosis of problems and their solution within society. The validity of this assumption has been shown in different studies and has been the subject of several conferences and seminars.

Margaret Mead in one of her articles called "Research with Human Beings: A Model Derived from Anthropological Field Practice" published in 1969 notes "There is a demand on the part of the subjects to have a role in the activity which involves them rather than continuing their past role as passive recipients on whose behalf power is delegated to the specialist practitioner".

Charles Nesbitt in his Ph.D. dissertation in 1972 studied the role illiterate blacks, in comparison with professional adult educators could play in the programs designated for them. He concluded that "the so-called functionally illiterate black who lived in urban areas was as capable of making significant input into programs designed for him as the literate leader".

Paulo Freire has been one of the great advocates of participatory methods. In his writing he puts great importance on the potential ability of individuals in "decoding their existential situation" for they are "authors of their transformation" and "they have a lot to teach". He quotes Nyerere, the President of Tanzania, "Just as I cannot develop a man, a woman, a person unless he or she develops, I can also not develop a nation without people".

Participation and participatory methods were among the main issues discussed at the International Conference on Adult Education and Development held in Tanzania in 1976. One of the main points of the Declaration of this Conference was "People cannot be developed. They can only develop themselves".

The concept of participation has influenced research and education as well. It has questioned the validity of the traditional methods of social surveys and suggests participatory research as an alternative.

*International Institute for Adult Literacy Methods, Tehran.

Participatory research is defined as a type of social study which involves the community and population in the entire research process from the formulation of the problems to the discussion of solutions and the interpretation of the findings. The advocates of this approach are critical of traditional methods because they try to understand human behaviour as much as possible through the methods natural scientists use to study plants, animals and physical properties; it treats social events as if they are phenomena that could be predicted, caused or controlled in a laboratory. Traditional systems examine what is and participatory research concentrates on what "can be". Participatory research has become an important issue in development and educational programs, and it is believed that this kind of survey "provides a more accurate reflection of social reality, assures more complete involvement of the community and is more scientific".

Principles of Participatory Research

Derived from various experiences, Budd Hall, suggests the following principles:

- (a) The research process should be based on a system of discussion, investigation and analysis in which the people are as much a part of the process as the researchers. Theories based upon the researcher's involvement with reality are not developed beforehand. Reality is based upon the process by which a community develops theories and solutions for itself.
- (b) Research should incorporate as many as possible of those working locally toward development of that community, be they village leaders, administrators, educators or extension officers.
- (c) The research process should be of some immediate and direct benefit to a community and not merely the basis for an academic paper.
- (d) The research process should be viewed as a dialectic process: a dialogue over time and not as a static picture at one point in time.
- (e) The object of the research like the object of the educational process should be the liberation of human creative potential and the mobilization of human resources for the solution of social problems.

Methodology

No step by step instructions can be suggested for participatory research. This approach is against any previously designed pattern of action. It rejects any prefabricated tools such as questionnaires or observation sheets because it is believed that information obtained through those means represent a static picture of reality, a photograph of a group of people with neither past nor a future .

However, most of the participatory research advocates recognize three main steps in this process: establishing a relationship with the group; collection of information; and systematic organization of information in the process of participatory research. These three steps are defined in the following way in an article called "The Militant Observation" by Roscoe and Miguel de Oliviera.

a) Establishing a relationship with the group

According to the authors this is a very important stage of participatory research. It is essential that the researchers not be experienced as a "foreign body" or an intrusion by those with whom they work. Such a situation would cause distrust and uneasiness. The researcher must learn to establish a relationship with the group such that a progressive acceptance takes place. The authors stress that researchers must be accepted as he or she really is, as someone who comes from the outside, who wishes to do a useful study, but who, it must be understood, will eventually go away again. It would be wrong for the researcher to desire to totally disappear or be fused into the community. Attempting to hide goals or refusing to assume openly one's specific roles are attitudes which reveal, in the final analysis, a lack of trust toward the group.

b) Collecting information

Before entering into the community, the researchers should study the documents and information available about the group and the community, learn about the community's institutions, power structures, and economic activities. It is important to identify the key persons who are known and respected by the community. These persons can be very helpful in giving a better understanding of the reality to be observed and studied. They can make the first contacts with the population much easier.

The traditional approach of using questions and answers for collecting information should be avoided. The use of questionnaires traps one in a closed framework, previously defined. The answers to such questionnaires can only confirm or reject what the researchers already have in mind. New ideas do not emerge in this system. The authors suggest the "open interview approach". They explain it as a free dialogue in which people discuss what interests them. It should not have a prefabricated framework but a flexible discussion format which permits the collection of richer information which is closer to the group's experience and reality.

The open interview's flexibility aims simply to make possible a more authentic expression by those interviewed, permitting the collection of richer, more interesting material which is closer to the group's experience and reality. This often implies a redefinition of original hypotheses. Problems and new aspects which were not grasped by the researcher can thus be identified and incorporated into the research process. Better interaction between the researcher and the group is also fostered by the open interview.

c) Presenting and discussing research findings with the community or group being studied

Systematizing, organizing and interpreting of the collected information is a difficult and delicate task. There is no recommended formula for this stage but the collected information should be organized in a way which would be comprehensible to the group who have to study and analyze them. The organization of the collected material should not be viewed as a definite portrait of the group but a basis for group discussions and analysis and working material for the group. Some kind of visual or graphic expression such as slides, photos or films could be used for depicting the significant parts. This step is a state of moving from thought to action. The

information obtained would be the terminal part of work suggested and envisaged by the group, a process which had been set in motion by the researcher and to be continued by the group.

THE BALANCE OF KNOWLEDGE*

The balance of social knowledge is tilted in favour of the West, says Krishna Kumar. The findings of research projects in the third world, financed by affluent nations, may help them manipulate the economy of poor countries.

"Study the rich and powerful, not the poor and powerless," says Susan George, the author of a Penguin paperback on international food politics titled "How The Other Half Dies". She feels that not enough research is being done on how the rich countries frame their policies regarding aid to the poor countries, and what socio-political and economic consequences these policies have in the Third World.

On the other hand, extensive research is being constantly conducted on poor societies by experts of developed countries and international agencies. "The situation becomes morally and politically worse." Susan George says, "when researchers have the confidence of their subjects. The latter then tells them things the outside world should not learn, but eventually does".

Development and aid are so integrally related in the contemporary world that, at the international level, the poor countries have to accept their role as subjects of research while the rich countries supply the researchers. The arguments of the rich countries runs like this: if we are going to help the poor, we must know them thoroughly so that our aid is not wasted. The poor nations have no option in accepting the argument. They do not even ask what is meant by 'wasted' aid: aid without profit for the donor, or aid in the wrong areas?

As donors of aid, the rich countries have the freedom to select the areas in which they would like to help, and this freedom gives them the right to determine the content and methodology of social scientific research projects. In exercising this right, the experts of the rich countries often act in consultation with the local elites of the aided countries whose own interests match those of the donors. The actual recipients of aid—the poor masses—are hardly ever consulted or allowed to voice their perception of problems and needs.

Most of the Third World countries have no organisational means through which the poor, who are generally illiterate, can directly express their feelings and views, let alone participate in decision making. Social scientific research on the poor masses is conceptualised and carried out solely to supply data necessary to provide suitable rationale for predetermined aid plans.

Working with a development agency and its foreign representative frequently serves as an asset to the native expert in his future career. Although his

*"Times of India", February 4, 1979.

role in the work carried out by the agency is seldom more than of an assistant, he can use this assistantship as an evidence of research experience with a professional, the foreign expert. When he conducts his own research afterwards, he naturally carries over the influence of his foreign mentor in the way he identifies problems and selects appropriate research design and methodology.

Several of our social scientists get direct exposure to the models of research developed in the rich, mostly western countries, during their trips abroad for doctoral or advanced study. When they return home, they continue to write for an international audience, and this influences both their choice of research problems and the means to solve them.

Research conducted on our people for a foreign audience has opened up the fabric of our life before we have the economic strength to protect ourselves from manipulation by outside agents.

This is perhaps the greatest danger of foreign control of knowledge acquisition. In a world where economic interests are openly competing for markets, knowledge about society is no more purely academic. Often it is sought under the auspices of commercial interest, and even more often it is used for commercial gains.

It is rarely admitted that many of the international development agencies are guided by interests of commercial organisations, as in the case of the Industry Cooperative Program which operates within the Food and Agriculture Organisation. Even if the policy-makers of an underdeveloped country realise this, they are seldom able to resist the pressures to accept foreign aid and the accompanying research projects.

The role of research in any society can be determined only by considering the source and outcome of knowledge gained from research. In the social sciences, a major source of contemporary knowledge in the underdeveloped world lies in the poor masses. It is they who provide the data on which the social scientist tests his hypotheses and concepts. But they do not share the outcomes of research conducted on them. The academic community has not yet developed a means to inform the general public about the findings of research projects and what socio-political and economic implications these findings can have. Not only the illiterate masses, but also the literate people who are not in the academic world are kept in ignorance about the outcomes of social research.

In the ultimate analysis, we have to ask what use is made of social knowledge once it has been documented and made available to an international audience of social scientists, technocrats and policy-makers. It can be used either to transform the society to fulfil the needs of the people, or it can be used to manipulate their needs. Any social scientist who is truly concerned about his subjects is obliged to consider these two possibilities and inform the public about his understanding of the issue involved in them.

It will be difficult for him to do this without first looking at the present balance of social scientific knowledge in the world between the rich and the poor countries. It seems that the rich know more about the poor than vice versa. In every sphere of national activity, the Third World countries stand exposed to the experts of the developed and powerful countries. The technocrat of the west knows how our people live, organise, quarrel, or resist.

In comparison, the experts and scholars of the poor countries have superficial knowledge, based on limited personal experience or propaganda literature, about the rich countries and the process of decision making in them. The politician, the civil servant, and the scholar in an underdeveloped country wait, like anyone else, for the bestseller paperback to find out how their country was manipulated along with many others ten years ago.



A NOTE ON UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPATION PROCESS IN
ORGANISATION SYSTEM DESIGN

Nitish R. De*

This note seeks to raise a number of issues on the dynamics of participation that are currently in my thoughts. The ideas are tentative and speculative.

Questions are raised on which further probings are warranted:

1. In the literature on organisation studies, two terms are often used to reflect a polarised concept: under-organisation and over-organisation. When I try to understand in a comparative way different types of organisations - economic and non-economic, small and big, urban and rural, industrial and non-industrial, I find that this by-polar concept does not explain realities adequately.

I would rather seek three alternatives: pre-modern, modern and post-modern, to describe such organisation systems as mentioned. A pre-modern organisation system is one which has been or is in a state of sub-optimum level mainly because of lack of knowledge and skills and prevalence of ignorance. It does not include lack of opportunity. To give an example, if in a rich peasant society infant mortality rate is high and one of the major causes is found to be the parents' persistence with an unbalanced diet for their children based on age-old superstition, then, I would like to call it a pre-modern organisation system (the family unit).

A modern organisation system is the one we are most familiar with and which exists in practically all walks of life all over the world. Large or small, it is hierarchic. It follows the logic of division of labour on the principle of redundancy. Impersonal or quasi-impersonal work relationships are dominated by open or subtle rules, regulations, checks and counter-checks. Power-distribution follows the logic of chain of command.

The post-modern organisations are those which seek to avoid the limitations, pains and dysfunctionality of modern organisations by making these to opt for human development culture which is possible if the organisation's entire rationale operates within a framework of certain ideals. In another context, I have used a meta-ideal to describe the vision of such organisations by using the term Samaj-siddhi. This refers to the process of determination of social self through the simultaneous effort to create a just social system.

One will probably note that we are not using the term modern in the sense in which it has been used by many social scientists not excluding Inkless and McCelleland which, one way or another, makes modernity an extension of rational, western culture.

*Director, Public Enterprises, Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi, India.

Presented at Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi during February 7-9, 1979.

2. While in the 1960s and 1970s many experiments have been and are being conducted to convert industrial organisations in the Western countries into post-modern systems through multiple approaches such as industrial democracy, quality of working life movement and self-management approach, most of these experiments have suffered from micro-level encapsulation. The problems of apathy and alienation, inability to cope with organisation power and clash with bureaucratic values in a framework of free enterprise economy have stood in the way to push these experiments to a stage where humanity could draw encouragement to rescue itself from the tyranny of technology, market mechanisms and personal greed.

3. When we examine organisations of the peripheral and marginal people, primarily in the rural sector but also in the urban sector, we are often struck by the innovativeness and foresight of the organisers in inculcating the values of post-modernity. Often enough the organisers and participants are conterminous. Leadership role does not remain a fixed concept. Organisations remain simple in structure and the processes of functioning with the result that these do not break under pressure of external assault. Its elasticity helps to regain a state of re-assembly.

4. The organisation of these people, through a range of its activities, resembles an industrial trade union. Yet, in practice, such people's organisations are total or near-total (participation rate), more open, meetings and discussions are free or less inhibited and the leadership remains not only accountable to members but also operates in close interaction with them. Women are no less relevant than men.

5. These observations raise a number of questions:

- a) What are the premises on which these participatory work organisations are designed?
- b) What are the design principles taken into account and why?
- c) If the control system is norm-based, how do the norms evolve and how are these observed?
- d) What are the qualitative dimensions of ideals and how do the goals-systems dovetail into the ideals-systems?
- e) How are the internal and external crises dealt with and with what effect?
- f) What are, empirically speaking, some of the ingredients of post-modern society?
- g) In "re-writing" the reality, how do the objective conditions interact with subjective forces?

6. I suppose what I am seeking is to understand the role of participation process (which I see as a planned and not random process) in terms of its possible contribution to the transformation of modern organisations into post-modern organisations.

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: A Critique

Angjan Ghosh*

In spite of its feeble attempt at dissociation, Participatory Research (PR) as described by Rajesh Tandon is a successor to Action Research (AR). AR is exemplified by the words of Kurt Lewin: "If you want to know how things really are, just try to change them."¹ From the testimony of one of its foremost exponents, AR² does seem to have a particular ideological stance and the actors do exercise some control over the research process. Consequently, the distinction between PR and AR is not very clear. Then what is PR? From Tandon's exploratory statement it seems to be a kind of research stemming from an 'immediate problem situation' to change the situation through an increase in knowledge base thus creating the capacity on the part of the actors to change the situation. At each step of research, from the choice of problem, methodology and outcome, the actors are to 'participate' with the 'professional researcher', thus sharing control over the research.

A number of naive assumptions underlie this approach. Firstly, there is the problem of cognition, i.e. the actors feel the need for research to solve their problems. Secondly, the expectation that actors can control the research process, in spite of lacking the skills of a professional researcher. Thirdly, that 'knowledge' is sufficient to generate change by the actors. Since PR has the goal of precipitating change its success is to be evaluated in terms of the achievement of this goal.

Yet, who is the participant? The professional researcher can hardly be considered to be one, as he is engaged for a limited time and his primary role definition remains as a researcher, in spite of his transitory involvement. In effect I would suppose that a participant is one who has no opportunity of withdrawal from a given situation. A researcher always has the possibility of retreat into his academic sanctuary which is denied the participants. Therefore, the 'subject-researcher' relationship must be related to their specific social situation, governed by the boundaries of their role situation.

How is control over research exercised by the actors? This can be achieved if there is no distinction between the actor and researcher, as in the case of 'activist participation research' described by Huizer. But as long as the researcher maintains some kind of autonomy, the control becomes primarily normative. Objectivity which is not the same as 'value-neutrality' is also important for PR, since even to change their situation the actors require scientific knowledge rather than 'ideological support'.³ Here objectivity would imply the explicit admission of bias. Moreover, is knowledge sufficient to bring about change without conscious mediation in the form of an organisation. In order for knowledge to be transformed into practice, it

*Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, India.

would require to be appropriated, not individually but collectively. This is where the possibilities of PR lies, in terms of breaking the unilateral transmission and use of knowledge by the establishment, if alternative organisations of the oppressed exist. Therefore, the 'authenticity' of PR is not abstract, but specific to the interest of the class in whose favour it is operating. Without conscious, collective organised expropriation of knowledge by the 'actors', change is not possible.

My final objection to PR as presently formulated is that, it seems more of a mechanism for 'tension management' 'integration' than an instrument of social change. By effecting piecemeal reforms which diffuses local conflict without affecting the wider infrastructure, PR may help to absorb and incorporate conflict. A change in the system might not lead to a change of the system. Thus PR as an instrument of reform becomes as redundant as classical research.

All this is hardly novel for the sociologists and social-anthropologists, who have raised these and similar questions for over a decade now.⁴ The 'subject-object' relationship in social research can be circumvented by two approaches - semiological or revolutionary praxis. The choice still remains with the researcher.

REFERENCES

1. Quoted in Gerrit Huizer "Action Research and Peasant Resistance: some experiences in the Third World", (Mimeographed), Nijmegen, 1977, p.6.
2. Ibid
3. Ibid, p.32.
4. cf. the symposium "The Social Responsibility of the Social Anthropologist", in Current Anthropology, November, 1968 (cf. articles by Berreman and Gough).

Gutkind writes: "In a sense the use by the social researcher of the participant observation technique shades delicately into the social researcher as participant". Peter Gutkind: "The Social Researcher in the Context of African National Development", in S. Saberwal and F. Henry (eds.) : Stress and Response in Fieldwork, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, N.Y., 1969.

J. Barnes: Ethics of Social Research, OUP, Delhi, 1976. Dell Hymes (ed.): Reinventing Anthropology, Pantheon, 1973.

"PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH": SOME IRREVERENT QUESTIONS

(A Critique of a Critical Critique)

Arvind N. Das*

1. If the jargon of social sciences has become akin to the mumbo-jumbo of witchcraft (Andreski 1973), it also seems to have acquired the mesmerising quality of auto-hypnosis. For, not only is almost any process of interaction between individuals/groups being taken to be research ("After all, there is an accretion of knowledge in the process!"), but the very basic premises of scientific enquiry - systematic categorisation of facts and interpretations within the framework of consistently adopted definitions - are being forgotten. In the context of "participatory research", either the definition/description is such as to be totally misunderstood so that the essential ingredients of "values", "ideological/normative stances", "identification of beneficiaries and benefits from the participatory research process" etc. are neglected in labelling diverse social processes (eg. Wage Negotiations!) as "participatory research", or the content/method of the process itself are so uncertain, inclusive and open-ended as to further confound the already confused social science scene.

Is it not necessary therefore, that (i) the perimeters of "participatory research" be more sharply drawn; (ii) the content/method be more specifically filled in; and (iii) the colour - ideology - be more brightly displayed?

For, ideology is no absolute.

2. Which brings us to the question of how "participatory research" is different from "action research". The former is supposed to include 'ideological' stances and explicit value-premises, whereas the latter is supposed to be lacking in this respect. As regards "value", it should be made clear that the very lack of explicit value declaration is a value in itself (Stavenhagen 1971). Similarly about ideology; ideology is not necessarily of the "left" but can equally be ideology of the "right". Hence, the inclusion of an "ideological" stance in "participatory research" does not ipso facto differentiate it from "action research". This will be particularly obvious if one examines the case of different types of referenda etc. held by the worst sort of rightist forces eg. Thieu, in South Vietnam. Neither is the participation of beneficiaries enough reason to distinguish "participatory research" from "action research" in terms of the values that are inherent in them. The example of the Shramdan movements and other such activities, involving the beneficiaries, will make this point clear. However, even the origin of initiative with regard to a particular action/research does not distinguish the two types of research. While the initiative may have to come from the "people" themselves, the whole process can be so manipulated as to go against their long term interests. The example of the Ahmedabad textile workers in setting up their organisation

*Fellow, Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi, India.

Presented at Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi during February 7-9, 1979.

through investigation of their conditions and the way it has been subverted is a case in point. Thus, it can be said that while the above factors are a necessary condition of "participatory research", they are not a sufficient condition to distinguish it from "action research".

Is it not necessary therefore, to find out the exact dimensions of participatory research before distinguishing it from action research? Otherwise, will not such labelling merely become an exercise in "Social Science sorcery"?

3. Instead of beating the dead horse of value loaded and value free research is it not better to make a plea, as Gerrit Huizer has made, of simply "valuable" research - valuable for the people concerned? (Huizer, 1979).

4. In communicating it is necessary to maintain certain consistency in the use of terms. It becomes important in this context to stick to the generally accepted meaning of research and this brings up a question of epistemology - cognitive process of different "actors" in research. Here too, a long debate has been waged about the source of knowledge as well as about the validity of "spectator knowledge" as against "experiential knowledge". Without entering into this morass, perhaps it is necessary to set right some simplistic ideas on this score. "Where do correct ideas come from? Do they drop from the skies? No. Are they innate in the mind? No. They come from social practice, and from it alone, they come from three kinds of social practice, the struggle for production, the class struggle and scientific experiment". (Mao Tsetung, 1963). For different people involved in different social processes, the source of correct ideas is therefore, different. For the (academic/action/participatory) "researchers", knowledge comes mainly from secondary sources like books, reports of experiments and other scientific enquiry. Their cognitive - action processes therefore, can be represented in the following manner:

Researcher : Consciousness - Action - Experience.

Another set of people who are more involved in the realities of changing not ideas but men acquire knowledge through day-to-day experience and then go on to perform action. Their cognitive/action process may therefore, be outlined as follows:

Advanced popular 'elements' : Experience - Consciousness - Action.

For the people, in general, the day-to-day involvement with the processes of living, of changing neither ideas nor men but things, is unfortunately so deep that their cognitive/action process is different and can be outlined to be as follows:

People : Action - Experience - Consciousness.

There is an implicit recognition of this difference even in the "Steps in an "ideal" Participatory Research Approach" where a differentiation is made between the people, the actors in their situation, and small groups responsible for research cycle.

Is it not necessary, therefore, to not only recognise this "filteration" process but also to creatively utilise it for social transformation?

5. One of the questions asked in the prescription of the Participatory Research Approach is "how to develop authentic, valid knowledge"? This implies not only epistemology, but even acquires ontological overtones! For at least 2000 years, if not more, this question has been asked as for instance by Jesting Pilate who asked "what is the truth" and "would not wait for an answer". (The Holy Bible : New Testament : Gospel according to St. John 18(38)). Unfortunately, it seems that researchers continue to wait for an answer.

Is it not less important to look for authentic and valid knowledge than to try to obtain the perceptions and felt needs of the people and to assist them in changing their situation? "Philosophers have interpreted the world in many ways; the point however, is to change it". (Karl Marx, 1845).

6. Next comes the question of participation. Often enough the word seems to be confused with intra-group democracy. While this is clearly wrong as participation implies a popular element which seems to go contrary to 'organisation', any historical - pre-modern or modern, to use the terms of Nitish R. De (1979) - organisation form seems to defeat participation : Athenian direct democracy is no solution as in it only 'citizens' participated and slaves did not, and certainly not hierarchical patterns based, as they may claim to be, on lofty principles of 'democratic centralism' and what not. Thus, the dichotomy between organisation and participation has to be sorted out. Perhaps this is possible only if "the organisers and participants are coterminus". (De, op.cit).

But, is this possible if "Steps in an "ideal" Participatory Research Approach" are already fixed from outside with a recognition of the different roles of 'researchers' and 'actors' who may share ideological stands but not necessarily 'meta-ideals' which have to be arrived at by "joint agreement" - yet another process which is not inherent but is one of negotiation? Is it not necessary to do away with organised processes involving different roles and steps altogether?

Otherwise, in the context of social research, participation becomes, according to the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences : "aimed at some kind of membership in or close attachment to an alien or exotic group"!

7. To conclude, if the action element in research is underscored in comparison to the ritualisation of the participation process, will not social research become alienated and fearful as observed by Robert Lynd many years ago:

"The social sciences exhibit reluctance, however, to accept this full partnership with man in the adventure of living. They tend to mute their role as implementers of innovation. So one observes these grave young sciences hiding behind their precocious beards of dispassionate research and scientific objectivity. They observe, record and analyse but they shun prediction?" (Lynd, 1948).

Prediction of the post-modern society and action towards that end is the essence of any meaningful social activity and "participatory research" must have as its end not "consolidation of learning" (the researchers' need) but social action.

In this sense, is it necessary at all to further indulge in the social science sorcery of making fine distinctions between the mumbo-jumbo of "Participatory Research" and "Action Research"?

REFERENCES

1. Stanislav Andreshi, Social Sciences as Sorcery, New York, 1973.
2. Rudolfo Stavenhagen, "Decolonizing Applied Social Sciences", Human Organisation, 30(4), 1971, cited in Gerrit Huizer, loc. cit.
3. Gerrit Huizer, "Applied Social Science and Political Action : A Note on New Approaches", Human Futures, 2(1), Spring 1979 (Forthcoming).
4. Mao Tsetung, "Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?", Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung, Peking, 1971.
5. The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, New York, 1957.
6. Karl Marx, "Theses on Fuerbach", in Early Writings, Harmondsworth, 1974.
7. Nitish R. De, "A Note on Understanding Participation Process in Organisation System Design", Seminar on Participatory Research, New Delhi, 7-9, February, 1979.
8. Robert Lynd, Knowledge For What?, Princeton 1948, cited in Gerrit Huizer, op.cit.

CASE STUDIES

WHAT DID WE LEARN? MEHRAULI:
A LITERACY PROGRAM WHICH FAILED*

Mehrauli Group

In late 1978, a community work project was started by a Delhi based voluntary organization in Mehrauli. The project was based on the principle that a betterment of living conditions of the poor would occur not by "uplift" from above, but through organized efforts of the poor themselves. It was hoped that the project would develop a self-sustaining outward spreading movement, in contrast to the work of most voluntary agencies which depend on the injection of large sums of money, into an area creating new dependencies. An experimental literacy program was part of the project.

Background

Mehrauli block lies a few miles south of Delhi metropolitan area. It has a total area of 92 square kilometres and a population of 134,000. After independence most of the land was sold by local villagers to upper class urban people from Delhi, retired army personnel and high civil servants. Agricultural infrastructure developed very rapidly after this and the area now has highly capital intensive agriculture. Every farm has a tube-well and tractors and threshing machines are commonly used. Apart from growing wheat and vegetables a lucrative business is carried out by growing flowers for sale in Delhi and also export.

The landlords who are largely absentee, run the farms with a migrant labour force from eastern Uttar Pradesh. These "Purabias" (easterners) are preferred to the local villagers because they accept lower rates of pay and are considered more docile than local people. The landlords may also be afraid that local people will occupy their land.

The Purabias maintain strong links with their villages. They often leave their families behind and come to work as casual workers for several months, returning home if they don't find employment. The ones who get regular employment go home annually or whenever they can put together enough money. Some bring their families if they find accommodation on the farms where they work. The Purabias are seen as aliens by the local villagers and also looked down upon. The local villagers are now mostly employed in the city and enjoy much better working conditions. Others carry on traditional occupations such as milk vending and agriculture. The local villagers are resentful of Purabias because they are seen as depressing wages, since they form a large pool of unemployed. The Purabias on their part are not able to withstand the pressure of being unemployed for long periods of time and accept low wages. Among the Purabias themselves, there is a sense of solidarity between people from the same villages and districts. Often a newcomer is given shelter till he finds employment. On the other hand there is also severe competition for jobs and a feeling that Purabias stab each other in the back.

*The program was partially supported by Participatory Research Project funds from PECCE, N. Delhi.

Apart from Agricultural land, there are many brick kilns in the area. These are manned by migrant workers mostly from Rajasthan but also some U.P. districts e.g. Aligarh. These workers do not work on the farms but go back to their villages in the rainy season. Stone quarries and small factories also dot the area.

Before the emergency (June 1975) an activist in the project had helped to organize the Purabias and other agricultural workers of Mehrauli. A union called the Dehat Mazdoor Union (Village Workers Union) had been formed. Its main struggles were to enforce the implementation of the statutory minimum wage and raise wage levels along with improving working conditions. During the emergency, the union broke down because several activists were jailed. In mid 1978 one of the activists returned to the area. After discussions with the workers and union members she felt that the union had undertaken a uni-dimensional economic struggle and it was felt that struggles on other fronts were also necessary. The two expressed needs in the community were for improved literacy and better health care. Two literacy centres were set up as a consequence.

Rationale for Program

Although the importance of functional literacy in making people independent of outsiders and more able to deal with employers and government officials was recognized, literacy was to be related to a process of conscientization. This would relate abstract education to the daily lives of the people and would further encourage them to become self dependent and active participants in learning, rather than passive objects to be acted upon. The method developed by Paulo Freire which made learning a cognitive as opposed to a purely behaviourist process seemed to be most appropriate. To use this method successfully, a close relationship with the old union and its members was intended, so that discussions could be enriched and past experiences analyzed. The literacy centre would also serve as a stepping stone for new activists to get to know the area and to learn from the literacy classes.

Though we had a broad purpose in our minds, we did not set specific goals such as, how many people would learn to read and write or how fluently. The time frame for our work was also not thought through. We were tentative in our approach and planned to allow feedback to shape our work.

The Participants

Fifteen or sixteen people had expressed a willingness to attend classes in two areas. They were all men who worked on farms. Some had regular jobs and were paid monthly wages. Others were daily wage workers who had to look for work every day but lived with friends/relatives on farms. They earned between Rs.150/- and Rs.225/- per month. The workers were mostly in their twenties. The age range of participants was 15-35 years. In one centre a family attended (Not the wife).

Although several people who attended classes had previous union experience, none of the main militants with whom the program had originally been discussed participated. In centre II, especially, the participants were mainly young men with no union experience at all. Their main motive for coming to the class was an interest in functional literacy. Several hoped

to learn English, especially the people who were already literate. Others observed the classes because they were living nearby. Possibly some hoped that the teachers would be useful future contacts because of their class background. So while the teachers saw themselves as coming to the centres to "conscientize the people", the participants saw them as rather strange ladies who would be better engaged in teaching them English.

The teaching personnel* changed over a period of time. In total 8 people were involved. Only one of them had previous experience of adult literacy teaching. This teacher had also developed reading material. One other teacher had training in teaching. Two people had a handicap in terms of not being fluent with Hindi language. The others were fluent, but not in touch with the language in terms of being able to pick up and develop relevant aids and reading materials. All the teachers came from middle - upper middle class backgrounds and some of them were very westernized. Of the eight teachers two were men and six women. Teachers ages ranged from 20-35 years.

The literacy Centres

Two centres were opened in different areas of Mehrauli on farms of two workers who voluntarily provided their homes for the centres. A place was considered suitable if it had electricity, since classes were held in the evenings, and there was a place to hang a blackboard.

Simple materials were used in the centres. To begin with a piece of paper stuck on the wall served as a blackboard, later two roll up blackboards were provided. A few visuals, newspaper/magazine cuttings and other short passages were used for stimulating discussions. Much later, we attempted to use two texts to facilitate reading and further discussions.

The participants provided note books and pencils etc. for themselves. It was felt that providing some materials for themselves would affirm that learning was useful and the teaching - learning situation would not be considered an act of charity with teachers doling out knowledge.

Classes were started briefly in November 1978, but really began again in January 1979. One centre (Centre I) stopped functioning until the teacher, a student with personal problems who could not cope with the work was replaced. The other centre (Centre II) continued smoothly, three times a week from January. One teacher handled classes, for two months till another one joined her. It was decided that at both centres at least two teachers should function, so that discussions could be generated and individual attention when necessary could be given to participants.

Methodology

The methodology we wished to follow would use discussions as a basis for the lessons. The discussions were to be initiated through stories or visuals to stimulate interest and the use of questions. After this, certain key words would be picked up by the participants and broken into syllabic components.

*We use the words classes and teachers for lack of any other common words.

From these syllables the students would be asked to create their own words. Though this may have been slow initially we wished to focus on creativity. There was to be a constant recycling of letters and syllables already learnt. Each session was to have a rythm, with some discussion, some repetition and some new ground covered.

This required careful planning which was not at first done in centre II. A few discussions based on short stories and other material took place but were not linked meaningfully to the words being learnt. When two additional teachers joined centre II (total 3) and centre I was restaffed better planning could be implemented.

In the following pages we will describe several lesson plans in detail and a few illustrative discussions which took place. The lesson plans are not given in sequential order, but have been presented in this manner for convenient discussion.

Centre I

Classes using lesson plans began on 20th March, 1979.

Lesson Plan 1.

Two visuals were used showing the immediate benefits of literacy. One was of a sick child in bed while a man held two bottles in his hands, one marked medicine and the other poison. The second drawing showed two men outside a courtroom. One was a poor man holding his thumb out to put his thumb print on a paper, while a prosperous looking man was writing. These drawings were to be used to initiate a discussion on literacy and its uses. Questions such as why do we want to learn to read and write? Can we earn more by being literate? Can we solve our problems through literacy? were to be raised.

The visuals were to point out the immediate benefits of literacy while the supplementary questions were to bring out the point that poverty and the conditions of life could be better understood through literacy.

No key word for learning was planned. Instead the learners were to be taught how to write their names.

Implementation: Eight people came to the first class, of whom two already knew how to read and write. The pictures impressed the learners but the discussion did not go as planned, partly due to the poor Hindi of the only teacher present. The word मकान (house) was written on the blackboard. The initial problem was to get the learners to split it into its component syllables म, का, न. This was at first very difficult as people are used to thinking of words as blocks and not separate parts. The word was written down, and then its components. After that several new words were made काम (work), नाम (name), कान (ear), नमक (salt), मन (heart), नाक (nose) but the teacher played a large part in this so it was not really a cognitive process. The class ended by teaching those who did not know how to write their own names, how to do so. Since the participants had not bought their writing materials yet, they wrote on the back of tin plates or on the board.

Lesson Plan 2.

A visual showing a rich man's mansion and a poor man's hut were to be used to initiate discussion. The questions to be discussed were : How can we change out conditions? Why are we poor? Many things are made through our effort, who gets the benefit of this? The key word was to be a repetition of मकान and आदमी (man) as this had come up in the previous discussion.

Implementation: Only four people came to the class. Several people had gone to a funeral. The class started with a visual and a story from the primer नया कदम (New Step) about a construction worker in a town. This led to a discussion on how houses are built with the sweat of workers but in which, they cannot afford to live. There was also some discussion about how education should not be one directional as it is in the present system. This contrasted with the view expressed by one of the participants that he should be taught with the stick. One of the people who attended was literate, so he read a short story written by a popular novelist Premchand. Others repeated the word मकान and its derivatives. आदमी was also introduced.

Lesson Plan 3.

The visuals consisted of a peasant working in the field and a seth (shopkeeper) in a shop. Questions to be discussed were, what is the difference between the two men? Secondly, what is the difference between a poor man's day and a rich man's day. The key word was to be आदमी.

Implementation: This lesson plan was used for three classes. The third class finished with four alphabet म, क, द, न and 2 matras र, ि having been learned. Words like दाम (price), आम (Mango), नदी (river) and दादी (grandmother) etc., were written. The discussion was dominated by one person while the others still found it difficult to express themselves. The people who could already read and write were set writing excrciscs while the others followed the lesson plan.

After several more classes with falling attendance, classes were suspended for two weeks because of the harvesting season. On 7th May, 1979 classes restarted.

Lesson Plan 4.

A visual consisted of a man working in the field and the discussion topic was, who does the work and who gets the harvest. Words to be used were महनत और अनाज (work and grain).

Implementation: The discussion produced the response that only through man's effort can the earth produce grain. The two key words were then written on the board and also म with three matras, मा, मी, मे. Two new alphabets ह, ळ and त were introduced. A simple sentence was written हम मेहनती आदमी हैं। (we are hardworking men). One participant who was more advanced wrote a few more sentences.

In the two following classes other simple sentences and new words were practised.

In the following classes a passage on अनाज और भोजन (grain and food) was read which led to the key sentence. अनाज की कमी नहीं है (there is no shortage of grains). Several new words and the alphabet were practised. A short oral word game was also played. The participants had to identify which alphabets go into different words.

From 14th May until 1st June six classes were held which were attended by only one or two students. No lesson plan was followed and only individual work could be done. One person who attended regularly through this period progressed slowly. Then three people came to the class after a long gap and they needed to revise the previous work.

Lesson Plan 5.

The visual of man working in the field was used again and the discussion topic was that a poor man works hard while the rich man has leisure. The sentence put on the board was गरीब काम करता है, अमीर आराम करता है।

Implementation: Five people attended this class. The discussion was initiated by reading a passage from the material अनाज और भोजन. This led to questions relating to the problem of money lending. It was pointed out in the discussion that the rich increase their wealth by exploiting the poor. Subsequently the class was split up into two sections. One which made the words and the other which made sentences.

The next four classes were a revision of all that had been learned before. This often meant that the teachers dictated the words to the participants.

Lesson Plan 6.

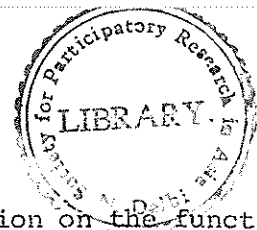
The key sentence to be discussed was गरीब के पास जमीन नहीं है। (the poor have no land). Several new alphabets were practised.

At this juncture the teachers decided that the primer नया कवच could be used on a regular basis. It was felt that this could give a focus to the classes and increase interest. However, only two or three people attended classes and teachers went over the lessons in the workbook individually with them. Towards the end of July 1979 classes were suspended due to lack of interest from participants.

Centre II

At this centre when regular planning started similar lesson plans described above were used. As the class was more advanced, since it had been functioning longer key sentences could be used. Some of the discussions held are described below.

Session I: The key sentence used was शरीर में क्या क्या अंग हैं ? (what are the different parts of the body?). At this session a participant drew a human body on the board and other participants named the different parts. A sympathetic doctor had joined in for two sessions to discuss questions related to health. She answered several questions on prevention of diseases such as malaria and common colds.

1142
12-9-89

Session II: In this session there was a brief discussion on the functioning of government health clinics. Most participants felt that they would rather not use these clinics even if health care was free because they were humiliated by the kind of treatment they received from doctors and other medical personnel. At this discussion it was highlighted that proper medical care was their right and if they did not get it they should organize to demand for better services. The sentences used during this discussion were

दिन भर मेहनत करता हूँ।

I labour the whole day.

रात भर खाँसता रहता हूँ।

I cough through the night.

डॉक्टर बहुत पैसा माँगता है।

The doctor demands too much money.

दवाइयें बहुत महंगी हैं।

The medicine is very expensive.

Session III: The key question in this session was where do the poor live.

जहाँ कहाँ रहता है।

This provoked a lively discussion. In

answer to the question a participant answered that the poor live in their homes. A usually quiet participant interrupted and pointed out that the poor live on the streets, in the fields and in huts, whereas the rich have large mansions. He pointed out that the poor seldom have a proper house or a place they can call their own.

A domineering participant shifted the discussion to literacy and suggested that literate people could earn more because of their education. The other participant pointed out that this was not always true and talked at some length about how the poor are herded into trucks during slum clearance campaigns.

Session IV: During this session a statement from the primer सरा कम काम was used for discussion. The statement read काम कम काम कम आय (little work little income). The discussion focused on whether this statement was infact true and whether only unemployment was the cause of low income. The participants pointed out that this was not entirely true and that there were several reasons for low income. These were listed as:

1. Low wages
2. A few people owning a large amount of land.
3. Agricultural workers being unorganised, and the existence of a large pool of unemployed labour willing to work for low wages.
4. Lack of education etc.

The discussion continued with reference to the differences between industrial and agricultural workers and it was pointed out that factory workers had better working conditions because they had organised themselves and struggled for their rights.

Session V: During this session a passage was read from a primer meant for workers in towns. It described how a worker sent his son to school but did not have money to pay for the child's uniform as he was on strike. During the session everyone described their own experiences at school. It turned out that most people had been to school for short periods of time. Perhaps only one or two months or may be a year or two. The main reasons for leaving

school were

- (a) the need to work either regularly or seasonally,
- (b) humiliation at the hands of the school master or other children, and
- (c) non-attendance of the teacher.

There was a discussion about whether children from poor families could be sent to school if the parents are determined. One participant felt that if parents made sacrifices their children could go to school and get better jobs. Another pointed out that only one of his children could go to school because the other had to work to support the family. In any case it was pointed out that literacy did not necessarily lead to better jobs. There were several literate people working on the same farm and earning the same wages as the illiterate workers. The question why girls usually did not go to school was also raised. Some participants felt that women had no brains. Others pointed out that girls in towns often did go to school.

In this centre the participants reached a more advanced level than in centre I. However, in this centre too, attendance dropped though several of the participants lived on the farm on which the classes were held. It was decided to discontinue the classes since the attendance had become very poor.

Critique of our work

There were many problems arising from the program which led to suspension of the classes in both centres. Several factors contributed to falling attendance and the discontinuation of the classes. These can be categorised broadly as

- (a) Methodological problems.
- (b) Teachers characteristics and skills.
- (c) Problems specific to adult learners.
- (d) Objective conditions.

Methodological Problems:

The Paulo Freire method depends for its success on a deep understanding of the life of the participants in the learning process. Knowledge is to be drawn out of learners by helping them to articulate their own experiences and breaking the barriers of the "culture of silence". 'Teachers' and 'students' should together learn from this process in order to become conscious of the roots of their problems and possible solutions to the problems. Knowledge is not a commodity to be sold or imposed upon the students.

While the stated intention of the teachers was to break-down the traditional student teacher relationship so that each member of the class could learn from others, this was infact recreated. The participants expected the teachers to play an authoritarian role and to learn by traditional methods. More than once people remarked "Teach us with a stick". There was also a failure on the part of the teachers to fully explain the method they were trying to implement, so in the light of the rote-learning expectations of the participants, the classes must have been very bewildering. One literate worker was scornful of the new methods employed, and no literate workers became active in teaching the new method. The Freirean method requires very careful planning as working from

existing primers would not usually draw out the learners own experience. Ad-hoc planning and an insufficient grasp of the actual teaching method led to very mechanical learning and discussions. Insufficient material was also a major draw back.

At centre II classes had started without any visuals being used. Discussions usually followed after short passages or stories were read. Though visuals were used in centre I to start discussions, at no time were they used to help learn words. Flash cards could have been used with pictures and words to facilitate associations between the written word and actual object. This could have helped to make alphabets less abstract symbols. However, teachers at centre II made the learners repeat words, break them up and then write them down without any visual aids to connect the words to actual objects.

Imperfect understanding of the role of rote-learning and repetition also affected the rythmn of the classes. In centre II teachers tried to perfect the use of alphabets through extensive spelling practices. In effect this meant that over two months were spent trying to perfect the use of the matra (vowel) (aah), by continually dictating words in which it was used. It was later found that this is the most difficult vowel sound to use correctly although it is always taught first. Progress can continue to be made before it is completely mastered. Centre II became a dictation class at this point, the method of teaching being paradoxically both cognitive and repetitive. An aversion to learning by heart (on the part of the teachers) meant that the students had to think out the spelling of each word by breaking it up into its component sounds, even if they had written it several times before. They were given no conception of the word as a whole which they would have had if flash cards had been used.

On reflection, the teachers felt that repetition, if used selectively, such as in drills when new vowel sounds were joined to consonants already learned, could be positive and necessary e.g. आ , का , ना , जा , घा , घा , घा , घा , घा . These drills were used in centre I as a part of the class and later in centre II on occasion. However, it is important to remember that drills and repetition should only be one part of each class, with new material being added, or at least old material reworked in new ways such as through word games.

There was some disagreement among the teachers about the use of rote-learning as a method after the closure of the centres. Some felt that given the expectations of the learners rote-learning might have worked better than Freirean methods. Others felt that it was a failure in proper implementation rather than faults in the method which lead to slow progress. They pointed to children who could not read well after several years of school attendance as rote-learning had actually hindered them from reading the sentences they recited.

At centre I not enough work was done to consolidate learning before moving on. As the classes continued and new members were added while others dropped out, the levels of literacy began to differ widely. Some participants progressed quickly as they had spent some years in school earlier while others were slow learners. At centre II two children also attended classes. Since we did not have any material for children this caused problems. The different levels in the class caused planning problems which to some extent could be (and were) solved by the use of key sentences for the more advanced participants while the others practiced one or two words out of these sentences. Often however, group learning dissolved into individual learning with the teachers working with

individual participants.

In spite of the above problems the functional aspects of the literacy classes made some progress. Five people learned to read passages, while others were learning fairly rapidly. However, discussions did not take place very often and particularly in centre I the class tended to remain very mechanical. It was here that the deficiencies of the teachers and the gap between theory and practice was exposed. Discussions on the uses of literacy, the main purpose of which the teachers saw as the raising of consciousness, degenerated into the repetition of two sentences which acquired the status of a religious incantation to revive diseased classes. These were "we can write letters home" and "we can read sign boards and bus numbers". The demand for literacy classes had come from union militants who wanted to use literacy to become more self dependent. However, once the classes started the people who actually came had little politicization. They saw no self-evident link with reading, becoming more aware of conditions of life that they took for granted and the possibility of change through self-organisation. The teachers started with the idea that reading = consciousness = unity and strength. Finding that this evoked little response, they retreated from the quick sands of consciousness raising to the rock ground of the narrowest functional literacy. Eventually through discouragement teachers ceased to explore linkages between functional literacy and consciousness raising—such as dealing with the state (was the ownership of land affected because the owner could not verify whether his land was registered?) and an ability to deal with the administration and police. Only writing letters and reading bus numbers remained to justify the existence of classes.

Topics chosen for discussion did deal broadly with poverty and how to remove it. But as the treatment of any subject led in rapid linear progression to the question of unity, the problem often remained abstract and the discussion mechanical and repetitive. For instance in centre I, in the second class the topic was - How can we change our conditions? Why are we poor? Who gets the benefit of the things that we make through our efforts? (हमारी हालत कैसे बदल सकती है? हम जरीब क्यों हैं? हमारी मेहनत से इतनी सारी चीजें बनती हैं, लेकिन उसका फायदा किसको मिलता है?)

A few weeks later, the topic was - एकता में ही ताकत है। हम ही नेता हैं। Unity is strength, we ourselves are leaders. Starting from the perceptions of the teachers rather than exploring the experiences of other participants this was inevitable. The situation was aggravated in centre I where some degree of politicization had given the learners the 'right answers' to feed to the teachers. In both centres good discussions took place when the topics drew on the experience of the workers.

Teachers Characteristics and Skills:

The failure of the teachers to sustain interest in the classes was due to their extreme cultural alienation from the people among whom they worked and their lack of involvement with the participants daily lives. We would like to situate our failure in terms of difficulty of language for several teachers and lack of previous organisational experience. Even those who spoke Hindi fluently did not (with one exception) read or write regularly in Hindi. This made it difficult to collect suitable reading material either for the participants to read or to initiate discussions. Though passages were read from time to time the amount of material used was inadequate. Due to language problems it was difficult to focus discussions and to control dominating members of the class. Lack of organisational experience both on the part of participants and teachers

led to superficial discussions. The teachers views being too narrow they could not draw out the participants enough.

Problems Specific to Adult Learners:

In addition to the above problems the extreme difficulty that many adults experience in learning - example; difficulty in holding pencil, slow learning which induced a sense of shame overwhelmed the initial enthusiasm. Even when participants were progressing fairly well, erratic attendance slowed the learning process and caused discouragement. Teachers could not encourage the participants enough and provide some experience of continuous small successes. In a highly stratified society, it is difficult to breakdown the attitudes that cause people to play their "given" roles. The learners expected the teachers to be authoritarian and active in class, while they themselves remained largely passive. The only way that they could see of breaking out of this passivity was to be disruptive playing a "naughty child" role. The teacher would either have to call the class to order, or lose face by an inability to do so. This would reinforce traditional student/teacher roles.

The teachers also threatened to withdraw when attendance fell, as a way of forcing all the participants to recognize their responsibility in running the centres. However, to the participants, this probably came across as a big stick waved at them, illustrating the power of the teachers.

Objective Conditions

Social conditions and other objective factors made it difficult for the participants to attend classes. Seasonal variation in the nature of work for example heavy work during harvesting and mobility of daily wage workers caused discontinuities in the learning process. Most of the participants did not have their families living with them and therefore had to cook their meals at the end of the day. Communal cooking was too radical an idea as yet to be experimented. In centre II one of the participants was an informal leader in the community and had great influence on others. Since he had offered his farm to run the centre, his behaviour affected the class greatly. This participant in addition to his salary supplemented his income through various activities such as running a Nautanki (Dance, drama troupe) company. His relative wealth enabled him to extend patronage in the area. He also had a position of responsibility in the union although he was not very active. He possessed the self-confidence to offer his farm for the classes, although his reasons for doing so were probably to increase his own prestige rather than an intrinsic interest in adult literacy. He seldom attended an entire session although he was usually present on the farm. This had a disruptive effect on the rest of the class. An attempt was made to find a new farm on which classes could be run but this was not successful since after a couple of classes the owner of the farm objected to classes being held there. Since the attempt to find a new place had been collectively discussed and decided upon, we again opened a discussion about whether the classes were of any use and whether participants were willing to take a more active part. We moved back to the old farm and continued a few more classes.

The Episode of moving the class away from the first site and back again has been dealt with at some length because it illustrates certain general problems which could arise in such a program. In the absence of generalised struggle and a

supportive atmosphere for literacy classes, the people on whom the outsiders are dependant to begin with, may be dominant elements who are using the classes for their own needs and do not share the aims of the activists. The complex inter-dependent relationships in the community which outsiders are not fully aware of, can affect the program.

Our experience showed that there was a difference between the felt needs and expressed needs. Although a need for literacy was expressed far more pressing problems were wages and conditions of work, and action on these questions was necessary. Since at this stage the previous union was dormant the literacy program was not imbedded in action and therefore was likely to fail. Centre II was closed down when attendance became very irregular and the teachers found themselves in the absurd position of out numbering the students.

Although some people did learn to read, as a functional literacy program the centres were a partial failure. When we suspended classes no one could write a passage coherently and even reading ability would relapse without constant effort and practise. From the point of view of the teachers however some purposes were served. They had developed a greater rapport with the people and had developed confidence to build further contacts. Since the activity in the union has been stepped up, it has left the way open for reopening literacy centres at some future date when the participants through their own experience of struggle feel a real need for them.

ORGANISING MOBILISING AND MOVEMENT*

Nitish R. De**

One feature of voluntary organisations that deserves attention is the source of their origin and sponsorship. We shall examine the issues that motivate them to undertake such a project and the underlying interests, goals and ideals.

In other words, we conceive that the organising process is the first step in the formation of a voluntary organisation depending on the awareness of the issues at stake calling for such an effort. Awareness is just not an ingredient or personality variable of the founding actors. It is the awareness of reality, subjective and objective, as well as the reflective and tentative conclusions emanating from it. Awareness affects the leaders' behaviour either in the form of positive tactical moves or counter-moves. Awareness or consciousness of the reality can either be theme-based but inadequately related to socio-political nexus or adequately related to it. In a development type organisation it is easy to take up a theme such as mitigation of poverty at grassroots level without taking into account the contextual forces which generate, foster and stabilise the phenomenon of poverty. The leadership orientation will be of one type if consciousness operates in a narrow focus. On the other hand, if consciousness is a becoming process then it can extend the horizon of appreciative capacity which will get reflected in change of tactics as well as strategy.

The organising process encompasses members as well. One first issue is whether the leaders look upon their constituents as followers or members. It is our premise that in a voluntary organisation if members are taken as followers then the leadership style will tend towards a directive organisation. If, on the other hand, they are perceived as colleagues, then it is likely to emerge as something of an egalitarian organisation. This distinction is important because a developmental organisation's viability and efficacy will depend upon the emergence of societal consciousness which Etzioni (1968) defines as an aggregation of the members' individual consciousness. This is particularly so if the organisation's task is to operate to alter the context of the political framework of the societal structure. It is the collective consciousness that can locate the chinks in the armour of power configuration and make an assessment of favourable and unfavourable elements. This has an implication for our second building block, namely, the mobilising process which we shall deal with later on.

The organising process, however, involves at least in the initial phase another dimension, namely, identification of the "leading parts" among the extended organisers. Initially, leadership may remain confined to a few, or it may include those who are otherwise peripheral in the existing power hierarchy but are nonetheless significant in their own sub-set or

*Part of a larger study entitled 'Organising and mobilising: Some building blocks of rural work organisations' supported partly by Participatory Research Project in Asia.

**Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi.

reference group. Indian experience indicates that even though in a typical village the members of outcaste groups and the tribals, though physically isolated from the village centre and distinctly economically backward, have their own horizontal homogeneity with their own accepted leaders. It is important in the initial phase to treat them as leading parts in the organising process. In other words, there is a degree of consciousness with some unique properties existing in the periphery. Put another way, the leadership at the formative stage may either take an elitist form or a coalition of the leading parts.

On the basis of this analysis, our next contention is that consciousness need not precede collective action. Some form of collective action can contribute to further sharpening of consciousness. Consciousness and concrete action have a circular flow adding quality to each. This aspect is important because during the organising process what is sought to be achieved is an exploration of the various probabilities of decision choice. There may not be just one alternative for action and the search for alternatives can become more effective if the founding actors are composed of the leading parts. This is a crucial test for a rural voluntary organisation.

Mobilisation is what is embedded in the organising process. Mobilisation is just not an attempt to redistribute fresh opportunities (creating new assets) as well as to achieve more clarity about the ideals guiding action in operational sense. Mobilisation, as Etzioni points out, is one way of overcoming the dangers of organisational entropy. As such, mobilisation is a continuing process which leads to a dynamic concept of organising process as well. We conceive mobilisation in a concrete form in the concept of Movement. A movement may be transitory in the sense of embarking upon specific action to rectify a wrong or to establish a new configuration of base to attain a specific goal. If that is the objective, then a movement can peter out in the logic of entropy law as often happens in an insensitive societal system with various types of protest movements. At best, they achieve a symbolic gain. On the other hand, achievement of a proximate objective can fortify an organisation to extend its horizon of objective and keep a movement alive. It is also possible that from the initial stage, a movement can aim at larger objectives and from the beginning its strategy may be the attainment of successive goals which are conceivable in the context of an ascending order of interests, goals and ideals. An approach, such as this, will again be reflected in the organising process itself. The initial process of organising will need to undergo structural change in the style of working and change of tactics and strategy. There is thus a recycling of mobilisation and organising at higher reaches of achievement.

Impact, of a movement on organising process will be determined by the characteristics of the movement itself. The kind of mix that a movement displays in its utilitarian component, coercive component and collective component (Etzioni, 1968) is pertinent. There cannot be any fixed ratio among the three variables, but one point is evident that more the coercive component within an organisation and less the normative component, the more it is likely that it will cause a movement to degenerate and organising efforts to weaken.

Let us now revert to the dynamics of organising process. Weick (1969) sought to understand this process in terms of internal and external dynamics.

Internally, he believes that the purpose of an organising process consists in resolving elements of uncertainty and unpredictability in an environment by means of what he calls "inter-locked behaviour". Inter-locked behaviour refers to the interdependence of actors involved whereby consistency of reciprocity, repetitiveness and adaptability in order to deal with non-programmed challenges can be established. We submit that this aspect is indeed important because a "collective" will emerge from a state of diffusiveness to a state of flexible structure in understanding and complementing one another (members) so that it can lead to a consistent and yet dynamic pattern of behavioural responses. We also suggest that for this to happen the perception of interests, goals and ideals of each actor should be the starting point for mobilising psychic energy for immediate task. Immediate task should be comprehended in a focus and that focus is as much based on ideals as on the characteristics of the environment. Weick's definition of "enacted-environment" does not amply describe what we are looking for in a voluntary organisation which has the twin objectives of new forms and socially oriented ideals for a target group which is as much the initiator of action as the potential beneficiary of that action.

It is relevant to recall that we have drawn a distinction between organising process and mobilisation process as reflected in a movement. Mobilising process will offer a more comprehensive base for the realisation of goals and improve the consciousness about emerging ideals. The organising process, on the other hand, is essentially directed towards the actors which is the core of the movement. Having borne this distinction in mind, we believe that the environment for the type of organisations we have in view can be described as experienced environment. Experience is subjective but when the organising process leads to collective reflection of experiences, it cannot go further unless it also acquires an objective reality. Exploration and experimentation are the two among various interventions through which the world of experienced environment can acquire more and more salience. In our view, experienced environment takes into account the politico-legal structures in the totality of their favourable and unfavourable components. It is to be appreciated that the opposing forces in the existing power structure, to the extent that these are stable, offer more opportunity to predict the likely range of responses from the powers-that-be. This type of assessment is not only a tactical necessity but also a favourable tool in the hands of the organisers.

To make it more explicit, in an underdeveloped country like India it is not as if the powers-that-be consist of, in all their comprehensiveness, a monolithic homogenous entity. There are internal contradictions within the powers-that-be. It is possible to take advantage of these diversities and contradictions. As our cases will show, it is conceivable to utilise governmental intervention selectively in favour of the movement rather than dogmatically rejecting all the forces which are "identified" with a hostile power structure. There are allies, at least potentially. Certain rules, regulations and procedures can well be converted into favourable forces provided the reflection on experienced environment operates effectively. (De, 1979 A).

This leads to yet another dimension. Organisers have the option of setting their eyes on a fixed goal or if unguarded, as the process goes on evolving, they may be led to the other extreme of the diffusion of goals resulting in peripheral action. We suggest that much will depend upon the

internal process of interdependence to avoid both extremes and instead the organisers can persistently explore the prospect of goal extension. Goal extension is a non-linear concept and yet, not to lose the potency of coherence, it is to operate within a network of ideals.

Internal consistency is conceivable provided there is flexibility of operation within the organisation structure. There is an option between "absorption of protest" and the "domestication of dissent" (Thomas and Bennis, 1972, 19). The diversity of views articulated vigorously or otherwise has to be dealt with in a manner that does not discourage members or cause disaffection among them. There is a danger that one seeks to hear a counter-view in order to ignore it. That approach will sow the seed of weakening the decision base. The other way will be to incorporate the protest in a manner that internal cliques do not get formed to the extent that it can lead to goal diffusion or goal fixation. For the type of organisation that we have in mind, this is particularly relevant because there is a major challenge to organisation redesign whereby authority-based hierarchy and bureaucratic impersonalisation of roles and norms do not assert themselves. Indeed, there is need for norms and consensus but the difference that we suggest is in the quality and nuances of the consensus building such a decision-making structure is allocation of priority to goals which are consistent with the ideals rather than the domination of preferences of interests of the engaged personalities.

Let us now sum up this section in a schematic form highlighting the interaction between the organising process and the mobilising process. This is an illustrative approach to what we visualise as the emergence of socially relevant voluntary organisations.

In the context of the framework outlined, let us now turn to the cases.

The Cases

We shall confine ourselves to five cases, four from India and one from Bangladesh with a passing reference to one from Pakistan. It is not our intent to go into details but to focus on the characteristics of the organising and mobilising processes in order to clarify our understanding of the alternative forms of work organisation.

A. Chipko Movement (Mishra and Tripathi, 1978; Mishra, 1979)

The locale of this movement is the Himalayan forest area of Uttar Pradesh around the region of Uttar Kashi. The movement of the forest people had its beginning in the 60s. These hill people are simple, straight-forward and most of them unexposed to modern education. They are poor and traditionally dependent on forest products.

The process of indiscriminate felling of trees has been going on for a long time to secure timber for construction and furniture making, and for such purposes as preparation of herbal medicines and toiletries. The deforestation process accelerated considerably in the wake of the China-India war in 1962. Development of all-weather road became a strategic necessity in this difficult terrain. Felling of trees became easier. Contractors came in a

Organising process	Mobilising process
*leadership motivation, values and styles of operation	t
*clarifying goals and ideals.	h
*consciousness raising while exploring goals and ideals.	r
	o
	u
	g
	h
	Movement
*tactics and strategy to determine target groups and approach to them.	*emerging objectives
*assessment of experienced environment (scanning and reflecting).	*time perspective for specific action/actions
*membership characteristics.	*flexibility and adaptability in assessing the adverse environment.
*participation mechanisms.	*handling of external actors (potential allies).
*matching interests, goals and ideals of members.	*evaluation of incipient norms and controls.
*dealing with differences and dissent.	*developing sensitivity to the organisers internal style of operation.
Next phase	
*ensuring revitalisation of the organisation process (awareness of entropy law)	*dealing with emerging opposing/supporting forces and resource creation.
*mobility of leadership	*relating accumulated experience to strategic objectives.
*charisma and organisation metaphors	*extension of target base.
*expanding consciousness about internal and external reality	*stabilisation and consolidation of gains.
*movement towards goal extension	
*experimentation with organisation forms and designs.	
Next phase	
*qualitative changes in the forms and content of organising process on dimensions listed above.	*the process moves forward instead of repeating itself.

big way and while skilled labour was being brought from outside, the local youth was employed at a pittance of Rs. 1.50 to 2.00 per day for unskilled work including movement of heavy logs of wood. Not that everybody got employment.

At this juncture some young men of the newly created Chamboli district got together with the initial objective of providing jobs to the local youth. This was led by C.P. Bhatt, a local man, who gave up his job in a transport company in order to concentrate on the organising process. The first effort was to persuade the local contractors and the public works department of the government to give labour contract jobs to their cooperative. The Malla Nagpur Cooperative Labour Society with 30 permanent and 700 temporary members came into existence. Initially there was some response and those who were employed could be paid double the wages earlier earned by them. Pretty soon they realised that not enjoying any official patronage it was not easy to get contracts even though their tenders were lower. Secondly, the income would be more if they could develop skills. So another organisation, the Dashauli Gram Swarajya Sangh was set up to establish small workshops for making wooden and iron implements to meet the local demand. Some young men were sent by the Sangh to the nearby traders training school to acquire necessary skills. Business started trickling in. However, while involved in these two organisations, they realised that another source of exploitation is the monopoly business of some traders in collecting wild herbs used for drugs for diabetes, heart ailments, local cosmetics and tooth powder. They conducted a survey in 1969 and the findings were that the traders could make large profits from metropolitan markets. They turned their attention to this problem by setting up a small rural factory for making resin and turpentine from pine sap known as lisa. They organised marketing channels in some of the trading centres. At this point, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), a central government enterprise, came to the help of these enterprising groups and assisted them with grants, loan and working capital.

The result of these planned activities, coordinated by Bhatt and a few committed colleagues started the process of horizontal mobilisation among the local people for whom all these are not only money earning proposition but also a way of coming closer to one another.

A natural calamity took place in 1970. An unprecedented Himalayan flood swept over the area. The bridges were washed away, at least 55 persons lost their lives and 142 heads of cattle were lost. The groups started reflecting on this calamity instead of blaming destiny for the event. Reflections led to the conviction that the destruction of soil was caused by sapping the forest wealth and that the forest had to be preserved in a planned manner. They wanted trolling and guiding the contractors and the forest officials motivated by narrow interests. This is where the major obstruction came from - the forest department and the organised contractors.

The Chamoli block was the first target. Simon and Company won the auction bid for the villages around Gopeswar and came in to fell the trees. The local organised labour decided to "non-cooperate" with the company. Series of meetings were held where the concrete facts of miseries of the local people were brought home linking these to the need for preserving the forest wealth. The resolution was that if the contractor wanted to fell the ash

trees their axes would have to fall first on the local people who would cling to the trees marked for felling to protect them. Thus the Chipko movement was born in 1973. The collective resistance of the entire population of the area forced the contractor to withdraw, thus creating a confrontative situation with the lower as well as higher authorities of the forest department.

The authorities went in for a contingency plan by allocating to the same company another forest at Phata, 80 kms away from Gopeswar. The news travelled fast and thus the Chipko movement was carried to Phata area. The same organising process - series of consciousness-raising meetings and demonstrations - were organised and all these attracted attention of the local leftist political leaders. The Chipko group did not join any political party but welcomed the cooperation on "save the forest" campaign of all political parties interested in the movement. Even in Phata area, the contractor failed to get the trees cut. The next move was at Reni near the Tibet border. Although news of the success of the movement in other areas travelled to Reni as well but that was not enough. Bhatt and another friend who joined the movement, Bahuguna, started organising the people at Reni as 2,451 trees were branded for felling by the forest authorities. Response from local people was favourable.

The movement had already drawn the attention of the state headquarters at Lucknow. Some saw it somewhat sympathetically while others saw it as a potential threat of a political nature in the sensitive hilly areas. Bhatt, Bahuguna and other leaders were called in, persuasive discussions went on and committees were set up to examine the problem and submit reports to the government. The Chipko leaders presented their case this way. They were not against the felling of trees. For various development purposes it was a necessity. However, in the name of development of this backward region with inputs of roads, schools, primary health centres and so on, they did not want to barter away the forest wealth. They wanted development to take shape around the forest as the centre piece. For that to happen they required schemes which would break the stranglehold of irresponsible contractors under the patronage of various governmental agencies. They conceded that for highly technical projects specialised contract firms were indeed needed. However, they gave primary importance to the renovation of destroyed forests and preservation of soil. In principle, the higher authorities accepted these suggestions, but in effect the practices were quite the contrary. The Chipko activists gradually got disillusioned with the Committee report and recommendations and abandoned collaboration in a mood of disgust.

As it is now referred to, "the finest hour of Reni women" came when one day all the men of the area were called away to the nearest town for certain payments due to them for earlier acquisition of their land. That was the day when the contractor decided to launch the assault on the forest. A little girl saw a group of outside contract labourers with their axes stealthily moving in the village. She ran to Gaura Devi, a matronly woman of the village. She knew about the Chipko movement and its tactics to protect trees by having attended some of the meetings. She raised hue and cry and initially 21 women and 7 little girls came and confronted these contract labourers. They tried to persuade the labourers to understand their problem in its totality, but these people refused to accept the women seriously and dismissed the rationale of the Chipko movement. They were determined to carry out their assignment. The women then turned to the marked trees and

simultaneously sent a message to the village for other women to join. When they started clinging to the trees, the hired labourers were dumb-founded. They did not know what they should do. At that time the women asserted that short of killing them and the little girls no single tree could be cut. Now the contract labour could understand the intensity of feelings as reflected in the determination and unfaltering collective expression of the women. The labourers started retreating and they came, pursued by the women, to a point where there was a connecting stone between the two sides of a stream. The women with their collective effort dislodged the stone thereby snapping the link with the targeted part of the forest. Thus the labourers were isolated from the area concerned. In the meanwhile some one took a bus to the town to inform the men as to what was happening. They rushed back to find that the women had performed a "miracle".

This time the government took the movement more seriously and an expert committee with some outsiders was asked to look into the forest policy for the area. The Chipko movement representatives were associated with this project. In the meanwhile, the voice of Chipko reached Almora district. Young students started taking more and more interest in the movement and they offered to help in eradicating the age-old exploitative practice of felling precious pinetrees and illegal lisa tapping. In Almora the interest of a big paper mill which held the forest lease had to be abandoned because of strong collective resistance. The anniversary of the Chipko movement continued to be celebrated throughout the region so as to keep the spirit alive and to spread the message among more and more people including boys and girls. In a way they were fortunate in several critical stages of the movement when ugly confrontative situations were saved by sympathetic and tactful handling by the heads of the district administration.

The movement started a new phase in 1975 with mass afforestation drive in the area. The cooperatives first planted 9000 trees on the vulnerable hill slopes with voluntary labour and cost of the saplings was also borne by them. At another place, in Almora district, another 6000 trees were planted. Around Gauna lake, 35 kms away from Gopeswar, which was the scene of devastating flood in 1970, 4000 willow cuttings were planted. As per the expert Committee Report, 1200 sq. km. area around Reni forest was declared as protected. Thus the movement that started at Gopeswar in the early 1960s reached a stage where protection of forest in a limited way became a reality.

The future is, however, unpredictable because one cannot be sure of the state government forest policy as the revenue from felled trees is an attractive proposition to the forest authorities. The modernised version of development as conceived in physical targets of roads, buildings and multiplicity of government agencies may indeed get preference over preservation of forest. On the other hand, the concerted Chipko movement has raised the level of consciousness of the people in protecting forests in their collective interest. It is interesting to observe that the organising process in the form of productive cooperatives did not take a monolithic organisation design but a series of them came up for different purposes and in different areas. At the same time, the resistance was organised in the form of a movement not confining it to one area but spreading it to the region. Women were never directly involved but their participation in the meetings even as passive listeners seems to have raised their consciousness in a constructive and effective manner. The Rent resistance of the women became an eye opener to the organisers. Even the children became actors of the movement by learning from this experience.

Here is a case from which one can observe a number of features:

- a. Immediate economic goals led to an extension of goals proliferating into various activities;
- b. ascending order of consciousness leading to a conclusion that economic viability, life-style and harmony with nature -
- practically all aspects of life for the present and future generations - depended on preservation of soil which was possible by planned effort in cutting the minimum required trees and at the same time by adopting a planned strategy of afforestation in vulnerable areas;
- c. deprived of modern mass media, meetings of the people were organised using each hamlet and village as the base of operation. Direct contact was made and maintained with the local people. Nobody was ignored, meetings and demonstrations were not a one-shot operation but a continuing one. The local leaders could be supported in all these full-time activities from the surplus generated by productive cooperatives. There was no need for them to beg for money or to swindle the local people in the name of the movement;
- d. confrontative model was all through maintained but violence could be avoided. Active violence was replaced by passive 'violence' premised on collective resistance rather than individual acts of heroism;
- e. only after the movement became a force to reckon with, selective cooperation was extended to different agencies of the government;
- f. preservation of the forest as an ideal in collective interest helped them to take support from politically active groups and as such the Sarvodaya group could work with the activists of the left-wing political parties. A steadfast faith in the ideal itself could thus bring the diverse political interest groups together giving it a pluralistic pattern. This is an indicator of open systems approach to a protest movement. Dogmatic exclusiveness was eschewed.

B. Maharashtra Village Development Program (ICA, 1976, ND; MVDP, 1978)

The Institute of Cultural Affairs is an international voluntary association initially established in the ghetto areas of Chicago and from that beginning it has spread over to different countries in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. Membership is from different nationalities. The volunteers are, subject to certain national restrictions, able to move from one project to another, from one country to another. The funding sources of this international network are private business, private donations, government, developmental agencies, and mobilised local resources.

Its unit in India is headquartered in Bombay. In 1975, it decided to start integrated rural development programs in India. There were discussions with the government authorities. Interest was shown by the state of Maharashtra and at the initiative of the then Chief Minister, the village Maliwada was selected as the first integrated rural development project. Maliwada is located 15 kms away from the town of Aurangabad which over the past decade has been emerging as an industrial centre, apart from being a major tourist attraction because of the historic Ajanta and Ellora caves.

The objective of this integrated rural development scheme is to develop the

village through the intervention of training, demonstration and experience generated in improving economic and social conditions of the villagers with the intention of helping them to acquire self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Funds have been mobilised from private business, local and outside, foreign sources, banking institutions, rural development resources earmarked by the state and local people's contributions. The scheme covers all villagers irrespective of their economic and social standing and, as such, it is a case of development within the politico-legal structure and close to the government establishment. It operates on a collaborative model.

The area is located in a semi-arid belt. Soil is usable subject to availability of water resources which are indeed a problem. On the economic front attempts have been made to improve the status of agriculture by introducing a high yielding variety of jowar (millet) and provision of water for growing vegetables, wheat and pulses. 40 acres were allotted to sugarcane, yielding 26 tons per acre; 450 acres to hybrid jowar with a yield of 14 quintals per acre. Recently 10 acres have been given to tobacco cultivation. After a house to house survey to ascertain the needs of the people, a plan of economic development on appropriate local resource-based technologies was evolved. Series of meetings were held with the local villagers assisted by external change-agents coming from Bombay but living with them for an extended period. Productivity has gone up, fertilizers, tractors, pump sets and other inputs have been invested upon.

The village has an association with 11 representatives of which two are from the scheduled castes. Of the population, which has increased from 1699 in 1976 to 1898 in 1978. 70 percent consist of caste Hindus, and 30 percent scheduled castes including 3 Muslim families, 37 percent of the population are daily labourers, 48 percent farmers, 14 percent in private trade and business and the rest in service and professional sector. A bank branch has opened accounts. Thus most of the potential is still unrealised. Before the project 104 persons were engaged in different types of activities which in 1978 has gone up to 343. The average family income has gone up from Rs. 2080 to Rs.4270 annually since the project was launched.

The village council meets once a week and it has been operating on the basis of developing a scenario of practical vision identifying the steps that can put to use the potential facilities and to overcome the various constraints. To help the local people, a Human Development Training Institute was set up after the program in the village was launched. The objective of the training program which is now the Central training forum is essentially built around skills development in economic activities, community integration and social improvements in terms of health care system, education and communal welfare. In the matter of economic development there has been no deliberate effort to raise the level of consciousness of the villagers in understanding the forces behind the socio-economic reality of stagnant rural economy. Consciousness raising is confined to improvement of knowledge, skills and techniques with a view to raising levels of productivity. There is no exposure to the overall socio-political structure of a typical village in relation to its context (environment).

There has been extension activities in small industries as well. One enterprise is a food processing and packaging unit to manufacture "sukhdi" biscuits which have protein content of 13 per cent and are made out of local

resources. Each 100 gm. packet contains 40 calories and is sold at 27 paise per packet. It has an investment of Rs.65,000. There were 40 employees but the factory was owned by 9 partners. So, in effect it is a partnership firm and not a cooperative. Production was 11,000 packets per day for 24 days a month for a period of 10 months in a year. There was a stable market for about 2 years because the factory got a contract with the school system under the District but this has lapsed and not been renewed. As a consequence the factory is now closed. Attempts are being made to find alternative employment for these 40 unemployed. On the one hand, it shows dependence on government developmental agencies and on the other a state of comparative weakness in establishing marketing network for such rural based agro-industries.

There are other problems as well. While irrigation facilities have been made available to some extent resulting in raising of farm productivity, not much headway could be made in developing cooperative movement. Emphasis has been on self-employment and entrepreneurial development rather than collective approach to the socio-economic upliftment of the people. Discussions with the villagers indicate that despite the thrust towards village integration, the deeper roots of caste feelings persist. The different forums of the village association are still dominated by those who own land and who are otherwise occupied in farming and trading activities. The landless families of the scheduled castes are living in quarters subsidised by the government development schemes but our investigations reveal that many of these quarters do not have any roof on top. It was expected that the local branch of a nationalised bank would extend loan facilities to these harijans to purchase corrugated sheets to construct the roof for which they were advised to deposit five rupees a month in the bank. The economics of rope-making is that out of local grass leaves family with an income of Rs.2 per peice of long rope not including the cost of labour. As such, there is no question of saving to the tune of Rs.5 per month. These are some of the contradictions in the development of unified village culture where the socio-economic scales are weighted against the poor.

Drinking water is a classic example. It has to be brought from a distance of about 3 kms. on a trailor driven by a tractor. 18 litres of drinking water cost 10 paise and many of the families have to spend upto Rs.1 per day for drinking water. This is again an issue on which the model village organisers have not been able to make a breakthrough. Voluntary labour has certainly improved the conditions of village roads and local sanitation. But it would necessarily imply that the landless labour is confronted with the choice of either going out in search of a living or else render voluntary services for the development of village infrastructure. This is not the case with those who are better off. Thus the superstructure of the harmony model has yet to come to grips with some of the mundane but basic contradictions shoring up in the village. There is a lot of importance given to improvement of health. Whereas some infrastructure of medical care has been created, local medical practitioners still thrive. For the landless labour, the problem of daily wage is such a burning issue that each tender-age boy and girl is a unit of labour in which context education is as much a luxury as health care. Apart from anything else because of recurrence of malnutrition caused diseases the infrastructure of socio-cultural benefits can hardly bring succour to economically poorer, groups. Be that as it may, this model village development has received outside attention including the World Bank because of the fairly effective publicity media in India and abroad. The "show-piece" example provided by Maliwada is now attempted to

be replicated in 24 districts of the state with 232 village projects. Schemes have been prepared and some favourable responses are expected from the World Bank.

This particular case highlights the following issues:

- a. The Institute of Cultural Affairs is operating within the premise of the politico-legal structure. It is seeking to avail itself of opportunities offered by the state agencies, and technical and financial assistance from external sources including foreign funds;
- b. Objectives are limited to the improvements of the economy as well as the socio-cultural development of the village. Internal contradictions are not confronted in the process;
- c. The organising process has not led to a movement in terms of focusing on some of the strategic issues such as non-availability of drinking water and poor housing conditions for the landless Harijans. That challenge would mean resorting to mobilisation process and some amount of confrontation. This has been avoided.
- d. At the same time the external change agents are trying to develop autonomously functioning administrative system in the village by withdrawing themselves from direct continuing involvement and their role is now getting confined to monitoring the project progress and offering help and guidance as and when necessary. From Bombay, which is the headquarters, these external change agents visit the village twice a month and stay there for a period of two to three days. However, the peripheral population's active involvement is still to be attained.
- e. Some degree of bureaucratisation is evident in the village association as well as in the national co-ordinating agency. By using certain traditional criteria of economic progress, the village has certainly made some headway. To some extent this has been possible because the land distribution pattern is not as skewed as in many areas of rural India. There is no definite identifiable landholding interest operating as a power bloc in the village. However, the differences between the farmers and the landless labourers in social sense still exist.
- f. The target population is premised on pluralistic concept. The village has been taken as a homogeneous entity which it is not. Leadership is still not shared and the decision making actors are still those who have more economic power and social status.
- g. This case is significant because this is some what of a revised model of usual rural development strategy adopted in India for under-developed regions, with the initiation of community development project since mid 1950s. One major difference is that a voluntary organisation with origins in a foreign country has taken the initiative and not the state bureaucracy;
- h. The training strategy is skill, technique and knowledge-based. It is consciousness-raising in a technical sense but not in coming to grips with socio-economic realities. On the whole, in terms of ideals it is operating within the politico-legal framework in order to improve matters on a gradualism scale and not on a scale of qualitative change. This voluntary association is apolitical which, operating within a framework of conflicting interests groups in India's rural society, is but a support to the existing politico-legal structure.

C. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

A brief account of the movement and its achievements including some of the unique organising properties have been reported elsewhere (De, 1979A). That the story up to 1976. A recent visit to the area extended over three districts provides fresh insights which are relevant to this study. Shibu Soren, the Guruji of the movement, had a harrowing experience of his active tribal father being murdered by a money-lender in 1957 in Hazaribagh district when he was 12 years old. His mother persuaded him not to go for revenge but to finish his school education. He did that but his active mind was working all the while, reflecting on the dynamics of the money lending business. He could link up in his analysis the subjective and objective elements to conclude that money-lenders and traders (usually called dikus meaning the outsiders) are the disrupters of tribal livelihood and culture. This became possible apart from their money power and support base in the lower echelons of the administrative machinery, on account of the tribals' acquired habits of drunkenness and infructuous expenditure on marriages and indulgence in other superstitious rituals and ceremonies.

So, he aimed at mounting an attack on the totality of the problem on two fronts. Mobilising the tribals is an essential task. Mobilisation requires a core group of organisers, however small the number, who are dedicated to the cause emotionally as well as rationally. While their dependence on the leader as well as the influential supporters from outside is initially necessary, they should also learn to work autonomously in the organising process so as to mobilise the tribals effectively. A favourable force was the basic core of tribal effectiveness. A favourable force was the basic core of tribal communal culture which could not be totally disrupted although it had been considerably weakened. In 1966-67, he moved to Dhanbad as many tribals from Hazaribagh migrated to this area because of rapid industrialisation process, in particular hastened by the establishment of one of the largest steel plants of the country. The migrant tribals invited him to be among them.

However, industrial labour did not attract him as much as the tribals in the rural belt of Dhanbad. He initially concentrated on Tundi Block. Attack on the social evil customs, which is really socio-cultural reorientation, would have been meaningless unless he could link it up with the economic issue of the exploited tribals who, through the machinations of various hostile agencies, were alienated from their land against the provisions of law. Restoration of lost land, application of government laws, rules and regulations in a fair manner, and the sharp practices of the diku traders became the targets of attack in mass meetings of the tribals. While this gathered momentum over the years and land was being restored to the tribals, three main centres were established called Ashram to spread the spirit of cooperation among the tribals; one at Pokharia village, another at Palma and the third at Pirtanar. These are small communes where the core organisers lived on the principle of self-sufficiency and interdependence. Cooperative farming on the land available to get necessary food items, animal farm with goats, indigenous chickens and pigs so as to make the Ashram self-sufficient and for selling the surplus at subsidised. These three centres started spreading the message of horizontal mobilisation of the tribals in different clusters of villages.

There was confrontation on different fronts. Distillation of liquor in tribal homes was banned and social sanctions were invoked under collective

pressure, particularly with the assistance from women. However, there are traders in practically every area who are non-tribals and engaged in liquor distillation and surreptitious sale. This practice still continues but has considerably abated. The success no doubt is considerable. That brings the larger question of the role of local administration. Illicit distillation of liquor is banned. Under the Excise Act, raids should be carried out in villages to identify the guilty parties and bring them before the Court of Law. When some local Excise officials are serious about their responsibility, the provisions of law are effective, but this is not always the case. The same is true about other government agencies. With the development-minded local bureaucrats, the movement gets a boost and suffers setbacks when the local officials with enormous power of formal and non-formal discretion behave differently. The major conflict comes with the basic orientation of the administration in the matter of development. The development orientation is to provide inputs and services to individuals in order to pinpoint accountability whereas the movement's aim is to foster and sustain collective effort. This is where collective efforts go unrewarded.

Even in individual cases, the bureaucratic procedures and rigid interpretation of rules ultimately act as a hindrance apart from costly delays. A case in point is what happened in a village. One tribal got sanction of Rs.9,000 for digging a drinking well, which, it was informally understood would be used by the fellow villagers as well. The actual cost was Rs.16,000. Labour was contributed by the villagers but the rules provided that the well should be brick-built, and in the locality only stones were available although at a price. So, stones were used and the well is as good as any other. The official interpretation was that since stones were locally available, it should be taken as a cheaper material and, the sanctioned grant of Rs.9,000 was brought down to Rs.6,000. The villagers had to find the balance amount of Rs.10,000. This is only one of many such instances.

Forest is yet another problem. The situation here is the same as in Uttar Kashi area in UP. There are forest contractors working in league with the forest department and mahua trees are auctioned for collecting flowers which have multiple uses including distillation of liquor. The movement organised several concerted efforts to obstruct the forest contractors from intruding into the area, more so on account of their misbehaviour with tribal girls. In many cases they succeeded but where the contractor could make a "law and order" issue out of it, the local police would intervene in favour of the privileged party.

In effect, the movement in Dhanbad district gives one the impression that the progress made earlier, till 1976 when the local leaders were active and attending to needs of the members, has stabilised. In fact, there has been some improvement. The local cooperative in one village, won a tender for Bandhah Minor Irrigation Project at an estimated cost of Rs.52,000. It was completed in June 1979 and the actual expenses were Rs.38,000. Despite many alarms and impediments created by the local government technicians, the project was adjudged satisfactory.

On the other hand, there have been distinct setbacks. The village bank, in the form of grain collection from each household in order to help the community at the time of distress, has become moribund. In some villages

they are surviving at a low level of effectiveness. In some others they are no longer operating. The night schools for removal of illiteracy have become practically extinct. Because of two successive bad crop seasons in the area, which is in any case not fertile, enough grain could not be collected to support the teachers.

The support that was available from district administration in 1974-75 was withdrawn during the period of national emergency and, in fact, reversal of policies affecting developmental projects started. To give an example, the tribals prefer Sal trees and Kendu leaves in the area. Although they are not direct beneficiaries of the trees as such, there are fringe benefits as Sal leaves and Sal seeds can be used by them which has been a customary right for a long time. Similarly, Kendu leaves are plucked the daily labourers, many of them tribals, get jobs. But the government policy is to have instead acasia trees which provide quick returns but hardly any benefits to the villagers. One sympathetic administrator came in early 1979 but because of his straightforward policy of dispensing justice fairly and squarely, he was found inconvenient by local vested interests. In July 1979 he was transferred.

The movement has now come to a conviction that, with these ups and downs in the style of functioning of the administration, it cannot depend on administrative systems for the development of the poor tribals. It has to rely on its own strength.

Partly motivated by this objective, and partly encouraged by the image that he has acquired among the tribals in the Jharkhand belt which spans a number of districts, Shibu Soren has practically left Dhanbad as an activist. He has moved to Santhal Parganas and Giridih districts. The strategy is the same as it was in the Tundi Block but with a difference. The movement is spreading in the form of demonstrations and protests in order to raise the consciousness of the tribals, but there is commensurately lesser emphasis on building up local organisations around tangible economic activities. Indeed there are night schools and grain golas but many of these have yet to take roots as entrenched and sustained leadership has not developed village by village. Territorially the movement has spread without taking deeper roots. The second tier leaders also move along with Shibu Soren rather than concentrating on particular areas.

The movement has acquired a political dimension in the form of a demand for Jharkhand State or at least an autonomous region consisting of the contiguous districts of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and MP, where tribals form a sizeable section of the population. In a sense this movement to establish tribal identity on a political platform is seen by many as a separatist movement. On the other hand, in mass meetings it is projected as a collective movement for the oppressed people whether they are tribals or not. In a way, Shibu Soren has become a mobile political hero addressing mass meetings and holding small group discussions instead of following the original strategy of using his organising ability, insights and charismatic personality upon a series of inter-related tasks to strengthen the grassroots. This is in contrast with another supporter of the movement, A.K. Roy, who, although becoming a Member of the Parliament while still in jail, continued to concentrate on mobilising the coal-miners and steel-workers in Ranigunj-Jharia field. His extended role as a Parliamentarian has not diffused his activities, as his primary task continues to be to lend active support to

building up the grassroot base of action oriented worker groups in Dhanbad-Ranigunj belt (Pradeep and Das, 1979).

On the other hand, Shibu Soren, compelled by subjective as well as objective imperatives, may have been propelled towards the new role that he has adopted for himself. Let us take the case of land alienation laws that exist in Bihar. In some districts of Jharkhand area alienation of the tribals from their land, by whatever means, is illegal and restoration proceedings can become retrospective up to 30 years. This is not so in Dhanbad, Giridih and Santhal Parganas. In order to rectify this anomalous position, which is an important issue for the tribals, political action is desirable and mass mobilisation to influence the legislature is one of the effective means. Secondly, money-lenders, traders and contractors are a strong collective force throughout the Jharkhand belt with a long tradition of continued exploitation of the poor tribals and non-tribals. This phenomenon also requires a movement across the frontier. Thirdly, Shibu Soren has acquired a mythical image in the eyes of the tribals many of whom have not seen him face to face. According to one senior district official, who is an objective analyst of the situation, has seen the picture of Shibu Soren in many tribal homes in the farthest corner of the district, even in the kitchen, so that the women can establish their tribal identity by looking at it. That is why the image of Shibu Soren has acquired a halo. He has also shown a subjective desire to project himself as a liberator. Then again as in the Chipko movement, it is necessary here to fight against the anti-developmental policies and practices of the government which cut across the boundary of any area. These are some of the factors which have catapulted him into a position of symbol-registering regional leaders.

At the same time, there is a potential danger that the movement, having been deprived of his active involvement in the grassroot organising process, can suffer from goal diffusion rather than goal extension. This movement thus runs the risk of what overtook the Sind-Hari movement in the Sind province of Pakistan, where an organisation was established in 1930 to protect the interests of landless sharecroppers or tenants -at-will, both on economic and social dimensions. The objective there was to mobilise them to get their rights established on land and its produce. The fight was directed against the rich landlords and their close allies and there were successive collective mobilising activities under the inspiring leadership of a well respected person who was known in the region as a litterateur and was dedicated to the cause. However, the movement took various turns and twists, including involvement in politically oriented khailafat and dolan. Later on, after Pakistan emerged as a nation and a strong centralised control was established, "Sind for Sindhis" movements sprang up and the leader of the Sind-Hari movement Hayder Bux Jatoi got involved in it. He became politically visible but his grassroot connections were weakened. The interests of the Haris suffered partly because the movement was dependent on him for providing direction and leadership for too long a time. With his death in 1970, and the rise of the Pakistan People's Party, which took up land reforms as one of the key pronounced program components, it came to a halt.

As Khan (1979) suggests, the Sind-Hari movement did, through the process of mobilisation and localised decentralised units, achieve a good deal for the sharecroppers, some within the framework of the legal system and some by getting a number of wrongs rectified by bringing about pressure to change the

legal provisions. The movement ultimately lost its potency on account of goal diffusion and inability to strengthen the grassroot organisation against the onslaught of landlords, obscurantist religious leaders and hostile or otherwise alienated bureaucracies.

We see some parallel between this movement and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha particularly because the halo effect of Shibu Soren may insulate him from not only his own people but also because an objective assessment of the realities around could become clouded by being fed with information from the "yes" men clinging to him. The recent developments in the grassroot units in Dhanbad indicate a gradual weakening of the Morcha and perceptible lack of enthusiasm compared to what was seen in 1974-75.

We can identify some of the characteristics of this organising process:

- a. From the very beginning a target group was clearly identified. The rural tribals who had lost their economic wherewithal, were also getting lost in their social identity. The opposing forces were also demarcated. The combined muscle power of the money-lenders, traders and contractors was too obvious to be ignored. So, the twin strategy of mobilising the target group around economic interests and eradication of social evils was a part of it. The other part of the task was to confront the opposing forces by enlisting the external facilitating forces among the local administrators. In a situation like this confrontation model may be a desirable option: Confront the target group with its socio-economic realities to arouse its consciousness for mobilisation which harnesses its collective strength and external confrontation with the help of the mobilised internal resources. And this was successful at the time of forcible occupation of land, illegally possessed by the powerful landlord group, or at the time of harvesting, when with the sheer strength of numbers, in hundreds and thousands, the muscle power of the vested interests could be kept at bay. The lesson is obvious. Use of coercive force by the powers that be can be blunted by the collective power of the people which is always the strength of the powerless provided they can organise themselves and in the process overcome powerlessness. As such, it is distinct from the Maliwada case because of the naked nature of exploitation. Similarly, the non-violent methods could not work as effectively as they did in the case of Chipko.
- b. The legal system, the case shows, is a two edged weapon. The collective will of the people can utilise progressive components of various statutes to their advantage. Unless the mobilisation process is effective along with a solid foundation of grassroot organisation, the same progressive measures would remain confined to the statute book itself and would not be reflected in practice. In the process of utilising the legal system appropriately, the movement also proved that the negative components could restrain the local administration, as in an overall assessment, it would not like to implement the punitive provisions of law leading to an escalation of conflict. This is an extra-legal way of counteracting an unjust and unfair legal system. The movement is an example of how the relations of production and property could be modified and it is one way of acquitting power against the powerful.
- c. As distinct from the Maliwada case, collective socio-cultural super-structure was built on the foundation of collective economic mobilisation. Grain bank, setting a limit to infructuous marriage

- expenditure, by resorting to a convention of several marriages being celebrated at the same place and on the same day in order to save on the expenses, are tangible economic gains. Maliwada's experiment has sought to strengthen the rural people selectively, as self-employed individual entrepreneurs, though on a small scale.
- d. Given the political scenario of the Jharkhand belt in the context of the caste complex of Bihar, it is but natural that the mobilising process sought to acquire political overtones, which is what the current emphasis of the movement is. Whether it will follow the entropic logic of Sind-Hari movement or not is anybody's guess. Should, however, the grassroot base weaken, this is likely to happen. For example, in Santhal Parganas, there is the government developmental scheme known as MESO (an area development program between the mega and micro levels). In four sub-divisions of the district, there are several tribal blocks covered under the scheme. Although there is a project manager for each project, the project fund is allocated to different departments of the government which deal with minor irrigation, road construction, forest developments, house building, animal husbandry and so on. The project manager without any authority to allocate funds cannot exercise effective control. Funds are handled by the regular government departments. The movement has yet to turn its attention to this problem in the interest of the tribals by generating collective support for an integrated budget in the hands of the project manager so that money can be spent more effectively. This may well turn out to be a missed opportunity.
 - e. The overall ideals of the movement appear to be somewhat blurred. Jharkhand movement is indeed political in nature. One of its components is to establish the collective identity of the tribals. On the other hand, another objective also seeks to mobilise the poorer sections of the area irrespective of whether they are tribals or non-tribals. These conflicting pulls may result in a contradiction in the movement itself. If the movement is aware of this potential danger, it has not shown it by taking any action to overcome it.

D. Operation Barga

This venture was initiated by the leftist government in West Bengal which came to power in 1977 with unquestioned majority in the legislature and took up the task of unfinished land reforms which it started under severe constraints in 1967 and carried on later for a short duration in 1969. As per our original framework we would not include a government sponsored organisational movement in our study. But this project has certain features which qualify it for inclusion.

West Bengal is one of the most populous states in India aided by the three decades of inflow of people across the border from East-Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and from the populous adjoining states of Bihar, UP and parts of Orissa. Land tenure has been skewed as in many other states of India. However, the peasant movement in undivided Bengal and later in West Bengal has a well-known history. There have been three distinct movements to protest against the land distribution system as well as the relations of production-Tebhaga movement, the Kaldwip movement and later on the Naxalite movement in 1967. Originally, there was one undivided "Kishan Sabha" mainly under the control of the Communist Party which, after the division of the party into two distinct parties, also underwent division. However,

the Kisan Sabha exists in all districts with varying degrees of effectiveness. The structure of the Sabha is loose, somewhat hierarchical. The more basic feature is that the membership pattern is varied, in the sense that in many areas middle and small peasants are in the membership list along with sharecroppers and rural landless labour. This has resulted on many occasions in compromises within the Sabha and by and large the interests of the lowest strata of the members could not be protected. Much, however, depended on the quality of local leadership. In some districts, some of the political leaders with a leftist orientation were active on the agrarian front while most others concentrated on industrial workforce in and around Calcutta and other industrial centres.

After independence successive state governments enacted a number of land reform measures under various names. One of the first measures was to enforce the Land Ceiling Act, but its implementation was tardy because of manipulative tactics of the landlords and partially because of lack of enthusiasm in the implementing agency. Between 1955 and 1966, approximately 400,000 acres of surplus agricultural land came into the state's possession through voluntary surrender by big landlords. However, when two short-lived United Front governments were in power between 1967 and 1970, 500,000 acres of land were acquired through active involvement of the poor peasants, spurts of mobilising activities by Kisan Sabha and some amount of initiative shown by the local bureaucracy, but it was considered still an incomplete task in the matter of land acquisition.

The story, however, is quite different when it comes to redistribution of land among the most needy. In 1979, the Bikram Sarkar Committee (an official body) examined the pattern of working of land distribution. It deliberately selected Coochbehar district for study, as it had remained comparatively stable practically throughout the post-independence era in terms of the rural law and order situation, thereby making it potentially favourable to implement the laws effectively. In this district, 51,715 acres of vested land were available in as early as 1955. Concentrating the study on what happened to 1,000 acres of such land in a particular area, it was found that for agricultural purposes 913 acres were distributable. However, the official formalities and red tape on an average took 18 months to distribute the land for possession by the needy. Even then only 370 acres could be distributed over a period of 15 years. Ultimately there were 432 beneficiaries, thus each having less than one acre of land, (The Hindu, 1979).

In the context of these realities it was decided that the following measures should constitute a strategy for land reform measures to change the structure of property relations in rural West Bengal:

1. Explicit political will at the top in support of making land reforms effective. This was done by policy decisions and issuing unambiguous directives to the appropriate agencies and wide dissemination of these among the rural poor;
2. Need to activate the otherwise rule-bound government agencies, which are the instruments of the government in giving effect to various policy directives. In a hierarchical system, it has been experienced that if the key top men are carefully selected on the strength of their dedication to the purposes of development backed by competence and integrity, they will be able to gear up the lower echelon sooner or later.

Accordingly, two key persons were entrusted with the task of gingering up the land reforms machinery along with that segment of district administration which was responsible for district development programs;

3. As a tactic it was felt desirable that the bureaucracy makes a direct approach to the lower strata of rural poor, instead of its going directly to the politically-oriented Kisan Sabha which might expose it to the allegation of political "hobnobbing", a danger which is potent in a parliamentary form of democracy;
4. It was premised that once this direct approach was made to this vulnerable section of the rural areas, the Kisan Sabhas which developed high expectations from the leftist government would accept the challenge to assist the rural poor in asserting their rights instead of making visits with the political "bigwings" in the state capital. It will provide them an incentive to mobilise rural poor.

Based on the limited experiences generated in the National Labour Institute, New Delhi, it was decided to organise a series of reorientation camps with selected potential grassroots level leaders who represented the poorest section as also from among the local government functionaries to expose them to understanding their rights and the facilities they could enjoy under various laws and regulations, and, at the same time, to raise their level of consciousness to the politico-economic dimensions of rural West Bengal. Members of the Kisan Sabha were informed about these camps held in villages, district by district. Although their initial response was negative, as the rural labour camps gained in popularity these local leaders gave up their opposition and joined in.

For a variety of reasons, the target group was selected from among those who belonged to the category of sharecroppers. These were the persons having either no land or a meagre piece of land, cultivating land for others and being unorganised, deprived of their share of the produce as provided for under the law. More than that, they had no official record available in which their names were registered to indicate as to how long or for how many generations they were cultivating the same plots of land or additional plots for the owners. This age-long evil was sought to be rectified by launching Operation Barga (sharecroppers recording). There was another purpose. The sharecroppers are in a favourable position to report on the real owners of land. These data would then be collated to find out the ownership pattern as also whether the owners were cultivators or engaged in other activities, getting their land attended to by sharecroppers or wage labour. This was an additional component to find out as to how many exceeded the provisions of Land Ceiling Act.

The survey also collected data on the subsidiary occupations of sharecroppers and the extent of their economic vulnerability. So, the objective of Operation Barga was multiple. The first camp was held at a place called Halushahi in Hooghly district in May 1978 and since then it has been extended to different districts. The rural labour camps were only the beginning. The main challenge was how to get the sharecroppers talk to the recording officers frankly and provide all the necessary data, keeping in view that the land owners and money-lenders had a strong grip over them because of their continuing vulnerability and dependence. It was not easy to overcome their fear psychosis which made them victims of the exploitative system.

Instead of requesting people to come to a local revenue office for the purpose, the officials after due publicity went out to open areas where the plots of land were situated with all their books, files and records so that the people at work could come in broad daylight while involved in the process of work to give their depositions. Care was taken that the owners of land were also informed and adequate opportunities were given to them to make their own presentations.

The results of Operation Barga from September 1978 till January, 1979 of which two months were lost because of unprecedented floods in West Bengal in late 1978 are given below:

1. Number of revenue villages covered	4,835	
2. Total number of plots covered	42,219	
3. Number of sharecroppers put on record	162,544	
4. Total number of sharecroppers recorded so far in West Bengal after independence	601,360	
5. Size of plots cultivated by each sharecropper (average)		
	1955	0.91 acre
	1978	0.78 acre

The last figure indicates that despite the right to record earned by him, the economic vulnerability of the sharecropper has increased over the years, which raises a host of other questions.

The following lessons can be derived from Operation Barga:

- a. Unless the basic legal structure which is but a reflection of the dominating politico-economic framework is sought to be altered, such progressive measures can only be implemented haltingly. A recent report indicates that hundreds of court injunctions have stalled the work involving at least 162,000 acres of vested agricultural land in West Bengal. This figure does not include the pending litigation about the claims of sharecroppers (Bandyopadhyay, 1979).
- b. Undoubtedly, the government implementing agency has been revitalised, but there are instances where, in the absence of supervisory officers' vigilance, some cases of malpractices have been taking place. During the author's field trips to two districts, it was reported to him in whispering tones by some sharecroppers that some of the officials of the Kisan Sabhas would not hesitate to collect of right certificate from the Land Reforms Office.
- c. This phenomenon, though rare, brings to the fore some of the contradictions in the Kisan Sabha leadership. As earlier mentioned, the active membership of Kisan Sabha is pluralistic, composed of disparate interest groups. There are middle farmers as well as small farmers. They resort to sharecropping systems as well. Many of them, being influential in the Kisan Sabha, would not hesitate to protect their interests by persuading their own sharecroppers by subtle or other means not to have their names recorded. Others also see this as an opportunity to earn a fast buck. If anything, this is a basic

weakness in the existing active membership pattern of local Kishan Sabhas, rendered further complicated by the elected representatives to the local institutions at the district, block and village levels which provided an opportunity for uncommitted but influential local persons to secure "tickets" from the leftist parties to win the elections. Our study indicates that their number is not considerable. Nonetheless, if a progressive political party does not have strong sustained grassroots cadre of dedicated workers this type of infiltration is unavoidable.

- d. The initial prognosis that activation of the government machinery in the matter of land reforms might act as a challenge to somewhat complacent local Kisan Sabhas, came out to be true. In most of the places these Kisan Sabhas have shown signs of increased activity, particularly, when records of rights movement has been launched in a district. It is a matter for some speculation as to how this initial enthusiasm would sustain itself.

One tentative conclusion that can be drawn from this movement is that re-distribution of land is fast reaching a stage of saturation, and that even the beneficiaries, namely, the sharecroppers, will continue to remain vulnerable unless a number of concrete measures are adopted to make them at least partially self-sufficient. The government has adopted a scheme of zero interest rate whereby sharecroppers and assignees of vested land would get loans from banks or cooperatives but would not be required to pay any interest till the investments start showing results. The government would absorb the interest component. That measure alone is not enough. Fragmentation of land on account of population pressure has reached a stage in West Bengal where two types of alternative technologies of production and organisation of productive work might be considered. One is to move away from single family unit economic viability to some form of cooperatives of agriculture-related activities. Economies of scale are possible that way and even the World Bank strategy of rural development could be utilised under certain safeguards to make these sharecroppers improve their lot. This is possible because of the "umbrella" protection that can be expected from a progressive government. Secondly, other supplemental activities, particularly highly decentralised rural industries and agro-based activities, can be conceived. Considering the fact that West Bengal alone has a large potential market, in quantity as well as variety of essential consumer items, sophistication of products is secondary to meeting the essential needs.

Unless the economic rehabilitation of sharecroppers and landless labour are linked with these extended activities in which the Kisan Sabhas will have to take a lead, no legislative measures would go far. To give an example, the minimum wage rate for agricultural operation is Rs.8.10 per working day. Our limited field investigations indicate that at the most it reaches even during the harvesting season, the level of Rs.6 but on most occasions it does not exceed Rs.4 per day.

On the whole, this experiment is unique in that a state government has for the first time experimented with an otherwise expensive bureaucratic machinery to harness its potential capability to raise the consciousness of rural masses thereby generating a potential for induction effect on the Kisan Sabhas which were otherwise geared to demonstrations, protest meetings, or at the extreme, individual acts of violence leading to no concrete results.

There is another lead from this case. Within a given framework of a constitution gradually tending to centralised power, a State government is required to plan for a transition strategy for transformation. Voluntary agencies and activated bureaucracy can become potential agents in this venture.

E. Gonashasthaya Kendra (Chowdhury, 1978 A,B; Das, 1979; G.K. 1977) (This centre is the subject of a separate case study included in this set of papers.)

This voluntary organisation of Bangladesh is unique in many ways, its beginning itself is unusual. When the liberation struggle started in Bangladesh in 1971, the liberation forces operating inside Bangladesh and at the Indian border needed medical care. Zafrullah Chowdhury, giving up a medical career in England, returned and joined with several volunteers to essentially provide health care to the liberation forces including emergency operations. That continued till the country earned its freedom.

Thereafter, instead of accepting an assured position in the new government, which surely required the services of such a dedicated person, Zafrullah with a band of colleagues set up Ganashasthaya Kendra (GK) in 1972 in a rural area of Savar, away from the city of Dacca. It is a voluntary agency. The objective of the Kendra has been expressed in many documents. One statement summarises the approach:

"The health problem in our rural areas is a consequence of underdevelopment, and, at the same time, a cause for its perpetuation. Malnutrition, for example, is basically a problem not for a physician but for the agronomist, the teacher and the community organiser. Strictly medical approach cannot produce community health. Without the involvement of the community anything that is produced will have a questionable value."

(Chowdhury 1978 A)

Impediments were many, since such an objective was sought to be achieved. The teaching of modern western medicine and its practice are expensive, essentially curative, and at best can serve the needs of those who are reasonably well-off, well cared and protected. It is an established fact, to give an example from India, that most of the life-saving drugs as well as such items as vitamins can at most reach 20 per cent of India's population. The situation in Bangladesh may be more severe. Secondly, an underdeveloped society, Bangladesh as well as others, is essentially a politico-economic system with those who have powers and those who are powerless. An agency such as this could not but decide that health care should be an intervention strategy for development. As can be easily predicted there were hurdles and obstructions to overcome. No less important were the accumulated prejudices and superstitions of the potential clientele because of their blind reliance on current medical tradition which, however, is beyond their reach. The demonstration effect of what the leaders of the community do and show is indeed considerable. So, even the target group, to begin with, was sceptical if not hostile. The other challenge was to create a spearhead of volunteers who could only be offered the bare necessities of life by an organisation such as this. It called for sacrifices of all kinds.

The Savar centre, which is still the main base, started with over 100 part-time volunteers, many of them from the student community whose initial

assignment was to carry out vaccination drives and be educated in health care programs based on certain values of work and inculcation of participative orientation.

The Centre developed itself on many dimensions as time went on. One of the first tasks was to create village paramedics, boys and girls. Girls were likely to be more effective as barefoot doctors in the villages where women were also to be reached. It was not easy to get Muslim girls to come out of their seclusion for such training and work. Secondly, in order to be autonomous and self-sufficient, they would be required to become multipurpose in their activities. For this a minimum level of education was necessary. Most of the girls in the village have at best an exposure to five years of schooling and, as such, are deprived of the basic qualifications for the job. Initially, some educated girls came from towns but, over a period, even the semi-literate girls were put under intensive training varying from six months to one year.

As assessment of rural Bangladesh and its requirements convinced the organisers that it was just not a matter of providing health care services to the rural poor but also in the process actively contributing to, slowly and steadily, the liberation of women from their conservative upbringing. To pursue the subject, the trained paramedics are expected to cover at least 3,000 population spread over a number of villages, coverage of which on foot would be time-consuming as well as physically strenuous. That apart, they may be subjected to indignities by the conservative elements in the villages. They were taught to learn cycling but this was not easily acceptable to the community. For Muslim girls it was not a "done" thing. With patience and adequate explanation even to the orthodox leader of the village community, it was possible to overcome the resistance partially. In the second centre, established at Shapmari in Jamalpur area, over 100 kms. away from the Savar centre, even towards the end of 1977, the paramedics were unable to move on bicycles as this was not socially sanctioned.

As regards health care, it was necessary to identify the health needs in terms of priority. Diarrhoea, scabies, high mortality rate, infection of eyes and ears and immunisation against small pox and cholera were some of the main challenges to be attended to. It was not possible, apart from curative services, to respond to these challenges in the centre at Savar. To begin with, mobile paramedics were deployed but gradually four sub-centres were created with the main centre acting as a referral base. Doctors would also be mobile in order to help the complicated cases in the sub-centres. Similarly, once a week, sub-centre based staff, at least some of them, would report to the Savar centre about various problems and share their experiences. They would also carry along with them the essential medicines. The variety of activities undertaken by the organisation can briefly be reported.

1. Primary health care.

The number of fully-trained paramedics came down to twenty-two by the end of 1977 as some of them were offered better jobs by hospitals and government departments. The paramedics' duties included:

- a. Registration of births and deaths;
- b. Identification of pregnant women and establishing at-risk cases;

- c. Identification of at-risk children, defined as those suffering from severe malnutrition, diarrhoea/chronic diarrhoea and night-blindness;
- d. Immunisation, BCG for children under 15, DPT for children under 5, tetanus toxoid for women during pregnancy and primary small-pox for all;
- e. nutrition and health education;
- f. treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery;
- g. preparation and use of re-hydration fluid, treatment of scabies;
- h. motivation, delivery system and follow-up of family planning package.

There were sceptics for whom it was a tall order. What really brought success to this bold unorthodox experiment was a basic faith in human capability and an imaginatively planned training system, in addition to the examples set by the doctors themselves.

It is enough to mention, without quoting statistics, that the scheme which covered, till the end of 1977, a target population of 100,000 has succeeded most favourably compared to the organised health delivery system under official and other agencies.

2. Education

The data indicates that 46 percent of school-age children do not attend schools. Among those who complete five years of schooling only 14 percent are girls.

The Kendra started a school with 50 children drawn from five villages near the Savar centre. They came from landless or quasi landless families. Curriculum design and program implementation were imaginatively planned in order to overcome parents' resistance. The object of traditional school education is to provide knowledge and its negative consequence is a lessening of regard for manual labour. Literacy is a felt need because poor illiterates are subjected to fraud by various interests through obtaining of thumb impressions on papers.

Formal dress was not a requirement because that would involve additional cost to the parents. Children were provided with an inexpensive slate and pencil. Working hours were flexible so that children, over six or seven years of age, could attend to the services required by their parents. This was particularly so during the agriculturally busy seasons. At least one full meal was provided free to them so that the burden on poor parents could be somewhat relieved. Even with all these measures, it was expected that most of them would not stay in the school for more than five years.

First thing in the morning, children would attend to vegetable plots and chicken farms so that they could retain respect for manual labour in the midst of mental work that was carried out in the classroom. Lessons were

also devoted to understanding the village life, the roots of poverty and causes for diseases and malnutrition. Group work was more predominant than lecture systems. Thus, education was aimed at raising consciousness in addition to removing illiteracy.

It is not as if all problems of pedagogy have been satisfactorily resolved. For example, the centre is still not sure whether it should go in for rural language of the common man or standard Bengali which is the preserve of the educated gentry.

3. Vocational Training

Starting with two, the women's centres now cater to over 450 women at the main centre and the sub-centres. Despite initial difficulties, women started taking interest in learning such trades as carpentry, plumbing, blacksmithing and electrician's jobs apart from sewing. These are also the trades which are in short supply in the rural areas as many skilled artisans have been going to the Middle East.

The technical workshop employs twelve full-time workers, six men, and six women. Apart from imparting practical training they produce simple agricultural implements, window frames, hospital cots, operation tables and so on. Some of these are purchased by the Centre and others sold outside.

This is another way of helping the cause of women's liberation.

4. Agriculture

TGUS is the most important economic activity in Bangladesh. The Centre could not neglect this reality. The project staff include four full time agricultural workers and a French volunteer specialised in biological farming. That apart, other members of the staff devote some time every day to food production activities. The centre is self-sufficient in rice and vegetables. Surplus produce is sold in the local market. There is a tank for rearing fish. Soya-bean experiment, though successful in the experimental farm, did not work out well with the local farmers.

The problem of financial resources for agricultural purpose is well known and the government agencies, for fairly known reasons which are common to practically all under-developed countries, reach only those who have land and property. The centre started giving loans on very easy terms to the extremely poor sharecroppers in two villages. After the initial resistance, it took roots. Of 43 cultivators only 2 defaulted. One was a well-off farmer whose financial status could not be earlier established. The other one lost his entire harvest because of his landlord's highhandedness and illegal seizure of his produce. This scheme has been most difficult to launch in the absence of appropriate land reform measures. Nonetheless, efforts are on and various funding agencies are being tapped to funnel their resources through the centre so that funds can reach the most needy.

5. Family Planning

The Centre exercised a good deal of caution to avoid repetition of the mistakes that are still being committed in the name of family planning. There are vested interests, national and international, keen to implement the program with haste, and with an unimaginative delivery system.

The Centre's approach was different. It was understood that unless the family planning efforts are meaningfully linked with economic revival of the poor, no amount of technical sophistication and persuasive skills would work. That is one reason why the Centre undertook other associated activities some of which have been listed out above.

In 1974, this approach of the Centre started receiving favourable responses from Savar area women. Many were disillusioned with the pill and other preventive measures because of side-effects and inability to follow the strict routine. They wanted a simpler method. They could be persuaded to accept tubectomy. It was also extended to sub-centres and then to the second main centre located near Jamalpur. At Savar, as the system started gaining popularity, the charges were fixed at taka 6 per case where as in Jamalpur area, it was provided free against a subsidy from government funds. The established medical practitioner and the local family planning officer were indeed unhappy because these efforts resulted in depriving them of their lucrative income. However, the corrupt practices still continue in many areas of Bangladesh supported by many expensive programs emanating from US aid, Family Planning International Assistance and the International Projects of the Association for Voluntary Sterilisation, although it could be presumed that these agencies did not intend the funds to be used for coercively implementing sterilisation programs.

The Centre has always maintained an attitude that pregnancy and babies are not to be treated as an epidemic. The issue has to be judged on the merit of each case. As a result of such discriminating and ethical approach there are more and more demands on the Centre's staff to terminate pregnancies. While initially women at an advanced stage of pregnancy would turn up, paramedics' efforts to educate them and other women resulted in their turning up at an earlier stage of pregnancy making surgical operations easier.

The most significant achievement of the scheme has been to train and use effectively the paramedics for tubectomy operations and for termination of pregnancies. There was strong initial opposition and scepticism. But it has worked well. However, in complicated cases, the paramedics did always turn to the doctors for assistance. Post-operational complications are not rare. Tetanus infections are the most serious and even results in deaths in some cases. The number of such cases has fallen considerably. Statistics show that birth rate among the target population is significantly lower compared to the national average and are an indication of success.

It is time that we conclude this narration by mentioning one additional point. The second main centre at Shapmai is working effectively under the guidance of a trained paramedic who joined Zafrulla Chowdhury as a nurse in 1971. She is an effective administrator and commands the respect of all those who work with her (incidentally a Bengali Hindu girl) because she has not turned out to be a paper-pushing administrator. She works with her own

hands. Of course, trained doctors from the main centre maintain close liaison with this centre despite communication difficulties. Running this centre is more difficult than running the one at Savar. It is necessary, for example, to get to Sherpur town everyday to buy a bagful of ice to keep vaccines cool as the village does not have electricity.

Comments on this case can be confined to the following:

- a. It is a unique and practical case as to how such a technical service as health care can be conceived as a part of a total package in a country which is among the poorest in the world with a conservative outlook of many people in respect of what is "done" and "not done".
- b. It is also unique that an egalitarian culture has been sustained by maintaining no distinction between manual labour and mental labour. Professional knowledge and skills differentiation have not created a hierarchical work system in the Kendra.
- c. Leadership is shared and as events have turned out, Zafrullah Chowdhury, the moving spirit behind the movement has switched over to other activities without snapping his link with the Kendra. His latest effort is to develop an indigenous drug industry in Bangladesh which is at present entirely dependent on foreign supplies and multi-national companies. He is still a part of the centre and this withdrawal has not created any void or crisis in transfer of leadership which, in any event, continues to be a shared responsibility.
- d. This case is an example of goal extension in interrelated activities, linked with an alternative approach to development. Considering the enormous dimensions of problems in Bangladesh this alternative model of development is pregnant with challenging replication in other under-developed countries.

It is yet another example where confrontation tactics have been skilfully deployed and yet selective cooperation from different agencies have not been dogmatically rejected. It may be mentioned that even the foreign agencies, such as the UNICEF, Kaufman Footwear in Canada, Oxfam, voluntary groups in France, Terre des Hommes of Holland and Switzerland, Inter Pares of Canada, have provided financial assistance without any strings attached. Bangladesh Government too, although initially not involved in this experimental venture, has started utilising the services of the Kendra for the training of medicos and paramedics having thus recognised the utility of the Kendra.

- e. The extent of hostility to the Kendra cannot be underestimated. In not too distant a past, an active paramedic of Shimulia sub-centre was murdered. His dedication, selfless service, inspired leadership and growing popularity were too much for local quacks and vested interests to tolerate.

His death, though a blow, has only succeeded in causing the Kendra staff to be more determined and dedicated to the challenge they are entrusted with. His tragic death has been accepted as a symbolic expression of the meaningfulness of work that the Kendra has undertaken.

- f. This case also indicates that the politico-legal structure as institutionalised in the medico-health care system can be shaken up by the approach adopted by the Kendra.

EXPERIENCE IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Bikram Sarkar*

We have, so far, held five Reorientation Camps in remote rural areas in five districts, viz., Medinipur, Hugli, Burdwan, Malda and Murshidabad. In each of these camps the total number of participants was between 45 and 55 of whom 30 to 40 were non-officials participants, drawn from the poor share-croppers, landless agricultural labourers and small allottees on government vested lands and about 15 were officials at the field level like Kanungos, Junior Land Reforms Officers, Cooperative Inspectors, Kanungos, Tribal Welfare and Agricultural Extension Officers.

In each of these 3-day camps the participants arrived at the camp in the afternoon before the first day. The officers and the peasants shared the same big hall for their accommodation. There was no distinction between an officer and a peasant in their treatment. There was no formal inauguration of the camp. All of us had our food together, stayed together and held discussions together. Seating was on mattresses spread on the floor. No chairs. No tables. The peasants were requested to take the initiative in all discussions. The participants were divided into a number of groups, each group consisting of seven or eight participants.

Objectives

1. Identification of the problems of the rural poor - social problems, economic problems and administrative problems.
2. What "development" means to the rural poor - the poor man's own feeling.
3. Why did the fruits of the Five-year Plans and all development exercises of 30 years fail to take care of the basic needs of the rural poor?
4. Identification of the administrative lapses - how are the officials looked at by the common people of the villages?
5. What the word "Government" means to the rural poor - who is Government? - The party in power? The Government Officers? Officers at which level?
6. What is the meaning of the word "Freedom"? Have they got economic freedom? Without economic freedom does political freedom have any meaning in the life of the rural poor? To whom have gone the benefits of technological break-through in the field of agriculture and allied sector all these years?
7. Their fear, their anxiety, causes of their aloofness from the government officials, and all Development functionaries - official as well as elected.

*Office of Land Commissioner, Government of West Bengal, India.

In the first stage of identification of problems each group does it separately after a discussion among the members of the group. Then the group write it up in poster-papers in bold types in their own language. They are allowed sufficient time to have free and frank discussion on the problems among group members. Thereafter, in the post-lunch session of the first day each group displays its poster containing the problems of rural areas. After all the groups have so displayed their posters all the participants sit together for a discussion session. They elucidate the problems written out by them and everybody participates by putting questions and by seeking clarifications of certain wordings and also by questioning the intense priority of problems. The input by officials in course of this discussion is only marginal. The non-official participants are not only allowed to criticise the government actions but also encouraged to come out with what they genuinely feel about the government functionaries. Uninhibited criticisms of different government officials are entertained. During this session it is observed that many of the problems identified by different groups are common and interrelated. In the next session on the second day all the participants sit together to formulate an agreed list of problems and to discuss possible solution to these problems giving more stress on self-help, interdependence among the village-poor through the setting up of a suitable organisation of rural poor. Then in the next session different pro-poor statutes are discussed by departmental officers and in the last session the summing up regarding identification of problems and their solutions is done and follow up actions suggested by the participants.

Critical Analysis of the Methodology Applied

In such a camp the initiators who are officials go through a transition to fill up the role of participants. Each decision by the groups as well as the whole body is related to a number of tensions arising out of the role of a sufferer who is trying to identify the problems and to become articulate. The main role of the officials during the initial stage of discussion is to draw out the participants and to carefully observe the way participants "felt" things. The intervention by the officials was minimal and that too in the nature of coordinating disparate interruption and ideas, to organise the ideas in a coherent and comprehensive manner. During the discussion session that followed these coherent organised ideas and explanations serve the group (the group becomes a reflection group) as the basis for a purposeful "continuous discussion about the subject of development of the rural poor. At every stage of these discussions care is taken to see that the official participants' own bias does not influence the course of discussion of rural poor in an endeavour to find out a way for their own improvement. Nor do we allow ourselves to go unchallenged whenever we make any statement or give any analysis to the participants.

The idea is to ensure that they critically analyse our statement and if they agree with our statement that will be only after they are satisfied and accept our statement as their own. Officers speak "truth" and nothing but truth, this idea must be given a go by. Sermonising has no place in this conscientization process. The form of our intervention is very delicate. We are to take care that we do not create a culture of dependence where the participants look forward to us for the solution. The object is to help the group/groups develop its/their own leadership potential. The general tendency noticed in those groups is to treat some of the government officials

as "experts" ready with the panacea. We are to be very careful not to encourage growth of such a tendency. We are to be frank and truthful to admit that we have no answer to many of the real problems of life of the rural poor. The other major tension that develops is on the question of how to identify ourselves with the rural poor. Can we really do it? Are we not "outsiders"? We are to reject the role of a government officer as that of a father-figure "do-gooder" who comes from "outside" bringing in a new consciousness. We must accept our limitations of experience. We are to be conscious of the fact that we are doing no favour to anybody by participating or staying with the rural poor in the camp. We must see our role as social scientists with a belief that through participatory research and follow up action we can increase our "knowledge" and get our perspectives cleared. This "new knowledge" will consciously contribute to a process of social change. We are to be fully aware at every step that social change is a continuous process and hence the process is more important than the one-shot result. In this way our experience in the camp is that of a Research where the actors i.e. the participants, the rural poor, - take a predominant role in analysing the present social set up.

The outcome of these camps is mixed with our experience in a two-way process where the actors and researchers are equal partners in a social setting.

GRASSROOT RESEARCHERS TRAINING PROGRAM

Farmers Assistance Board Inc.,
Quezon City, Philippines

Background and Rationale

Control and information and data has created a new brand of elitism even among groups avowedly geared toward authentic human development.

The peasants and workers actually engaged in the front line of the production efforts are most often unaware of the external forces that affect their very lives and livelihood. Subjected to these influences, not only beyond their control, but apparently also beyond their knowledge and thus outside their understanding and comprehension, their action for liberation often times become localized and parochial, and therefore ineffective in the long run.

It has been the practice that political "agitators", "conscientizers" or those engaged in awareness building among the peasants and workers are external agents, most often than not - they are intellectuals, students - people alien to the workers' and peasants' milieu, yet knowledgeable of the mechanics and structures of those forces that control the lives and the productive efforts of the peasants and workers.

In many cases this state of affairs had led to the control of information and data by this group of people, creating a dependency on the part of those being "conscientized" even on their means and method of action.

It is understood that action can only be effective based on the data and information available on which consequent mobilization is decided on.

Thus even among political and social organizations the "vanguard group" becomes the exclusive domain of those who have access to information and data relevant to the aims and objectives of the organizations.

It may be that data and information are available, but the skills, the means to gather and systematize these for critical analysis leading to mobilization, is lacking.

An attempt is being done by this program to break this dichotomy.

Nature and Aim

As organized peasant and worker groups progress in their own programs and activities, the role of the organizers or facilitators diminishes as the peasants and workers themselves assume full leadership and control.

Part of the effectiveness of the organizer-facilitator is his access to information and data on the issues, and his ability to analyse the data, communicate them to the people, and make them part of the information on which the peoples' organization can base their mobilization.

Yet most training programs for organizers do not contain this type of skill formation and acquisition. Or if it is present, the methodology for their transmission to the people's organization is not clear nor identifiable.

Therefore it becomes necessary that in order that people's organizations become more effective, and that they be able to correctly determine their course of action, they must have the ability to gather data and information, systematize and organize them and relate them both to the micro and macro situation. Their plan of action thus can be properly and more scientifically decided upon.

It is the aim therefore of this program to

- provide training opportunities and skills on research (data gathering, systematization and organization for action) for organizers, and for peasants and workers who are members of their own local organizations.
- provide training and orientation to skilled researchers on the correct and responsive type of research based on the information needs of peasant and worker groups towards action for liberation.

Content

Since this is an action-oriented program, the training itself will be directed towards issues identified for action by organized groups.

Thus the process may follow this pattern:

1. During meetings and discussions of organized groups of peasants or workers, certain issues are identified which must be acted upon. Such issues may be the effects of the government's Corporate Farming Program, the Operation Land Transfer of the government's Agrarian Reform Program etc.
2. A research-training staff, initially composed of skilled researchers dedicated and committed toward social change (as a minimum qualification) will conduct exploratory studies on the issues based on feedback from the meetings and discussions of the organized groups.
3. At a certain stage of the exploratory studies, a brainstorming session between the research-training staff and representatives of the organized groups will be held. The aim of this session would be to provide initial data and information to the organized groups and to assist them in gathering local data on the issue by providing a framework for data gathering and to direct the efforts of the research-training staff to the information needs of the organized groups. This stage should lead to the selection by the

organized groups of those who are going to participate in the actual training process and who will now conduct the actual data gathering.

4. The exploratory studies will have to be translated into the local dialect. Materials, audio and visual, as well as documents and facilities for the actual training process will have to be prepared.
5. The data gathering by the prospective trainees (selected and chosen by the organized groups with minimum criteria established i.e. knows how to read and write etc.) which should not last more than four (4) weeks, will be the starting point for the formal training process which will be from four (4) to six (6) weeks including field practice.
6. A continuous follow-up process which will provide an interaction between the research-training staff and the graduates of the training program will be established in the form of a research service bureau in which both will continue to train others at their own levels: the research-training staff will recruit others who can be trained for this purpose, and the graduate "grassroot researchers" who will share their skills with others in their own groups, and together replicate this process for other groups.

Communication and coordination will continue in specific forms which will be worked out as the needs arise. For example, the research-training staff will provide data and information not accessible locally or which will be impractical to acquire locally due to bureaucracy, but which may be easily acquired by the staff; comparison and coordination of socio-political analysis of data and events to provide unity in action etc.

The program will also continue to provide training opportunities to other organized groups. Trainees for rural organizing may participate subject to certain conditions which have to be worked out on a case to case basis.

Process

I Exploratory Studies

A. Objectives:

1. To identify together with peasant groups the relevant issues and problems which need more investigation and study.
2. To initiate exploratory studies on these issues/problems.
3. To prepare written reports on these exploratory studies in languages understandable to the peasant groups concerned.

B. Contents/Methods:

1. During the meetings, discussions, seminars of peasant groups certain issues and problems are identified.

Issues that may be discussed are:

- a. specific economic issues
 - a1. land reform
 - a2. corporate farming
 - a3. credit assistance program
 - a4. pesticides/fertilizers
 - a5. health delivery system
 - b. political issues
 - b1. local participation in barangay/barrio council
 - b2. policies/decrees affecting the area covered
 - b3. military abuses, harassments
 - b4. peasant organizations/peoples organization.
 - c. cultural issues
 - c1. relevance of education system
 - c2. consumerism/commercialism
 - c3. traditional values: liberating/corrupting.
 - d. Attempts Toward Self-Reliance and Liberation by Indigenous Peasant Groups.
 - d1. Economic self-reliance
 - d1a. cooperative farming
 - d1b. cooperative marketing
 - d1c. cooperative stores
 - d1d. cooperative poultry/livestock
 - d2. Political Self-Organisation
 - d2a. Types of peasant organizations
 - d2b. Responsive Organisational Structure
 - d2c. Methods of Rural Organising
 - d3. Cultural Self-Reliance
 - d3a. Creative Dramatics
 - d3b. Awareness Seminars
 - d3c. Educational programs
 - d3d. Songs, Poems, Games etc.
2. These issues/problems are further determined as to their priority and relevance to the existing socio-political and economic conditions of the local peasant group and communities.
 3. Surveys, census, interviews etc. may be conducted in such a manner that the peasant groups and the GRTP staff are partners in the process.
 4. Other sources of information and data are tapped, e.g., journals, manuals, publications, libraries, institutions, government officials, etc.
 5. Weekly discussions among and between all those involved are held.
 6. Write-ups, summaries are prepared.

C. Expectations

1. Peasant Groups and GRTP staff become partners in the process.
2. Relevant issues and problems are identified and initially documented and studied.
3. An exploratory study on the particular issue/problem is produced and ready to be presented in a language understandable to the peasant group.

D. Participants

1. GRTP Staff
2. Peasant Leaders
3. Rural organizers/workers
4. Members of peasant groups
5. Volunteer researchers, social scientists, etc.

II Brainstorming Session

A. Objectives

1. To present for discussions and criticism the initial data and findings of the exploratory studies to the peasant groups concerned.
2. To direct the efforts of the GRTP staff to the research and documentation needs of the peasant groups.
3. To determine the research and documentation skills, materials etc., available in the area.
4. To provide a general framework for further data gathering and documentation on the issues/problems presented to be undertaken in cooperation with the prospective trainees.
5. To identify human and material resource, including agencies and institutions in the area, that may be useful for the GRTP.
6. To clarify the roles and responsibilities of the GRTP staff, trainees, peasant leaders, rural organisers/workers in the training sessions.
7. To set up a criteria for the selection of trainees and staff for the training sessions.
8. To identify the needed materials, forms, supplies, etc. for the training sessions.
9. To develop a criteria for the evaluation of the GRTP.
 - a) who will be involved in the evaluation?
 - b) what will happen to the results of the evaluation?

B. Contents/Methods

1. The exploratory studies are now presented to the local peasant groups for discussions, criticism and study.

2. In the process of discussion and exchange of ideas, the efforts of the GRTP staff are directed to the documentation and research needs of the local peasant groups, and at the same time the resources and skills available locally are identified and where possible tapped.
3. Such discussions which may take the form of small workshops will indicate also what areas or facts of the issues or problems need further studies and clarification.
4. A general framework for further documentation and data gathering will be formulated during this session which will be used by the prospective trainees later on.
5. The criteria for the selection of the trainees and staff of the training session will be set-up.
6. Guidelines for evaluation will also be determined including the mechanics for the implementation.

C. Expectations

1. The exploratory studies are presented and discussed and revised. These become the basis for further study and investigation.
2. A general framework for data gathering and documentation is worked out which will be used by the prospective trainees.
3. Based on this general framework, prospective trainees start their own data gathering and documentation.
4. Criteria for the selection of trainees and staff are established.
5. The selection of trainees and staff is made during this session or shortly afterwards.
6. An evaluation process of the GRTP is established.
7. The usefulness of relevance of this process in the total struggle of the peasantry toward liberation is determined.

D. Participants

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Peasant Leaders | 3. Rural workers/organisers |
| 2. Prospective Trainees | 4. GRTP Staff |

III Training Sessions

A. Theoretical Phase

Conceptual Framework

1. Specific Objectives
 - a. To review and refine the understanding of the economic, political and cultural situation with the use of the different conscientization tools.
 - b. To have a deeper understanding of the fundamental concepts underlying the economic, political and cultural situation.

- c. To trace the historical roots of the present situation.

2. Contents/methods

- a. The new data and information gathered by the trainees are reviewed with the use of the tools for Structural Analysis, the Ideological and Political Apparatus, the Levels of Consciousness and the Creative Utopia.
- b. A series of small group workshops will review the use of these tools.
- c. Each trainee will be given the opportunity to present an analysis of this data and information with the use of these tools.
- d. In the course of the discussions presentations, certain concepts will be highlighted, reviewed, explained and classified.

Such Concepts may be:

- d1. Economics, Culture, Politics
 - d2. Man and Society, Class Society
 - d3. State and Society
 - d4. Leadership and Fellowship
 - d5. Organisation, People's Power, People's Movement
 - d6. Private Property, Land Ownership
 - d7. Capitalism, Labour, Profit
- e. The whole process is taken from the point of view of a past, present, future historical perspective.

3. Expectations

- a. The trainees and staff are able to consolidate the data and information gathered in addition to the earlier exploratory studies.
- b. This consolidation is critically analyzed with the use of conscientization tools in so far as they are relevant to the program of action of the groups.
- c. The trainees are able to use the conscientization tools correctly in this process.
- d. Written materials on the content and process of this phase are produced.
- e. The trainees are able to make a summary of the main points through essays, diagrams, songs, poems, symbols, slogans, cartoons etc.
- f. The trainees are able to make a comprehensive analysis of one particular issue based on the concepts discussed and the conscientization tools used within a historical perspective.

Skills Framework

1. Specific Objectives

- a. For the trainees to acquire practical knowledge and skills in gathering, selecting, utilizing, keeping and disseminating data and information.

- b. To gain familiarity with the materials, resources and tools of research and documentation.
- c. To develop a documentation network for information acquisition and distribution.
- d. To develop a system of safe, speedy and accurate receiving, processing and dispatching of information and data.
- e. To identify and master routine documentation tasks.
- f. To identify vital channels of information and communication for smooth work flow.
- g. To know how to produce reports for decision making purposes.

2. Contents/methods

a. Steps involved in Data Gathering

I. Preliminary Steps

A. Identification of types of information needed.

- 1. What data/information to gather.
- 2. Where to gather: identify effective sources of information
- 3. From whom to gather: persons, agencies, organizations
- 4. How to gather: person-to-person, house-to-house, surveys, census, interviews, meetings etc.

B. Preparation of materials, instruments, tools

- 1. References
- 2. Forms
- 3. Supplies
- 4. Survey/Interview forms

C. Determination of Priorities

D. Establishment of plans and documentation targets.

II. Actual Data-Gathering

A. Types of Approaches

- 1. Prospecting
- 2. Pie-approach
- 3. Approach
- 4. Handling questions, suspicions, objections

B. Presentation of Data: Descriptive and Tabulated Form

C. Analysis of Data for Action/Decision

D. Summary of Data

b. Data-Handling

I. Transmittal of Data

- A. What data will be communicated: to whom and in what form.
- B. How data will be communicated.
- C. When data will be communicated.
- D. Details of reports.

II. Data Management and Control

- A. Responsibility for records keeping.
- B. Proper classification and filing of data.
- C. Determination of accessibility of data to whom, for what.
- D. Responsibility for data updating.

3. Expectations

- 1. The trainees are able to understand and make use of the research and documentation skills.
- 2. They are able to plan their fieldwork phase and actual use of the practical skills in coordination with their peasant groups.
- 3. They are able to transmit the theoretical concept of these skills to others.

Participants

- 1. Trainees
- 2. GRTP Staff
- 3. Selected resource persons.

B. Fieldwork Phase

1. Specific Objectives

- a. To provide practical and actual application of theories, learned:
 - a1. conscientization tools
 - a2. basic steps in data-gathering
- b. To pursue further the initial documentation and research undertaken with the use of the theories learned.
- c. To identify the risks involved in actual grassroot research.
- d. To identify linkages of research and documentation to the organizational, educational activities of the peasant groups.
- e. To establish a research and documentation network.

2. Contents/methods

- a. Actual social investigation to the areas covered with the use of the theories and skills learned.

- b. Regular meetings and consultations with the GRTP staff and the responsible peasant leaders.
- c. Regular presentation of reports and data to the persons concerned.
- d. Application of data gathering steps and conscientization tools.
- e. Daily journal of activities
 - e1. according to priorities
 - e2. objectives
 - e3. accomplishments
 - e4. analysis: positive-negative lessons learned
 - e5. reflections
 - e6. plans for the next day.
- f. Optional
 - f1. poetry
 - f2. songs
 - f3. drama scripts
 - f4. oration
 - f5. essay
 - f6. slogans
 - f7. sayings
 - f8. riddles
 - f9. stories, myths, legends
 - f10. cartoons, caricatures
 - f11. jokes

3. Expectations

- a. The trainees with the use of the theories and skills learned are able to conduct a more in depth, extensive-intensive investigation and study of the problems/issues.
- b. The results of these are made use for planning and decision making of the peasant groups.
- c. During this phase, new issues/problems are studied by the trainees and other members of the peasant groups who may now be the new batch of trainees.
- d. This also starts the follow-up program in which the trainees now become the trainers of new prospective trainees.
- e. A research and documentation network is set up.

4. Participants

- a. Trainees
- b. GRTP staff
- c. Selected resource persons
- d. New batch of trainees.

C. Refinement-Termination-Phase

1. Specific Objectives

- a. To develop research and documentation guidelines based on the theoretical framework and actual field, experience.

- b. To write up final reports, summaries etc.
- c. To identify indicators for a successful GRTP.
- d. To evaluate the GRTP.
- e. To initiate follow-up programs.

2. Contents/methods

After the fieldwork phase, all the trainees come together for review and evaluate their activities in preparation for the formal end of the GRTP. Plans for follow up programs are set.

The following will be taken up.

- a. Format for final reports.
- b. Contents of reports, including recommendations and suggestions.
- c. Study of basic principles of research and documentation as culled from the training experience.
- d. Obstacles and hindrances to research and documentation.
- e. Factors for success.
- f. Follow-up programs.
 - f1. Documentation network
 - f2. Local GRTP
 - f3. System of information delivery
 - f4. Production of write-ups, essays, poems, newsletters, comics, cartoons etc.
 - f5. Regular updating
 - f6. Particular issues/problems to be undertaken.
- g. General Evaluation of the GRTP.
 - g1. Contents/Methods
 - g2. Staff
 - g3. Trainees
 - g4. Peasant group's participation
 - g5. Resource persons
 - g6. Recommendations/Suggestions.

3. Expectations

- a. The trainees are able to produce their final reports.
- b. A Guideline for grassroot research and documentation is formulated.
- c. A general evaluation of the GRTP is conducted clearly indicating what the recommendations are and who should implement these.
- d. Follow-up Programs are initiated.

4. Participants

- a. Trainees.
- b. GRTP Staff.
- c. Peasant Leaders.
- d. Members of peasant groups.

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN ACTION*

The Story of the Shramik Sangathan

Organisation of agricultural workers poses several problems. They are scattered, ignorant and illiterate; working under, not one, but several employers. Their living conditions are dismal and therefore tend to dampen the enthusiasm of those who set out to work amongst them. Mainly due to these difficulties the trade unions and political parties have been able to organise only a very small fraction of nearly five crores agricultural labourers. Devoted and dedicated cadres, with a high level of commitment and consciousness, alone can play a meaningful role in organising the rural proletariat. These cadres need patience, understanding of the problems and issues which can help mobilisation of the landless labour. Also, they have to master the tactics and strategy of wielding them into a powerful fighting force by overcoming political, social, economic and cultural handicaps.

The story of the formation and growth of "Shramik Sangathana" in Dhulia (Maharashtra) is an instructive example of how this difficult task of organising the agricultural labour, in the face of onslaught by vested interests, can be successfully accomplished.

A 'HOW' team visited Shahada, headquarters of the Shramik Sangathana, and made an on-the-spot study of their activities. The team had discussions, in a warm and comradely atmosphere, with Kumar Shiralkar, Vijay Kanhare, Dinanath Manher and other devoted workers of the Shramik Sangathana.

"HOW" also visited a couple of villages where the agricultural workers were engaged in struggles and negotiations for recovery of arrears of minimum wages i.e. the difference between the statutory wage fixed under law and the actual amount paid by landlords. When in most of the States the workers are even denied the statutory wages, the struggle for recovery of arrears in Shahada revealed a higher level of organisation and consciousness.

"HOW" presents here an in-depth report on Shramik Sangathana and its struggles. The first part describes the agricultural workers in action. The second part gives the background of the formation and growth of Shramik Sangathan. "HOW" is responsible for the views expressed in this report and the activists of the Shramik Sangathana not answerable if any errors have, inadvertently, crept in. We are sure this study will be of great interest and value to other field workers. We will welcome reactions, comments and suggestions and would like to publish reports on similar experiences.

- Editor

*How, Vol.1, No.1, June 1978, pp.24-28.

6 September 1977, Village Moyde, Tehsil Taloda (District Dhulia)
Maharashtra:

Faint ripples of the waters flowing in the historic Tapti can be heard at some distance. A few agricultural workers gather in the moonlit night. The discussion starts in a somewhat desultory manner. Most of them sit silently. A few converse somewhat listlessly. The subject is their own life. Some of them murmur, "We are getting only Rs 2/- as wages after working from sunrise to sunset. The whole of the weeding season had passed without any increase in our wages. The first Kharif harvest had arrived. But the wage-rates remain low".

These agricultural workers knew that what the landlords paid to them was much less than the minimum wages fixed under the law. Many of them had to work on a contract basis, called Udhale Kam in local dialect. When the contract is over and the labourers receive the pre-decided amount, they find that the actual wage earned by a man or woman is even less than Rs 2/-. Sometimes it is as low as 50 paise.

The working hours are long. Most of the men leave their homes in the early hours of the night and return when their children are fast asleep. For the women, it is a tiresome life of never ending drudgery and hardwork. After a whole day's sweated labour in the fields of the rich landlords, when they return to their huts, daily chores awaits them: cooking of meals and other household duties. Even though they know that the wages paid to them under the contract labour system - Udhale Kam - is very low, some of them opt for it because it could give them an opportunity to complete the contracted work expeditiously and return home early. For gaining a few hours to be with their family they have to lose heavily in terms of their earnings. Such is the intense exploitation prevailing in the village. Gradually the discussion became animated. What was earlier discussed in hushed voices became sharper and louder. Suddenly Patabai, a 30-year old Bhil woman, got up and exclaimed: "It is no use merely discussing our plight. We know the maldars (the landlords) in our village possess all the land". The Bhil woman, filled with rage, continued to speak with great passion. It appeared that an ancient dam had collapsed under the uncontrollable pressure of a river in spate. "They know we are landless. They are aware that we are dependent on them and that is why they harass us. Even though they agreed to pay the minimum wages according to the Act when we went on strike in 1974, they have gone back on their word. The Government officers are in collusion with them. We can win our rights under the law only by demonstrating our strength. Empty talk is meaningless. It is only our strength that will settle the question of minimum wages".

Patabai went on speaking in this way with intense fury. Her words pierced every one's heart. They had the strength of sincerity and conviction. Soon her courage permeated the atmosphere. The other agricultural labourers were caught with her infectious enthusiasm. The discussion concluded. A decision was taken. If from the next day, the maldars (the landlords) refused to pay Rs 3/- per day to every agricultural labourer - man or woman - for seven-hour work, the labourers would return the wages. The decision to fight for their rights filled all the labourers with a new sense of confidence. Their favourite slogan - "Shramik Sangathana Zindabad" rent the sky. The decision spread to the surrounding villages like wild fire.

All the agricultural labourers of the five villages who used to go to work on the lands owned by the rich landowners became aware of the collective decision.

Landlords furious

7 September: It was like any other day; but no, there was a difference. The 'maldars' had come to know of the decision of the agricultural labourers to insist on payment of minimum wages. They were enraged at the audacity of the labourers who had cast off their meekness and had decided not to submit to injustice any further. Naurotam Dam Patil, the headstrong headman of the 'maldars' was furious at the new sense of awakening among the agricultural labourers. He hurriedly called a meeting of other landlords. After long confabulations they decided not to pay a single paise more than Rs 2/-. The workers had to be taught a lesson.

Therefore, when the labourers returned after seven hours hard work from the fields to collect their wages and demanded Rs 3/- which the maldars refused. The workers protested and declined to accept less than minimum wage fixed under the law. There was a stalemate. Like all exploiters, the landlords began the game of trying to divide the poor and the oppressed. Pressure began to be mounted on them. Some weaklings were being persuaded to accept Rs 2/-. But the members of the Majoor Samiti-committee of the agricultural labourers of village formed by the Shramik Sangathan were vigilant. They rushed to the spot and persuaded the weak and the vacillating that they should not accept anything less than what was legally their due.

A meeting of agricultural labour was again called in the night. The workers warned everyone against the renegades and "chamchas" of the landlords. The same action was repeated the next day. The labourers returned as usual from work and again declined to accept less than their due wage. The maldars began to ridicule them. They abused and insulted the women workers, heaped scorn on them and taunted the labourers and asked them to go to Shramik Sangathan to get their wages.

Mass action begins

The workers launched a mass action on 9 September. About 2,000 men and women led a morcha to the office of the Tehsildar at Taloda, the taluka headquarters, 8 miles from Moyde. Poor peasants from other villages also participated in the morcha and agricultural labourers of the neighbourhood joined in the march. Officers of Revenue, Block Development and Police departments were called before the morcha. The workers enquired from the officers if they know of the Minimum Wages Act promulgated by the Government of Maharashtra on 24 March 1974. The officials blushed at the volley of penetrating questions hurled at them by the illiterate labourers. But the courage of their organised strength and their new sense of awareness had given to the labourers articulation and eloquence. The demonstrators insisted that officials should explain publicly the provisions of the Act and also tell the labourers what had been done to implement it. The agricultural workers knew the details of the Act but they wanted to impress on the local officials how they had been negligent in the performance of their duty. The open dialogue ended with an admission by the officials that

they had remained indifferent as far as the implementation of the Act was concerned. They promised to ensure its implementation in future carefully.

Bureaucracy and vigilant workers

The workers were not satisfied by this vague assurance. They informed the officials of the attitude of the maldars of Moyde and enquired what the Government machinery would do in this case. This concrete question forced the officials to give a specific assurance: they would conduct an enquiry into the whole affair and if the maldars had not paid the legal dues they would be compelled to respect the Act. The 'morcha' invited the officials to visit Moyde the next day. The officials hesitated, presumably unwilling to annoy the landlords, but the agricultural labourers were insistent. Ultimately a day was fixed for an on-the-spot investigation two days later. The leader of the Shramik Sanghathana warned the officials that the workers would be forced to intensify their agitation if no action was taken within two days.

The landlords regard themselves to be the real rulers of the villages. Over the years they have become accustomed to have the administrative machinery dance at their beck and call.

On 12 September, news spread that the landlords were not ready to pay the minimum wages had and treated the advice of the officials with utter contempt. Evidently, this was a calculated act of provocation and a challenge to the organised strength of the agricultural labourers. Though there were 500 working men and women in Moyde village and the total number of maldars was only 10, the latter thought they could beat down the workers' agitation by employing labourers from surrounding villages. However, the agricultural labourers were not cowed down by the defiance of the maldars and the passivity of the local administration.

The gherao

After the deadline was over, the adivasis and non-advansi agricultural workers, men and women, gheroed the house of the most arrogant rich land owner of Moyde. They were peaceful but organised and determined, shouting slogans like "Ek phatka aur do Maldari dhund utar do". These men and woman demanded the payment of their legitimate wages. The landlords gathered at the gheroed house to rescue their headman and to safeguard the interests of their class.

As the landlords resisted and the organisation improved, the agricultural labourers also redefined their demand. At the outset they had asked for payment of Rs 3/- for the work done on 7 and 8 September only. However, since the maldars denied their legal dues for these two days, the workers declared that they would not leave the place until they were paid their full wages for the entire kharif season. Now the demand was for payment of arrears for the whole period because the landlords had paid less than the statutory wages.

Demand for arrears

The landlords were shaken to their bones, furious at the workers who demanded payment of arrears and angered by the demonstration of the organised strength of the workers, they "ordered" the police to arrest all the leaders and workers of the Sanghathana and demanded that the labourers and their leaders be prosecuted on charges of trespass and gherao. The demonstrating agricultural labourers, however, refused to be provoked, despite harassment and molestation. They continued to squat peacefully. The officials were in a quandry. They could not act against the workers because their demands were completely justified under the law.

But the bureaucracy tends to be soft to the exploiters and the oppressors. The same began to happen in Moyde also. The Block Development Officer took the stand that the workers demand was not feasible as they had no proof to show that they had not been paid in accordance with the law. The agricultural labourers asked the officials to show them the record maintained by the 'maldars'. According to the Minimum Wages Act for agricultural labourers in Maharashtra, the landowners are required to maintain a record in a tabular form in which the details of the actual payment should be written daily and the signs or thumb impression of the labourer receiving those wages should be taken. The record - the Master Roll - must be checked by one Gram Sevak, the village level workers, specially assigned for this purpose. Under the Act, the Block Development Officer, Tehsildar and the District Magistrate are held responsible for the implementation of this Act. But nowhere in Maharashtra are these provisions honoured by the landlords nor by the indifferent and callous officials who are reluctant to uphold the interests of the poor rural labour. For them the word of the rich landlords is enough.

But in Moyde, the conscious and organised group of the agricultural labourers - fully their legal rights - insisted that the official show them the records and prove the claims of the landlords. The organised workers put forward two alternatives - either, the record of payment be shown or the difference be paid for the entire Kharif season.

Realising the conscious and organised workers led by the Shramik Sangathana would not give in, ultimately the landlords agreed to pay the difference for the whole Kharif season. There was satisfaction all round. But the landlords had some more tricks up their sleeves. They agreed to pay the arrears but not on that day. They wanted to delay the payment, hoping to utilise this time for cooking up some more designs against the workers. The landowners, owners of rich fertile lands alongside Tapti, earning huge profits from bumper yields of each crops, beneficiaries of the land expropriated from the Bhils and other sections of rural poor, pretended that they did not have a single rupee nor a kilo of grain in their homes to pay the arrears immediately.

The next day was 'Pola' festival. The workers needed money badly. The landlords hoped they could use their need to mount some pressure. The agricultural labourers once again demonstrated their reasonableness and said that part of the dues to be paid immediately and the remaining afterwards. They offered that the Tehsildar could decide what part of the arrears should be paid immediately. The Tehsildar's efforts, however, proved

to be of no avail. The 'Maldars', true to the traits of rapacious exploiters, were not willing to accept this reasonable suggestion. The Sangathana leader requested the police to intervene.

However, the police officer's attempts were also in vain. Once again, the workers came to the conclusion that it was their own strength that would bring them the desired results. At 2.00 a.m. the agricultural labourers served yet another ultimatum to the maldars. If the full amount (and now not a part of it) of arrears was not paid on the spot, the workers would devise some effective means on the basis of their own strength to realise their dues.

13th September, the sun rose with a new brightness. Moyde village was reverberating with a fresh wave of life and activity. Hundreds of labourers from all the villages in Taloda, Tehsil began to pour in Moyde. The labourers were peaceful but their determination was evident.

As bright sunshine rolled over field green with the sweat of agricultural labourers, the women activists of Shramik Sanghathan declared. "We will enter the houses of landlords, and check every corner. If we do not find a single rupee or a kilo of grain, the workers will leave the place. However, if money or grain is discovered in these houses, it will be distributed to the workers. The labourers will take only the amount which is due to them, that is the difference between the legal wage and the actual amount paid to them."

Battle lines are drawn

It became clear that if the police intervened when the women entered the houses and if distribution of grains and money was regarded by them as an offence, the police would have to arrest all the women, men and children from the entire Tehsil who had gathered there. People continued to throng the village. They were in a fighting and festive mood. They were chanting songs, shouting slogans, confident of their strength and full of wrath against the unreasonableness of the rich landowners. The headstrong leader of the maldars continued to strike an arrogant posture, but some other landowners saw the reasonableness of stand of the workers. They also knew that the flash-point had come. The Sangathana leader publicly announced the names of the Maldars and the amount which each had to pay to the labourers.

Women move to the front line

The situation was tense. The women activists were poised to move in. Suddenly, three landowners came forward and expressed their readiness to pay the differences in wages. One of these three was middle peasant. The Majoor Samiti immediately saw that he was a potential ally. Therefore, he was ready to pay the full amount. But the Majoor Samiti, organisation of the local agricultural labourers, told him that as he was a middle peasant, they did not want to put him to inconvenience by insisting on full payment. The Samiti offered that the agricultural workers would accept only half the amount. Thus, in concrete terms, the landless labourers were able to forge an alliance with the middle peasant.

Agricultural labour-middle farmer alliance

As soon as the alliance was forged, and some of them agreed to pay the arrears to the workers, the position of the rich landlords collapsed. Those who had pretended to be poverty-stricken on the previous night were now overflowing with cash. The hypocrisy and the deceit of the exploiters was thus exposed.

The workers of Moyde had won a victory. But they also learnt many valuable lessons. They realised the doggedness of the exploiting class. It was clear that those who had put up such a fight to pay legitimate wages would not give in easily when it came to the question of distribution of land. But the workers also knew that for every new phase of their struggle new tactics would have to be devised, new forms of dealing with the enemy developed, higher levels of organisation forged.

Inspiration from Moyde victory

The victory of the agricultural workers in Moyde inspired their fellow workers from other villages and gave them confidence. They returned with a firm decision to launch the struggle in their own villages for the realisation of arrears. A new wave of awakening began to spread.

The struggles in other villages had their own specific experiences. In Chougaon-Morwad village, the agricultural workers and their supporters had to gherao the landlords continuously for three days. The maldars pelted stones from inside their houses before the very eyes of the police. The workers refused to be hustled and provoked. They told the police that if the maldars did this again and the police merely watched passively, the agricultural labourers would have to defend themselves and wage the struggle in a different form. The scene in Moyde was soon transformed. The young amongst the agricultural labourers began their traditional adivasi dance, beating drums in order to raise the pitch of the enthusiasm of the embattled agricultural labourers. The women came from the forefront. They were ready to be the first to face the landlords' attack. But the demonstration of the organised might of the "meek and submissive" agricultural labourers unnerved the landlords and they paid the dues on the spot.

Hard nuts among Maldars

However, there were several hard nuts among the maldars who were not prepared to pay the legal dues. The Major Samiti asked the Labour Office and the Block Development Officer to file cases against these recalcitrant landlords. The battle in the law courts continues. 17 rich landlords have chosen to incur huge expenditure on the legal fight but not to pay the legitimate dues of the labourers.

Legal fight: limits and uses

The agricultural workers know that the legal fight is a protracted and long drawn affair, that the ultimate solution of their problems and the fulfilment of their demands does not lie in law courts. But the legal battle has another dimension. It will reveal, on the basis of actual experience, to

the agricultural labourers and to the people at large, whether the administrative machinery always functions to protect the interest of the rich. If the law enforcement machinery continues to be corrupt or dilatory, a fight against it will become a part of the many-sided struggle of the agricultural labourers. It will also help raise the level of consciousness amongst the workers and other sections of the masses. The fight to expose the incapacity of the administration to effectively implement laws beneficial to the poor and its partisanship in favour of the exploiters is a part of the campaign to arouse the consciousness of the people regarding the character of the state apparatus.

Fresh designs to harass adivasis

The maldars of Moyde and Chougaon-Morward have not given up their chicanery. They are continuing to fabricate fresh design to harass the Adivasis. Recently, they filed a complaint in the Taloda Police Station that the Adivasis had assaulted and looted their house. The police which had stood helpless when the landlords had refused to honour the provisions of the law, arrested 40 adivasis including women without losing a moment. The Shramik Sanghathan leaders have told the police that the accused were not present at the spot where the maldars had alleged the looting took place. They were in Taloda in connection with the counting of votes in the State Assembly election in which the Sanghathan had supported an independent candidate. According to Sanghathana, this is a part of the landlords vicious attempts to frustrate the efforts to organise agricultural labourers and to weaken their will to fight for their rights. The Adivasis were sent to jail. Especially, the young amongst them were not released on bail. A women with her child was directed not to go to her home at Moyde; instead she was instructed to register at the Police Station every day.

The struggle of the agricultural workers of Taloda continues unabated though the maldars are harassing the labourers by all possible means. In 15 villages the workers have already won the battle for payment of their arrears. As a result of this struggle, even workers in other villages, where no struggles were organised, are receiving minimum wages now. But now the lean season has started. The next weeding season will come soon. The maldars are planning their own strategy. The awakened, aroused and organised labourers are mobilising their strength without becoming unnerved or getting provoked. This strength has not come in a day. It is a result of six years of dedicated and devoted work in Shahada and Taloda tehsils. The history of this movement and the growth of the Shramik Sanghathan is a valuable lesson for all those who are engaged in the task of organising the agricultural labour.

GONOSHASTHAYA KENDRA (PEOPLE'S HEALTH CENTRE)

(DACCA, BANGLADESH)

I. Objectives

1. To provide adequate health service in the rural area of Savar thana.
2. To increase the independence and bargaining power of women.
3. To bring about a change in the infrastructure and thereby allow for the economic and social development of poor villagers, i.e., 90% of the population of Bangladesh.

II. Activities

1. A health program which encompasses

- a) training of
 - paramedical workers
 - basic health workers
 - medical students
 - doctorsin rural health care delivery.
- b) curative care through a system of sub-centres which are staffed by paramedical workers and backed by a main centre which is staffed by doctors, technicians, and paramedics, and which offers OT, sick-room, pathology, x-ray, and dental care facilities.
- c) preventive care including immunization programs, mother/child clinics, pre and post natal care, nutrition, hygiene, basic health education, carried out through a regular program of village visiting.
- d) family planning which provides contraceptives (pill and injection), sterilizations, and abortions, while carrying out a program of motivation and follow-up.
- e) an insurance scheme for users of the health care services.
- f) pharmaceutical plant which manufactures drugs under their generic names (this is in the initial stages of operation).
- g) publication and distribution of literature to assist medical practitioners in effective health care delivery in rural areas.

2. A vocational training program for villagers in which both men and women are instructed and employed in all of the following areas

- a) agriculture
- b) jute handicraft manufacture for export
- c) shoe manufacture and sale

- d) metal work including welding, etc.
- e) woodworking and finishing
- f) management of canteen which caters to a sizeable public clientele.

3. Education

- a) classes in literacy and conscience-raising for village women and staff members.
- b) experimental school for children of landless combining practical training with formal study.

4. Credit unions providing loans for marginal and landless farmers.

III. Critical Analysis

1. Health Program - "Some success of the primary service have been ascertained by surveys of sample villages and also by more random observation of disease incidence. Thus, there has been a dramatic fall in the incidence of serious diarrhoea with dehydration. This is probably due to our intensive teaching of oral fluid therapy to mothers of small children, who now give the 'shortcut' to their infants as soon as they notice the first symptoms of diarrhoea. Since diarrhoea in children is still the commonest cause of death in Bangladesh as a whole, our success with preventing serious cases may well account for the lower overall death rate in our area which has been established by a sample survey (12/1000 as opposed to the national average of 17/1000). There has also been a marked decrease in scabies and other forms of skin diseases. Care of at-risk pregnancies, especially of women with the symptoms of pre-eclampsia, has resulted in nil maternity deaths for the last year in the area fully covered by our service."1.

2. Women - "Out of a total project staff (including sub-centres) of 114, 46 are female; and on the health side, women outnumber men. Apart from nightguard duty, there is no single task which women have not been engaged in on equal terms and on equal pay with their male colleagues, be it the daily agricultural labour, health work, welding in the technical workshop, teaching, or office work. In the vocational training program women are taught blacksmithing, carpentry, whitewashing, and varnishing...."

"A much talked-about event occurred on May 1, 1977, when 23 women from the project cycled all the way to Dacca to demonstrate solidarity with the women's movement all over the world...."

"While behavioural changes and increased self-confidence made possible by economic independence and experience of work outside the home is most striking in the women closely connected with the project, there has also been a discernible change in the attitudes of women in our area in general. Burkas (veils) have almost vanished from sight among patients both at the main centre and the sub-centres, recruitment of female workers for those types of work and training which do not require much school education, no longer poses a problem; indeed, we have to send many home for lack of places, and during our recent procession to the Shimulia sub-centre to

commemorate the first death anniversary of Nizam, (see below), many village women, as well as men, joined the ranks of the project staff."

"Nationwide, our work with women has contributed to Government decisions to recruit women for village work in family planning and female primary school teachers." ² However, though as individuals there is a noticeable liberation among women, with certain barriers having come down, as a group, they yet remain unorganised.

3. Infrastructure - "Nizam was 25 years old. He had been with the project as a paramedic since its inception and when a paramedic sub-centre was to be set up at Shimulia he was the one arranging the final details of the land. He knew the coming of the centre to Shimulia would threaten the fraudulent practices of a good many people, including illegal possession of government lands, smuggling, and selling health centre drugs. Among those involved in the illegal activities was the only qualified physician in the area, who was making a handsome profit by over-charging patients. Nizam did not realize just how great a threat the new centre was. In collaboration with local officials, i.e. the union chairman and a union member, the physician hired a group of thugs to have Nizam murdered, confident that he could make the necessary payments to the proper people, allowing him to continue his illegal work, along with his cohorts, and ensuring that the centre would not become a permanent fixture in Shimulia. Nizam lost his life, and now an almost incredible struggle for simple justice seems to be availing nothing. We have come face to face with the village. We have reached, it seems, our limit. Do we carry on with our small struggle or are we sustaining a system that would (and should) crumble, sooner without our gallant efforts. And even if we choose to work on, can Gonoshasthaya Kendra last in its present form? How viable can a body remain when it is alien to the system in which it operates"?³

REFERENCES

1. Gonoshasthaya Kendra Progress Report No. 6, December, 1977.
p. 8, para 2.
2. Gonoshasthaya Kendra Progress Report No. 6, p.1, para 3, and 4,
p. 2, para 2 and 3.
3. Basic Service Delivery in 'Underdeveloping' Countries: A View From
Gonoshasthaya Kendra, by Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, published by UNICEF.

GONOSHASTHAYA KENDRA

P.O. Nayarhat, District Dacca
Bangladesh

PROGRESS REPORT NO.6

Dedicated to our Paramedic
Nizam

December, 1977

Introduction

Two-and-a-half years have passed since our last report, but during this time a number of papers dealing with various aspects of the life, work and philosophy of Gonoshasthaya Kendra have been produced (see appendix).

The single event that stands out as a tragic landmark over the history of the project during this period is the cold-blooded and calculated murder of our fellow-worker Nizam, a senior paramedic, who was in charge of our Shimulia sub-centre. From the complicated evidence that was unearthed it has been shown that Nizam was murdered by vested interests who found that the project was damaging their sources of income and weakening their control over the local population. They believed that Nizam's elimination would terminate our work in that area of Savar Thana (cf. appendix No. 13). In this, at least, they have been deceived.

While evaluation and assessment of the project performance are necessary, we have always believed that perhaps its more important achievements are those which cannot be expressed in patient statistics, family planning practice rates and numbers of houses visited per paramedic per month. In no area is this truer than in the change of the status of the women who are in one way or other connected with the project. Out of a total project staff (including subcentres) of 114, 46 are female; and on the health side, women outnumber men. Apart from nightguard duty, there is no single task which women have not been engaged in on equal terms and on equal pay with their male colleagues, be it the daily agricultural labour, health work, welding in the technical workshop, teaching or office work. In the vocational training program women are taught blacksmithing, carpentry, whitewashing and varnishing.

One of the first tasks of a newly-recruited paramedic girl is to learn to ride a bicycle (most boys have acquired the skill in childhood), and it is now the commonest form of transport for the paramedics when going on their village rounds. This has not always been the case, since there is a lot of prejudice about the propriety of women on bicycles, which had to be overcome. For example, a mullah (religious leader) in a particularly conservative village had spoken out against the use of bicycles by female paramedics.

N.B. The official exchange rate is one U.S. dollar for 15 lakhs.

Somebody from the project asked him how his mother had travelled to and from Dacca for her recent eye operation. The mullah replied that she had travelled by bus, and we reminded him how she was touched and jostled by unknown males, in contravention of accepted religious teachings while, as we pointed out, a girl on a bicycle can be sure of keeping herself to herself. The mullah dropped his opposition.

A much talked-about event occurred on May 1, 1977, when 23 women from the project cycled all the way to Dacca, to demonstrate solidarity with the women's movement all over the world.

It has also been suggested, tongue in cheek, that the remarkably low fertility of our female staff (five live births in 247 "fertile women years"), both as a result of delayed marriage and of delayed child-bearing after marriage, should be added to the family planning figures of the project.

While behavioural changes and increased self-confidence made possible by economic independence and experience of work outside the home is most striking in the women closely connected with the project, there has also been a discernable change in the attitudes of women in our area in general. Burkas (veils) have almost vanished from sight among patients both at the main centre and the subcentres, recruitment of female workers for those types of work and training which do not require much school education, no longer poses a problem, indeed, we have to send many home for lack of places, and during our recent procession to the Shimulia subcentre, to commemorate the first death anniversary of Nizam, many village women, as well as men, joined the ranks of the project staff.

Nationwide, our work with women has contributed to Government decisions to recruit women for village work in family planning and female primary school teachers.

Agriculture

Having had problems with finding an agricultural graduate willing to touch work out in the fields rather than the paper work he was trained for (of Progress Report No. 5), we finally found Shofiques, commerce graduate and convert from paper work, who has now been our agriculture-in-charge and extension worker for a year. The project staff includes four full time agricultural workers, and a French volunteer who specializes in biological farming, but all members of the project must contribute 1-2 hours daily to food production on the project land. We are self-sufficient in rice - our last harvest was 360 maunds of paddy (13 tons) - and produce a lot of our own vegetables. Surplus produce is sold in the local market.

In our big tank we are cultivating 'rumi' fish, a cross between two local types of carp. The individuals of the first batch now weigh 1-1/2 kg. They will be difficult to catch, as (thanks to following the experts in Dacca instead of the farmers of Sevar) we made the tank too deep for effective netting. However, a visiting expert has proposed bringing the fish to the surface by stunning them with sub-lethal electric shocks...

An entire consignment of soya bean seed, supplied by UNICEF which was used for experimental sowing by local farmers, failed to germinate, causing a serious setback in our soya bean popularization program: no farmer wants to waste precious land on dud crops.

It is well-known that the number of landless and effectively landless families in rural Bangladesh is increasing, and, according to official statistics, now makes up 50% of the population. An important factor in this is the chronic insolvency which places the poor peasants at the mercy of unscrupulous money-lenders. In the lean period between winter and spring harvests, small farmers are forced to borrow money for food and agricultural inputs. In the past, most borrowing was from professional Hindu money-lenders; nowadays that class is disappearing, but rich landlords have taken over their role. As Muslims, they cannot charge interest: instead, they allow themselves to accept a token of gratitude along with the returned loan. For a loan of Tk.100 over four months (the time between sowing and harvesting one crop of paddy) a tribute of 40 kg of paddy is required - equivalent to 250% p.a. Where sugarcane crop is concerned, for a Tk.100 loan, 40 kg of molasses and a payment for crushing machinery and oxen is required. In addition, a bribe in the form of rent for unwanted storage facilities has to be given to the baron of the local market without whose goodwill molasses does not sell.

It has often been pointed out that provision of fair credit facilities could cut this downward spiral of debt and degradation which engulfs so many of the landless. Indeed, 'rural credit' has become a fashionable pastime for social scientists, World Bank experts, and Third World governments. The Bangladesh Government also has recently made 100 crore (1 billion) taka available to provide credit facilities, especially for the small and landless farmers. The money is routed through the commercial and agricultural banks, and farmers with three bigha (about 1 acre) land or more can receive a loan by mortgaging their land. However, farmers who own less or no land have to survive on sharecropping - i.e., more than half of the rural population and certainly the most in need of fair credit - must persuade a Union Council Member or its Chairman to stand surety for them. This small group of men represents the most powerful and the richest families in the area and one of them is always identical with or closely related to the local moneylender. Hence, it is not surprising that very little of the Government bounty actually reaches the poor.

Last year, we prepared to give some loans on easy terms to a number of very poor sharecroppers in two villages, as an experiment. But the peasants, who seemed very interested initially, later came to tell us that they did not need the loans - their landlords had 'advised' them against us, and they could not afford to displease a man to whom they were in debt and who owned the land they cultivate. This year, we tried again, applying the lessons we learnt last year. We gave loans of 100 taka each to 43 cultivators at the time of boro planting (March), and contrary to the prognostications of landlords and rural experts, 41 of the loans were paid back, with interest, at harvest time. One of the two defaulters turned out to have been a well-off farmer who had managed to slip through the net of our investigations, the other was a poor sharecropper whose entire harvest had been confiscated by his landlord when the latter saw that the tenant was escaping his grip. This creditor offered to sell his one cow to pay back the loan, but we preferred to give him more time. 23 of the 41 farmers who paid their debts as

well as 43 new applicants, have now received a new loan for this season's planting. (The rest of the 41 old farmers do not have land to plant this season, due to irrigation problems.)

The terms of our agricultural loans are as follows: for each 100 taka loan, the creditor has to pay back the capital within four months, together with 10 kg of paddy, but he is free to cultivate whichever crop he wants. 5 kg of the 'interest' are deposited as a saving on behalf of the creditor, who can borrow two kg of paddy for each one kg deposited in time of need. We hope that within a few years of this compulsory saving, the farmers will be able to tide themselves over the hunger periods of the year and become independent of our loans. The other 5 kg paddy are used to set up a fund which will allow us in the future to give loan without capital input from outside.

How the agricultural scheme fares in the long run does not depend on us and our creditors alone, since the sharecroppers are not only dependant on their landlords and their local connections for credit, but also for their land itself. Sharecroppers who have displeased their landlord, or perhaps his brother, the money-lender, by taking credit from outsiders, thereby weakening their control and decreasing the possibilities for exploitation, may be driven off the land. We have heard mutterings to this effect, and there have certainly been precedents elsewhere. Such a situation cannot be remedied without a land reform, and this depends on political will and political power. More immediately, the future of our small scheme depends on the fate of the Government's 100 crore program, which could influence the power structure in the villages even though it does not reach the poor.

Encouraged by the good results of this scheme we have now branched out into giving loans to other categories of rural occupations. Eight vegetable farmers have received 100 taka each to cover their inputs. One of them died before he could pay back the loan, but his widow told us that she would be able to do so when the growing vegetables had been harvested. 54 fishermen received a total of 11,700 taka for repair of their nets and the wood and bamboo needed to trap the fish in ponds and rivers during the rainy season. They are repaying in instalments, and we have so far received 25% of the debts. We employed 15 women to husk the project-grown paddy at 9 taka per maund (40 kg) by the traditional 'dheki' method, but when we tried to give them continued employment by lending them money to buy paddy at the local market after our paddy was husked, we found that they made a loss of 100 taka with 16 maunds, by comparison with machine-husked rice.

Our agricultural work and rural credit scheme are financed with funds from War on Want, U.K.

Vocational Training

From the uncertain start with Zarina and Rohima, which was described in Progress Report No. 5 our 'Narikendra' (Women's centre) developed considerably and about 140 women received training in sewing, jute handicrafts, health education and functional literacy, at the main centre and three subcentres. The response from village women, who walk long distances to do this work, often with small children in tow, showed how strong and general is their wish to

come out of the home to learn new things, to earn their own money. Unfortunately, we found ourselves unable to fulfil the expectations for long-term employment which we had raised in these women. The reasons are not difficult to find; jute handicrafts were a product which most of the charitable organisations and women's cooperatives seized upon during the post-liberation period as a suitable occupation for women, so the tiny internal market (resident foreigners and a few city people with Westernized tastes) was soon saturated, while export was difficult to organise and unreliable depending as it does on rapidly changing fashion. Thus, our whole approach to women's employment needed rethinking, and we are now trying to train women in skills which are needed locally. Due to the unrestricted export of skilled manpower to Middle Eastern countries which the Government has been encouraging over the last year, areas like Savar Thana are suffering from a shortage of carpenters, plumbers, blacksmiths and electricians, to name but a few. We decided that training women in some of these trades might open an avenue for new employment possibilities for them, as well as answering an urgent need essential to any developing society. We have now about 15 such trainees, and by now both they and their trainers have overcome their initial prejudice about women working in these traditionally male occupations - but then, all occupations other than housekeeping, mothering and snake-charming are traditionally male in Bangladesh. However, this does not mean that the problem of female (or male) unemployment is solved - we are constantly trying to think of areas where new employment might be created.

One bright idea which has worked very well in practice was to use specially treated bamboo poles (to increase durability) for outside lighting, thus saving on imported metal poles and using local materials and skills.

We also started a technical workshop which employs 12 full-time workers, six women and six men. They produce simple agricultural machinery, like hand threshers for paddy, peanut crushers, window frames, hospital cots, operation tables, metal sheating etc. While a lot of their manufacturers were made for the Centre, they have also produced window frames and hospital beds for outside orders.

Despite expanding into these new areas of vocational training, we are still continuing on a rather reduced scale with the handicrafts production, mainly because it gives an opportunity to teach the participants functional literacy and gets them accustomed to life outside the home.

Vocational training was initially financed by Inter Pares, Canada. Since the beginning of 1977, both Inter Pares and Terre des Hommes, Switzerland, are contributing funds.

The School

According to government statistics, 46% of school age children in Bangladesh, do not attend school. Only 14% of girls and 33% of boys complete five years of schooling, which is the minimum necessary for a person to maintain the ability to read, as we found in our survey of drop-outs in 1976.

Our school was started nine months ago with an initial intake of 50 children who came from five villages near the Centre. The children were selected with the help of our survey, from landless and effectively landless families. None of them were attending school.

Poor villagers do not send their children to school because they learn little, and what they learn is irrelevant to, or, indeed, a disadvantage for village life. A boy who has studied up to 'matric' has earned himself exemption from manual labour in the fields, and has become useless for his peasant father. To marry off a girl who attended school up to class five, her father will not find anyone with less than 10 years' schooling willing to take her, and such bridegrooms are expensive.

Education, then, is a luxury, an ornament, part of the conspicuous consumption of the better-off, not a tool for the living.

Yet, knowledge is power. Nowadays, even the simple village life of Bangladesh requires at least basic literacy and numeracy. The man who signs by thumb print is cheated at every turn, and there is no hope for him to improve his life by developing farming methods. He will not even become aware of the economic and political context of his oppression.

We therefore decided that our school should take into account, as far as possible, the factors which keep poor children from coming to school.

One of the reasons is that they do not have what the Government primary school teachers consider decent clothes, i.e., a shirt and pants for boys, dress and pants for girls. We make no special demands in this respect. Another reason is that, although primary schools are free, the children have to buy their own notebook, pencil and reader. We provide the children with a slate and pencil. Thirdly, children over six or seven years of age are useful to their parents - they can collect cow dung and firewood, go fishing, take their father's lunch out to the fields, look after the cow or goat. As far as possible, we tried to accommodate these needs: children are allowed to bring their animals to let them graze with the project herd; during busy farming seasons, they are allowed to take time off to carry food to the men in the fields. Fourthly, children of this age already often find paid employment outside their homes, as servants, or cowboys, or restaurant helpers. We could not give them a wage, but all children get one meal a day, which offsets the loss in earnings to some extent. In any case, we are aware that even with these provisions the children will not stay at our school for more than four or five years, and we therefore aim at giving them some useful preparation for their working lives within this time.

In the morning, after they arrive from their villages, the children first look after their vegetable plots and chickens. This is not particularly exciting for them, as they do it every day at home, but we want to avoid the traditional mental break between work on the soil and school education. Teaching of reading and writing is combined with discussions about village life, the reason for poverty, disease and malnutrition. We try to encourage group work, for example, groups of older children help groups of younger children with their reading. One unsolved problem is the difficulty of

Bengali spelling, which is almost as irrational as that of English. The children would be much benefited by a spelling reform, but it would probably be a disservice to them to teach phonetic spelling as long as the complicated usage prevails. The same goes for dialect words: most children are familiar only with these, and we have been uncertain whether to let them use dialect in their writing, or get them accustomed to the 'high' Bengali vocabulary within the short time available. Health education is an important part of the curriculum and is taken care of by one of the senior paramedics. One of the teachers is a carpenter, and there is a small carpentry and blacksmith's workshop attached to the school.

Our school, as everything else we undertake, is an experiment. It is an attempt to develop a constructive alternative to the present unsatisfactory education system. The children seem to enjoy coming to school and it is astonishing to see their transformation within a few weeks from worm-infested, malnourished, listless children, to energetic and cheerful youngsters concentrating on their tasks. But whether our school really proves to equip them better for their future struggle, whether it will help them to see through their oppression or just alienate them from village life, whether it might not be better to teach the children in small groups in their own villages, rather than bringing them together in a purpose-built school - all these questions we are not yet able to answer.

Funds for the school are provided by Terre des Hommes, Holland.

Family Planning

Family Planning is the field which has perhaps most exercised our minds over the last two and a half years (cf. appendix, nos. 2, 4, 5, 7, 19). It is not so much that we believe in the overriding importance of the population issue over other problems facing Bangladesh, but because we have seen how a concept that should serve to increase the quality of life of the poor, and in particular, should lead to greater freedom and self-determination of women, has become perverted into another instrument of oppression. Despite numerous analyses which show that poverty is a cause of the population explosion rather than its result, the 'myth of population control' is perpetuated by an interplay between the large donors, who reflect the terror of the industrialized rich at the teeming Third World poor, and local greed, which finds an opportunity to line its pockets when money is thrown about in crash programs. Our experience in this respect has inevitably influenced our thinking and practice of Family Planning.

During 1974, when the idea of Family Planning had become more familiar to many of the local Savar Thana women, we received more and more requests for more long-term, and less cumbersome methods than the Pill, and we started to offer tubectomies (female sterilization).

Soon we found that the doctors could not cope with the additional workload, and they gradually trained a small number of female paramedics to do the operation. The paramedics showed great ability and manual dexterity and the results, both in terms of client demand and of operative complications and infection rates were excellent (cf. appendix, no. 20).

This new venture caught the eye of, among others, some UNICEF officers, who encouraged us to set up a satellite program in the sub-divisional town of Jamalpur about 100 miles north of Savar. For over a year, from the end of 1974 onward, we had an arrangement where a team from our Centre would go each week to Jamalpur for two or three days, to operate and provide a very limited - maternity and child care service to tubectomy clients. Our work was then carried out on the premises of the Jamalpur subdivisional hospital and financed by UNICEF.

From the beginning, sterilization programs on the sub-continent, usually conceived as single-purpose, short-term, crash affairs, have been dogged by incentives doled out to medical personnel, 'agents' and clients. Our approach was different. At the Savar Centre, where people were by then used to our policy of asking for payment of services, we charged 6.00 taka per tubectomy, while in Jamalpur this charge was paid to us by the Thana FP Officer but out of Government funds, because the people of the area were suffering from the effects of severe floods and many were destitute. After some months, we became aware that the FP Officer had been paying incentives to some of our clients under the pretext of 'transportation allowance', in accordance with Government practice elsewhere, although we had insisted that this was quite unacceptable to us. We then saw with our own eyes how even these miserable 15.00 taka, when offered to starving people, made them willing to compel their wives or daughters-in-law to undergo the operation. Soon afterwards, we were also able to observe the effects of the Government organized sterilization camps in various places, where larger incentives to all parties involved were given, the accompanying corruption as well as the element of compulsion which is inevitable once incentives arrive on the scene. This has been described elsewhere (cf. appendix no. 5). The funds for these expensive programs came from USAID, channelled through the Government FP officers, as well as such organisations as the Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA), and the International Projects of the Association for Voluntary Sterilizations (IPAVS) and their Bangladesh branches.

At that time, we were tempted to follow the counsel of despair and wash our hands of sterilizations of FP in general, as it seemed impossible to provide a service which preserved the interests and dignity of the poor. But in the end, the experience served to clarify our position on the issue: we believe that FP should be one part of a general, permanent, primary health service, where women can be assured of constantly available advice and supplies, and where FP is a means toward the emancipation of women. We must resist the attitude which views pregnancies and babies as an epidemic that has to be eradicated once and for all.

It was therefore a logical step to make our presence in the Jamalpur area more permanent, and from April 1976 onwards, some Savar paramedics together with some local recruits began to live in rented accommodation in the town, while operating from a part of the Government maternity centre. There are 93 such maternity centres with a standard 15 rooms each in Bangladesh, all of them practically unused. Yet one of the items high on the Government's list of priorities is to construct 40 more such centres. At the Jamalpur centre, an average of 4-5 deliveries a month had taken place and this had been its only function. For the time being, we hoped to put just this centre to its proper use and provide a good FP and maternity service within the guidelines of the Government and in cooperation with existing Government personnel. However, the District FP Officer, who presumably found his

opportunities for money making curtailed by our presence (sterilization incentives, handling of medicines, etc.) started agitating against our paramedic and instructed his subordinates not to cooperate with us, taking the death of one of our tubectomy clients from tetanus (operated by a doctor) as a pretext. When our requests for apologies from the officer to the paramedics and proper cooperation were not met, we withdrew from the Jamalpur maternity centre in April 1977. Shortly afterwards a national newspaper published serious evidence of corrupt practice on his part.

Meanwhile, we had been offered a piece of land by the villagers of Shapmari, about 20 miles from Jamalpur in Sherpur Thana, who asked us to come and set up a health service in their area. Our team therefore moved to Shapmari in 1977. As we had promised the Jamalpur sterilization clients a long-term follow-up service, the team continues to hold clinics in Jamalpur once a week.

In the various centres, a total of 2826 tubectomies have been performed, 2351 of these were carried out by 21 different paramedics, 475 by 12 doctors, and 3 medical students. Among the cases operated by doctors and medical students, 42 (8.8%) experienced infections, among the cases operated by paramedics, 133 (5.6%) became infected. Thus, the average infection rate was 6.1%.

The infection rate in operations performed by paramedics is lower than that of doctors, but this may be misleading since doctors tended to take on the more difficult-looking cases, and paramedics are instructed to call a doctor if they encounter any difficulties during operations.

Two tubectomy clients died, both of tetanus, and both in the Jamalpur area before we could organize a general tetanus immunization program. It was our practice to give a tetanus toxoid at the time of operation. The second woman who died had also procured a herbal abortion one week before having the tubectomy, and developed the symptoms of tetanus on the seventh post-operative day.

We have had three tubectomy failures; two of them were operated by paramedics, the other by a doctor.

Over the last three years we have pioneered the use of another contraceptive method in Bangladesh: the injectable Depoprovera, which was chosen by 3500 women. Although the method is very convenient (only one three monthly or six-monthly intra-muscular injection is needed to give full protection), many women suffer from menstrual side-effects, and, something that is perhaps more serious in a country like Bangladesh, we found, contrary to the scientific literature on the subject, that the method decreases lactation in some of the women (of appendix, no. 19). We have therefore argued against the use of Depoprovera in a nationwide program at the present time and suggested that the health authorities organise a wider trial of the method in the eight thanas adjacent to Bangladesh's medical colleges.

We have also continued to offer the Pill, and there are, at present, 800 'continuers', (over six months of constant use).

Overall, in our insurance area (population 100,000), FP is practised by 25% of the fertile population.

Abortion has continued to be in demand, and while in the beginning, women often came with requests for abortion during the last trimester, they now tend to come earlier. Up to 10 weeks, we use 'menstrual regulation' (suction), and/or dilatation and curettage; from 11-20 weeks, we use prostaglandins; and thereafter catheter and/or prostaglandins. A total of 219 abortions have been carried out. Similar to people working in other areas of rural Bangladesh, we also found that the number of abortions carried out by village midwives and practitioners is very high, and unfortunately we are still quite often faced with resulting sepsis, tetanus or incomplete abortions.

Health

I. Primary health care.

Our primary health service has now had time to become more systematized and covers a population of 100,000. Normally each trained paramedic is responsible for a population of 3000, which equals 2-3 villages. Unfortunately, several paramedics have left the project over the last few months for various reasons, so that the number of trained people has shrunk to 22. Consequently, some of the 'circuits' had to be doubled up temporarily, with one trained paramedic supervising 2-3 trainees.

The paramedics' duties towards their villagers are:

1. registration of births and deaths;
2. identification of pregnant women and establishing at-risk cases;
3. identification of at-risk children (defined as children with either malnutrition and diarrhoea, or children with chronic diarrhoea and night blindness);
4. immunization: BCG for children under 15; DPT for children under 5; tetanus toxoid for women of childbearing age to combat neonatal tetanus; primary smallpox for all;
5. nutrition and health education;
6. treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery, teaching preparation and use of dehydration fluid, treatment of scabies;
7. motivation, supply and follow-up of FP clients.

These services are carried out entirely by house to house visits by the paramedics. Usually, paramedics are assisted by a particular contact person in each village, be it just a talkative woman with time on her hands who likes to be the first to impart all the local gossip, or one of the 20 dias (village midwife) who have taken some training in hygiene and FP at the Centre and receive a small monthly remuneration for their on-going services. The trained paramedic is often accompanied by a trainee colleague on his/her

village round. Trainees assist in all their tasks and in clinic work for six months before being given the responsibility of their own.

Some successes of the primary service have been ascertained by surveys of sample villages, and also by more random observation of disease incidence. Thus, there has been a dramatic fall in the incidence of serious diarrhoea with dehydration. This is probably due to other extensive teaching of oral fluid therapy to mothers of small children, who now give the 'shortout' to their infants as soon as they notice the first symptoms of diarrhoea. Since diarrhoea in children is still the commonest cause of death in Bangladesh as a whole, our success with preventing serious cases may well account for the lower overall death rate in our area which has been established by a sample survey (12/1000 as opposed to the national average of 17/1000). There has also been a marked decrease in scabies and other forms of skin diseases. Care of at-risk pregnancies, especially of women with the symptoms of pre-eclampsia, has resulted in nil maternity deaths for the last year in the area fully covered by our service.

II. Subcentres.

We have now four subcentres with resident paramedics, Panishail, Kashimpur, Simulia, and Mirer Chandgaon. We also hold regular weekly clinics at three more localities, Mador Tek, Genda and the 'Dairyfarms'. Of the resident subcentres, Panishail was the first to be established 13 months ago; the latest, Mirer Chandgaon, is not yet fully operational, and Mubarak, who has taken charge of it, is still conducting the initial survey.

Each subcentre has a staff of five paramedics of differing levels of seniority, as well as one guard (two in Simulia, due to the security situation there). On five days of the week, two paramedics carry out village work, much like the primary health care described above, except one, who stays at the subcentre to take care of any emergencies, which are either dealt with on the spot or referred to the main centre. Patients' personal records are kept by them, while the survey records for the population covered by the subcentre are kept there. Important drugs, including a limited supply of some antibiotics and other medical supplies are kept at the subcentres and are periodically replenished from the main centre.

On the remaining workday of the week, all paramedics stay at the subcentre, and a doctor and some paramedical helpers from the main centre come for the weekly clinic, which is the main curative activity. At any time, paramedics from the subcentre can refer patients to the main centre. So far, one of the subcentres, Panishail, is also equipped for tubectomies and other minor surgery.

The subcentres have been an important step in getting primary care and simple curative medicine to the people in the villages. The main centre, serving a population of 100,000, is too far away for most of them to use it in anything but serious illness. It is no doubt important also that the subcentres are constructed like the village houses from mud, unlike the large and rather forbidding main centre.

In order to increase the villagers' participation in the running of their subcentre village committees have been set up at each of them, which we hoped could assume the organisational responsibility. Unfortunately, both the general village meetings and the committees tend to be dominated by the wealthier men of the community who usually press for more sophisticated curative services, and complain about lack of personal attention to them from the paramedics.

III. Curative work.

Scope for curative work is concentrated at the outpatient clinics and the small inpatient unit at the main centre.

At present, we have six weekly clinics outside the main centre, as well as two clinics a week at the main centre for patients from the two Unions adjacent to it. During the last six months, 23,682 patients were seen in the various outpatient clinics, and paramedics treated 3,460 patients in the course of their village rounds. Ideally, doctors should only see cases referred to them by paramedics, but often the number of waiting patients is too great, and doctors also see fresh cases. Out of our total of 22 trained paramedics, 8 are now qualified to prescribe; there is an instant pathology service, carried out by paramedics who are trained to do various chemical tests, and to examine, stool, blood, sputum by micro-scope. If x-rays are necessary for diagnosis, we still have to send patients to Dacca, but we hope to obtain x-ray equipment for our main centre in the near future. At the moment, we also have the services of a young dentist awaiting his final examinations, who carries out dental treatment during the clinics. Other specialized services always available are scabies treatment, and treatment of ear infection, which are extremely common. Immunizations and FP advice are also given.

Serious cases are referred to the 'sickroom', the inpatient unit at the main centre, which also accommodates accident victims and the growing number of patients who come for elective surgery. Due to our position by a main road and bad traffic conditions, we have to cope with numerous accident patients. In the last two months alone, the injured of three major bus accidents, 10-30 in each case, and often seriously injured, were brought to the Centre. At present, we have only eight general beds as well as one separate labour bed, and one which is reserved for tetanus cases. Over-spills of patients onto the floor of the hallroom occur, especially during the 'diarrhoea season'. We have been proud to notice, however, that during this year's season almost all cases of diarrhoea requiring admission, originated from Dhamrai Thana, which is adjacent to Savar and not covered by our primary services, since a government health centre exists and is operational. It is our policy to admit inpatients only when strictly necessary and for as short a time as possible, in order to promote the idea of home-based health, and to avoid domestic disruption and economic loss to the patients' families.

Total admissions for the Bengali year 1383 (April 1976 - April 1977) were 421, with an average stay of 4.5 days. Commonest causes of admission were, in order, diarrhoeal diseases, septic ulcers, self-poisoning, difficult labour and eclampsia. There were a total of 30 deaths, the commonest causes were, in order, head injury, tetanus, and self-poisoning; in the previous year self-poisoning had been the commonest cause.

IV. Insurance system and other charges.

During the Bengali year 1382 (April 1975 - April 1976), 44% of the recurrent expenditure of the health program, including drug bills, salaries, transport, etc. were recovered from insurance payments and charges made directly for treatment and services. For various reasons, income decreased during the following year, but has recovered again over the last six months. Considering the poverty of the population we serve, we think that the proportion recovered can be counted as a considerable success.

Our insurance scheme has made no headway in the last two years, and we have been examining the reasons for this. There is an inherent paradox in our position on money charges: we are mainly interested in providing a good primary care service, especially immunization, health education and instruction in self-care. But this is not a service that corresponds to the felt need of the villagers. What they would like to see, and what the better-off who have experienced modern medicine and lead village opinion, demand, is a full curative service, with lots of x-rays, injections, foreign drugs, and a hospital at every sub-centre. They are unimpressed by advice to drink tamarind 'shortbut' to relieve constipation or to eat the despised mūlah shak (radish greens) to cure night blindness, and would be happier with senokot tablets and Vitamin A capsules. When we advise simple home-grown methods, villagers tend to think that we are just too stingy to give them 'real' medicines, and if they can afford it, they will go to another doctor, who will satisfy them with multiple prescriptions, and a fat bill.

Further, about 20% of the local population are really poor, and cannot easily afford the monthly premium of 2.00 taka per family. This is about twice the figure that we anticipated. The richest 10% can turn to private medicine and dislike our democratic queues; they also recognise in our teaching a challenge to their own privileged position, and some of them actively discourage their tenants and other dependents from coming to us. Another reason is that the population, like poor people anywhere, are not used to calculate a probability, they just hope to get by without illness or accident, and paying in advance to cover themselves for the eventuality is not something they will easily consider. Most are quite willing to pay for services on the spot, as they are used to paying the various types of village practitioners. On the other hand, since we came from outside, we are also expected to be part of the relief scene which is the second variety of medical input that Bangladesh is used to. Moreover, other programs and the limited Government services are run free of charge, and this knowledge deters the villagers from making an effort to pay.

We have decided to make some adjustments to our scheme, without abandoning the principle of payment. The amount of insurance premium, which we encourage people to pay a year at a time to simplify administration, will be reduced, and charges for actual treatment will be increased. A reduction or exemption, in respect of premium or charges or both, will be made for really poor families.

V. Recruitment and training of paramedics.

Recruitment of trainees, especially of female ones, from the Savar Thana area, has always been difficult. At first, it was mainly due to the traditionally restricted life of women. Nowadays, this is not such an important factor

in our area, as is shown by the fact that we can recruit plenty of illiterate village women for our various training programs. The limiting factor now is rather the low standard of education among local women. Although we do not ask for 'matric' standard, the daily work of paramedics cannot be done without a fair standard of literacy and numeracy. But it is difficult to find even middle-class village girls in our area who have attended school for more than five years, and we have had to resort to newspaper advertisements to try and find suitable candidates elsewhere. This has the disadvantage that a lot of applicants are unfamiliar with the project work and philosophy and find it difficult to fit in. What many of them find particularly hard initially, is the daily period of agricultural labour, not only because of the physical hardship, but also because the main purpose of going to school is to rise above this toil, and our educated young tend to experience it as a humiliation. For example, of a group of eight new trainees recently, only one 'survived' the first month.

Intake of new trainees occurs at any time through the year, and the basic training period lasts for six months to one year, depending on the time of arrival. It consists mainly of an apprenticeship - as described above for the village work - and evening classes given by senior paramedics and doctors. We also hope to influence the attitude of the trainees to the villagers and to themselves through the general experience of living and working at the project. An important part of this learning are the meetings, e.g. the general monthly meeting, the sectional staff meetings and ad hoc meetings which are convened when the need arises. Various committees such as the pay and kitchen committees also help with the running of the project. Twice a year, in the Bengali months of Kartik and Boishak, a committee consisting of the heads of the sections involved - that is, agriculture, FP, pathology, and village work - as well as representatives from the subcentres and the project director, decide whether a paramedic should be taken on as a full staff member. The head of village work, Gita Kor, has the most important task: before the meeting she will have gone to the various villages where the paramedics under consideration were working during their training period, to ascertain the opinion of the villagers about them. If there are strong objections among the villagers about a particular individual, this will outweigh even strong recommendations from other section heads. Although there are no final examinations, written tests are given throughout the training period, and the results are also taken into account in the overall assessment made by the committee.

From time to time, we have agreed to take trainees from other projects, although, if it is a question of training a whole group, we prefer to send one of our paramedics to conduct training in the trainees' own area, because we want to avoid becoming a training centre. At the moment, we have five 'guest trainees', from the Terro des Hommes in Rangpur, from SCI Moudoubi (Patuakhali), and from a local project in Faridpur.

Training is by no means finished when the basic period is over. There is, for example, still much to learn before a paramedic can see patients independently in out-patient clinics and prescribe medicines. Among our trained paramedics eleven are qualified to do this. Of those, four are at the main centre, four are at the subcentres in Savar Thana, and three have gone to the Shapmari project in Jamalpur district. They are allowed to prescribe simple analgesics, antacids, topical and systematic antibiotics, and issue repeat prescriptions for any chronic condition, e.g. TB, leprosy,

rheumatic fever.

The most senior paramedics are often moved to new responsibilities, according to their preference and ability. For example, one is now project director of the Shapmari project, one is in overall charge of FP, another of the sickroom, and a fourth of village work. Four more senior paramedics have become heads of the subcentres.

We always believed that one of the disadvantages of our training was that it had no Government recognition, and that the paramedics were therefore dependent on the existence of the project for their jobs. Ironically, we have been proved wrong; recently, two women paramedics left to take Government FP posts, and a married couple left because the husband had been offered a pathology laboratory job for much better pay than we can afford with the Johns Hopkins Project at the Cholera Research Laboratory, an American research institution in Dacca.

Funds for current expenditure in FP and health as far as not covered by our income came from Oxfam, U.K. and Oxfam, Canada. Some equipment and medicines were donated by our support group in France.

Bhatsala Gonoshasthaya Kendra

The history of our involvement in the Jamalpur area was described in the section on Family Planning. For some time before our departure from the Government maternity centre, villagers from Shapmari had requested us to set up a health centre at their village, offering us a piece of land and all necessary cooperation, and they remained undeterred by our conditions (no privileges for the owners of the land, service charges etc.) and the description of our eccentricities (agricultural work, women on bicycles). In April 1977, we decided to accept the challenge, and four senior paramedics, from the Savar project moved to Shapmari. The most experienced of them, Gita Chakraborty, one of the original group of workers from the Bangladesh Hospital, became the project director.

The land offered us was located by a small kacha road that leads to the town of Shorpur, four miles away, and up to then it had only grown tall grass used for thatching. For the first three months, the paramedics lived as guests in some villagers' houses, while simple accommodation was being constructed on the site. At the same time they conducted a survey for Bhatshala Union, in which the village of Shapmari is situated.

Work in health and FP is along the lines developed at Savar, with a similar emphasis on primary health care. Twelve local young women have been recruited as trainees, practical instruction and classes are given by the senior paramedics. There is no resident doctor at the project, but Dr Akhtar, a private practitioner from Shorpur, comes on two days a week to see patients on a contract basis. The village work covers Bhatshala Union, but it is hoped that it will expand eventually to the whole of the Thana. Community development work has not yet been organised, although there is obvious need in the field, especially in women's employment.

The Shapmari team have to contend with many difficulties which the Savar project no longer experiences. For example, the women paramedics often prefer walking long distances to cycling in order to avoid embarrassing remarks of the villagers who are not yet accustomed to the sight. Since there is no electricity, someone has to go to Shepuri each day to buy a bagful of ice to keep the vaccines cool. Supply of medicines and other equipment is much more difficult to organise because communications to Jamalpur or even Dacca are bad.

On the other hand, several mistakes which were made in Savar through lack of experience have been avoided. Most importantly, instead of a large brick and cement buildings, local-type accommodation was constructed with the result that the project is much more part of the village scenery, and already serves as something of a community centre. Construction and health work at Shapmari was financed by UNICEF; FP work is funded by Kaufman Footwear, Canada.

Conclusion

So, despite the silence of the last two and a half years, the project has grown and diversified in many ways.

Funds for capital expenditure, especially for construction work at the Savar centre, have come from NOVIE, Holland, and Oxfam.

We would like to thank all those, inside and outside Bangladesh, who have helped the project materially and otherwise over the last years.

A few weeks ago, on the 18th November, we observed the first anniversary of the death of our worker Nizam. A year after his murder, most of the hired killers and the powerful local leaders who were behind the plot are still at large. Some of them, including the local doctor whose business and fraudulent dealings Nizam was threatening and the Union Council Chairman, spent a few days in jail, but were released on bail. The main hired assassin roams freely in the bazaar, but the police have been 'unable to arrest him'. If we with all our powerful contacts cannot effect the apprehension of known murderers, it can only be guessed how much justice there is for the ordinary illiterate villagers of Bangladesh.

On November 18 this year, the paramedics organised a moving tribute to their dead comrade. The project staff walked the five miles along the narrow footpaths to Simulia where Nizam was murdered. Along the way, about 300 villagers spontaneously joined the procession; they had known Nizam well who had walked and cycled the path to Simulia many times. The procession led through the Simulia bazaar to the spot where Nizam's body was first buried by the murderers in a derelict pond, to our subcentre, (which, contrary to the hopes of the murderers, is still functioning), and then back to Nizam's grave at the Centre.

If there was, perhaps, for some months, the unavowed wish among us to forget

about the terrifying events surrounding Nizam's death and to pretend that it never happened the anniversary has created an atmosphere of acknowledgment of the dark forces operating in our society and a determination to fight them so that Nizam may not have died in vain.

Appendix: List of Papers by Project Members

1. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Combating the population explosion in Bangladesh; Action by a group of doctors at the grass roots. publ. in Population Planning, Vol.1, Dec. 1972, UNROD, Dacca.
2. Susanne Chowdhury and Zafrullah Chowdhury, Tubectomy by paraprofessional surgeons in rural Bangladesh, publ. in 'The Lancet', London, Sept. 25, 1975.
3. Kamal Islam & Zafrullah Chowdhury, Seven short reports on medical, education, medical services, and Family Planning in Bangladesh, Dec. 1975, mimeo.
4. Susanne Chowdhury and Zafrullah Chowdhury, Medical Highlights - The role of mid-wives and paramedics in voluntary sterilization programs. Read at the Third International Conference on Voluntary Sterilization, Tunis, Feb. 1976; publ. in 'New Advances in Sterilization' ed. Schima and Lubell, Assoc. for Voluntary Sterilization Inc., New York, 1976.
5. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Vasectomy Mela and Family Planning, Bangladesh Times, Dacca, Feb. 25, 1976.
6. Zafrullah Chowdhury, The mother and child in Bangladesh, a view from the People's Health Centre, publ. in 'Carnets de l'Enfance - Assignment Children', No.33 Jan. March 1976, Geneva.
7. Gita Chakraborty (Paramedic), Bangladesh Paribar Parikalpanay Mahilader Bhumika (Role of Women in the National Economic Development of Bangladesh), sponsored by Bangladesh Economic Association, April 1976, publ. in 'Desh Bangla', June 18, 1976.
8. Nurun Nahar Shoba (head of school), Shikkakhetero Palli Narir Bhumika (Role of Village Women in Education), paper read at the seminar cited in No.7, mimeo.
9. Kamal Islam, Training and Use of Paramedical Workers, publ. in Bangladesh Times, July 29, 1976.
10. Gita Chakraborty, Oshud, Sheba Paramedic Meyera (Medicines, Patient Care, women paramedic), lecture given at UNICEF meeting in Dacca, 1976 publ. in 'Desh Bangla' August 6, 1976.
11. Ira Kor (Paramedic), Shishur Pushti (Child Nutrition), lecture given at UNICEF Meeting in Dacca, 1976, publ. in 'Desh Bangla', September 3, 1976.
12. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Organisation, Supervision and Evaluation of Primary Health Workers. Presented at the 1Xth International Conference on Health Education in Ottawa, Canada, Sept. 1976.
13. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Under the Law in Bangladesh. Nov. 1976, mimeo.
14. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Research: A Method of Colonization. publ. in 'Bangladesh Times' Jan. 13 and 14, 1977.

15. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Basic Services Delivery in 'Underdeveloping' Countries, a view from Gonoshasthaya Kendra, lecture given at the special meeting of the Executive Board of UNICEF on the situation of children in Asia with emphasis on basic services, Manila, May 17-19, 1977, publ. by United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/ICEF/Asia/9, May 4, 1977.
16. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Health Auziliary Workers: their training, supervision and evaluation. Read at the 20th International Hospital Congress, Tokyo, May 1977 mimeo. To be published in 'World Hospitals, 1978.
17. A.Q. Chowdhury and Kamal Islam, Medical Education and its relevance to Community health care in Bangladesh. Lecture given at a seminar at the Institute of Postgraduate Medicine, Dacca in 1977.
18. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Akattor Uttor Bangladesh (Bangladesh since 1971) publ. in special issue of the weekly, 'Bichitra' Sept., 9, 1977.
19. Laila Parveen, A.Q. Chowdhury, Zafrullah Chowdhury, Injectable Contraception (Medroxyprogesterone Acetate) in Rural Bangladesh, publ. in 'The Lancet', London Nov. 5, 1977.

Requests for copies of these articles may be addressed to Gonoshasthaya Kendra. To cover our expenses and postage, we charge US dollars 15 for the whole set, and U.S. dollars 2.00 for each single copy.

PEER GROUP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT*

INTRODUCTION

The Peer Group Development Project was started in Kherwara Development Block by Seva Mandir, Udaipur in 1975.

Seva Mandir is a non-governmental organisation working in the field of Adult Education and Rural Development. It aims to:

- a. Provide opportunity and atmosphere for understanding human values and dispassionate study of the trends, needs and problems of the society and wherever possible to place the results of such study before the people;
- b. seeks to be a dynamic, positive and action-oriented endeavour on the part of a devoted, disciplined and dedicated group of people with an attitude of meeting challenges by seeking and applying solutions to social problems and maladies rather than merely engaging in complaint or criticism.

In sort it undertakes practical measures for promoting social, economic, educational, intellectual and spritual development of the community, both rural and urban.

Seva Mandir has made a start towards fulfilling its objectives of promoting development amongst the rural and urban communities, especially for the weaker sections.

THE AREA

The Peer Group Project was launched in Kherwara Development Block, Kherwara, the headquarters of the Seva Mandir field projects, and of the government offices of the Block Development area of Kherwara Panchayat Samiti. It is situated on National Highway No.8.80 kilometers to the south of Udaipur, in the State of Rajasthan.

The total area of the Block is 269,101 acres, of which 53,449 acres are under cultivation. Because this region is situated in the Arawali Mountain Range, the area is hilly, and only the valleys can be cultivated. Small trees and shrubs are found on the hillsides.

The area is economically backward and usually suffers from a shortage of rain (drought). Most of the people depend on agriculture for part of their income, others on the wooded areas. Beeoi leaves (used in making cheap local cigarettes), white radishes, gum bamboo, mahua (country liquor base), charcoal and honey are forest products that supplement the income of the people of the Block.

* Seva Mandir, Udaipur, India.

Though this area is a backward and disadvantaged area in many ways, the culture is rich with folk songs, and dances; but life is hard, and the constant threat of the shortage of water, and drought periods, plays havoc with the family life of the poor rural people. Men and boys from the area regularly migrate for 6-8 months a year to Gujarat and Maharashtra, in search of work. The monsoon crop on small holdings of land is often the main source of local income and production. The forests are being quickly devastated. The tenacity and nature of the people may be the richest resource of the area.

Background of the Project

The Peer Group Development Project is basically a people's development project. In the past it has been the experience in the tribal areas that the development programs have not produced any significant change in tribal communities.

The government is administering a Community Development Program. The Program is providing at present extension services to all areas through a gramsevak. The concept behind this program is that economic incentives of different kinds can speed up the transition of a traditional society to a modern one. Hence the approach has been to promote the development schemes approved by the government. This may or may not have an education component built into it. None or very little effort is made by the development machinery to provide adequate knowledge to the people about development so that they may organize and act for their own development. With the exception of a few well-to-do and well-connected individuals, the people in rural areas have no knowledge about development programs, nor about the processes that are underway in their area, and they do not know the opportunities that exist for them to benefit from these schemes. The people also lack the know-how, the means and often the will to organize themselves and to act to gain access to these opportunities. Other reasons for lack of development in tribal areas may include macro-level planning with very little flexibility at the field level, the lack of understanding of tribal social culture and their eco-systems, non-involvement of the tribals in administering local self-governments, the feelings and attitudes of field-level functionaries towards tribals, the lack of coordination between different official and non-official agencies which leads to a differing approach to development by the different agencies, and the meagre financial allocations. More specifically:

- a. The Government development programs seem to exist in complete isolation from the poorer rural populace;
- b. The institutional framework for development, be it the Panchayat Raj Institutions, Cooperative Societies, Khadi and Village Industries Institutions etc. are complex and the benefits from them are limited to a select few;
- c. The local groups are inarticulate and unfamiliar with the intricate planning and administrative processes of the government. The line of communication is long and imperfect;
- d. The cultural background and lifestyle of the tribals seem to act as a restrictive factor in their economic development; for example, the habit of liquor consumption and unproductive use of resources on social customs and rites.

This analysis leads to the basic point that the tribal has to develop and learn skills, and a sense of control over the processes of change this means that a whole educational process needs to be initiated which may:

- a. provide basic knowledge and understanding about the development programs so that he may actively participate;
- b. create a feeling that he is not alone and that his community as a whole would be able to stand against exploitation;
- c. help in creating such institutions of tribals within the community which on the one hand can deal with their own people, and on the other, can effectively deal with the outside world.

The Concept (Peer Group Approach)

Our approach to 'Development' is based on our experience of working with the people.

The approach is people development through people participation. The process has to be based on an educational effort which may generate self-confidence, self-esteem and greater self-sufficiency.

This educational process is not based on formal learning methods but on a cycle of learning, experiencing, reflecting, analysing, new learning etc. so that further action may be better.

The first stage is to develop a team of young people who will be able to give leadership for personal and community development in their own villages. These young people will be given training in the skills and techniques needed to improve conditions (agriculture, sanitation, animal care etc.) in their own villages, and will be given support and encouragement to try new things on their own land, in their own homes. These 'Peer Leaders' will be encouraged to carry out what they have learned and to communicate their knowledge and skill to their peers.

The second stage is that the peer leader would help other young farmers and young people in the village in trying out the new practices that have been learned. In this way, a group of village young people would be brought together by the desire to learn and to improve their lives, and by the experience of having tried something new. This group would form the basis of the peer group in the village.

The third stage is that the Peer Leader and the Peer Group, supported by the Inter-disciplinary staff, would move from trying improvements on their own land and in their own houses, to trying to work on a community problem. At this stage, training is given to the group to give them the ability to understand their situation and to plan effective ways so to overcome the difficulties inherent in their community life. Information and knowledge about development schemes for the areas, and tools for analysis, planning, organising and action would be developed.

The fourth stage envisaged is that there are some issues that can only be worked on by a cluster or group of villages, in a Panchayat area or even larger. Members of several villages' peer groups would come together for this kind of area planning and action, around issues like health, crop storage and marketing, social extravagancies at the time of marriages and death etc. They together would work out strategies of taking support from different sources.

It is clear that the success of the approach outlined above depends on a fair degree of expertise and sophistication in the art of organisation, planning and management of development strategies and of projects. As things stand today, it cannot be assumed that communities possess these skills. However, this very situation defines the magnitude and complexity of the educational task for the development of the community by the community.

The Project

To test our approach the peer group project was launched in Kherwara as a action research project. The objectives of the project were as follows:

1. To test the assumption that involvement of rural populace for economic development takes place better through peer groups.
2. To examine the possibility of developing an institutional set-up comprising a number of peer leaders who combine to arouse a desire for economic betterment among the groups of which they are a part.
3. To test the effectiveness of peer groups in bringing about change of attitude and behaviour connected with their present life-style which inhibit economic and abstention from alcohol consumption and extravagance in social ceremonies.

Implementation of the Project

(a) Selection of the Inter-disciplinary Staff

The project began in April, 1975, with the recruitment of the inter-disciplinary staff, an agriculture worker, a cooperative organiser and a rural engineer. The team members were chosen because the area needed improvement in agriculture, the development of efficient credit facilities (non-exploitative in character) as well as improvement of land fertility. This team worked with the project leader in devising a self-learning program about the area, its people and the various development programs underway in the area, especially the organisation and activities of DPAP and Block activities. The preparation of the team members was done so that they would be able to maintain close liaison with the functionaries of these agencies; indeed, these agencies were involved in the training of the peer leaders. However, the role of the team was seen as the field level trainers, who could provide effective training and guidance to the peer groups through the peer leaders for the purpose of initiating and sustaining agricultural improvement, maximum participation in cooperative institutions and home, land and water resource development. It was conceived that through working on these agricultural and community projects, the people involved

would grow in their self confidence, ability to organise themselves and in their understanding about the world around them.

(b) Selection of the Area

A cluster of 25 villages away from the highway was chosen. Some of the factors considered in selecting the area were as follows:

1. contiguous area;
2. low previous intervention by development agencies;
3. some receptivity to the project.

These factors were tested by the then project officer of the Functional Literacy Project and the inter-disciplinary team. A village resource centre was established in a central village, Bawalwara.

(c) Selection of the Peer Leaders

In selecting the Peer leaders for the program, the following were the considerations:

1. resident in the village and work in the village area;
2. self-employed and engaged in farming;
3. had shown interest in doing some work for the community;
4. a moderate level of literacy.

All the peer leaders selected were from poor families, but whose families owned some land (2-5 acres). Most of the them have shown their interest in working for their communities by being literacy teachers in earlier Seva Mandir work. During their tenure as literacy teachers they have helped the village by organising several development activities.

The task of the peer leader was seen as a person who would first understand an innovation, and then he would test it; then once this innovation has been confirmed by him, he would be the communicator of the innovation to his group and the community. The innovation has to be related to the need of the community.

Right from the beginning, it was made clear to the peer leader that he is our colleague and partner in the program of developing an active, alert, on-going, self-reliant and prosperous community; and is not a paid employee of Seva Mandir. A small honorarium is paid for his valuable services.

(d) Training of the Peer Leaders and Peer Groups

1. First phase-Training of peer leaders:

The training of the peer leaders was considered as a continuous cycle. In the initial stages a training was organised for a fortnight in collaboration with the Block Development Staff, DPAP, the Extension Directorate of the University of Udaipur. The following topics were part of the discussion:

- Cooperative societies - principles, organisation, administration;

- Existing scheme of cooperative societies;
- Soil and water conservation practices;
- Modern concepts of agriculture and animal husbandry;
- Dry land agriculture-package of practices of crops;
- Survey techniques;
- Major diseases of the area and their preventive measures;
- How to make puppets and how to develop puppet plays with a social message;
- Rural housing;
- Some already existing development schemes for Kherwara area and how they can benefit the villagers.

After the initial training the peer leaders were sent to study the area. They were asked to come back after a fortnight. In this meeting they were asked to prepare such projects which they could do themselves after the study of the area and its resources, and their 15 day's training. For each peer leader initial projects were their 'minimum achievable projects'.

As the main occupation in this area is agriculture, animal husbandry and farm labour, they planned a maize (corn) demonstration on their own land and several other small projects. The inter-disciplinary (ID) staff helped them in planning the demonstration projects. The peer leaders met every Tuesday to discuss their projects. Also the I.D. staff visited villages to work with peer leaders. This was considered field based training of peer leaders.

2. Second phase-training of peer groups:

Once the Peer leaders were trained the next step in training was to organise peer group training. The objective of this trainings was to enable the growth of strong, viable unit of people which may be able to take-up village level projects. By this trainings and through these projects, the goal was that the persons involved would grow in maturity and self determination. This training is two days long. On the first day members of the group are exposed to trust building and team building exercises. Adult learning methods such as role-playing, socio-drama, simulations games are used to build mutual trust among the peer group members. The next day, the group is given exercises in community goal setting and problem identification. This is followed by problem solving sessions. Here a hypothetical exercise is not taken, but members are asked to think of a real problem and planning, organisation of resources and scheduling is done.

After this training the I.D. staff checks on the development of the problem taken up by the peer group. Follow-up meetings are organised on the request of peer group members.

The emphasis during types of training is to increase the awareness about their own reality and to prepare them to be more effective in dealing with the other members of the community, and with their own work.

Achievements and Experiences

1. First two years (1975-77)

In implementing the project, consideration was given to priorities in economic and peoples' development of the area. As the main occupations in this area are agriculture, animal husbandry and farm labouring, special efforts were made to take up projects in these areas. The approach taken to develop the projects was to create awareness about credit facilities for farm inputs, about improvement of land and water resources, about improvement of farming techniques and animal husbandry practices and about a variety of new agricultural practices. These were taken as priority activities of the project. It was felt that subjects to be dealt with should not be only on economic fronts, hence some social issues (drinking, superstition, extravagance, social justice etc.) were discussed in the village communities with the help of cultural media e.g. Bhajan Meetings, Puppet shows and Drama. Along with these economic activities, another priority objective was people development. Right from the beginning each peer leader was encouraged to create a group of young adults in his village, and develop with them new ideas of socio-economic development. The new knowledge and the existence of a support group has prepared the young adults to break the traditional barriers to development.

The first step taken in starting the project was to establish the peer leader as an important member of his community who would contribute to the socio-economic development of that community. In an India village, the best way to communicate one's intention is to show by doing what one says. Hence, the projects were of two types - village level and individual level. The individual level projects were demonstration of Kharif Group of his own farm based on modern agriculture, preparation of compost manure bunding on his farm etc. Similarly some of the village level projects were reviving the village cooperative society, surveying the village community, formation of a individual level projects.

Details of Minimum Achievable Projects Underaken by the Peer Leaders (1975-77)

(a) Individual Level Projects

1. Adoption of High Yielding Varieties of Crops

The peer leaders and some peers in each village took maize and sunflower as the demonstration. They requested their parents to let them try a crop demonstration on small plots of their land. Thereafter the staff gave them all help and advice.

During the project period, the farmers training programs were organised seasonally to develop awareness about agri-technology. Similarly live farm women's camps were also organised in Udaipur with the help of the directorate of extension, University of Udaipur to disseminate knowledge about balanced diets, health and hygiene.

The high yielding varieties/hybrids had been introduced during the project period in this area. These areas Ganga-6 of Maize, Ratna of Paddy, EC-68414 of Potato and Pusa phalguni of coupea. Except Sonalika of wheat and S-555 Potato all were well suited to dryland farming.

The yield data of the year 1975-76 showed that with the introduction of Ganga 5 and Kalyanasona/Sonlika, production increased by 233% and 374% respectively as compared to local varieties in the year 1974/75. Likewise production also increased in the rest of the crops.

As a result, a total of 50 demonstration of Ganga-5 a dry land corn variety, were taken up. This project was a tremendous success. The villagers had never seen a crop like this in their life. In order to possess this variety of maize seeds, some villagers stole the cobs of corn from the field. In some cases villagers gave dhanna to buy seeds of this particular crop at some peer leaders farm. But these seeds being a hybrid variety could not be used for the next crop.

The peer leader convinced the villagers that they would help in getting good seeds of this variety at the next crop time. The success can be easily seen if this development in that for the Rabi Crop, 100 people joined the wheat program, taking the advice of the peer leaders and core staff. The high yielding variety recommended for dry land farming (i.e. 'Kalyan Sona') is being taken as part of these demonstrations. This project was able to introduce a package of practices for high yielding of some cereal crops, e.g. maize, wheat and cash crop like sunflower etc. These included soil treatment, seed treatment, concept of line sowing, use of fertilizers, plant protection measures etc.

2. Compost Pit

Another project which was taken by peer groups and leaders was the preparation of compost manure. The idea behind this project is to promote the habit of preparing better manure, fertilizer from cowdung.

3. Bunding and Water Management

Our core staff has gone and shown proper bunding systems so that in this drought-prone area, one crop's production could be assured. The bunding process will help to minimise the soil erosion and to improve the moisture retention capacity of the soil of this area. With the help of DPAP, Block, CARE, 4 anicuts and 1 drinking water well were taken by the peer leaders and other members.

Details of Some Other Projects

Along with these projects the peer leaders also used their knowledge of government and non-government schemes, to help the village in getting benefit from schemes. Similarly the peer leaders helped government agencies in implementing their programs.

To mention a few cases, the Land Development Bank started loans for the deepening of wells. The application forms were very complicated, and the process of getting the loans was arduous. The peer leaders helped the villagers in getting the applications ready, with all the procedures, in time, and the villagers were able to get loans. Also there was 'foot and mouth' disease among the cows and buffalo of this area, and the Veterinary Doctor was called and he explained the method to treat the disease. The spreading disease came under control with the peer leaders' efforts. Similarly, the soil conservation section of the DPAP Unit of Kherwara was interested in surveying the sites for anicuts in the project area. With the help of the peer leaders and our core staff, the Unit was able to select four good sites in no time.

There are several such examples - proper distribution of CARE wheat and subsidized fertilizer, helping in the program of the Directorate of Extension for farm women, helping in the functional literacy project etc. To help the peer leaders understand fully the way a cooperative functions, a cooperative of peer leaders was formed. This cooperative has started helping its own members in their work (for statistical report see Appendix A).

2. Third Year (1977-78)

In April, 1977, the project was extended to another 25 villages. Now the objectives of the project were as follows:

- a. To continue the peer group program in the cluster of 25 villages around Bawalwara with greater emphasis on peer group organisation at the village level.
- b. To initiate the peer group program in a new cluster of 25 villages around Kherwara.
- c. To include animal husbandry as a new development concern on the part of the peers.
- d. To integrate both the peer group program units with the literacy work of Seva Mandir in Kherwara.
- e. To develop effective collaboration of peer group work with the plans and activities of Block Development Office. SFDA, DPAP and Tribal-plan agencies.
- f. To complete an interim report on the to-date functioning of the Peer Group Program in the Bawalwara area and to prepare a final report in 1979.

The Inter-disciplinary Team now consists of five people for two clusters. For implementation purposes there are two teams of persons with specialized training in agriculture and cooperative organization, in two clusters of 25 villages. A rural engineer works for both clusters, Bawalwara and Kherwara.

As the Program is now in 50 villages, the phasing-in was as follows:

- a. Orientation of the inter-disciplinary support team, setting up of the Learning Resource Centre and formation of the teams of the field, carrying out of base line benchmark survey.
- b. Initial training of the new peer leaders and orientation of the existing peer leaders; the training will include familiarization with new techniques, new schemes and opportunities, and learning of survey extension and organisation skills, maintenance of records and reporting.
- c. Monthly meeting of peer group and peer leaders for review and planning of village and individual farm/home level activities.
- d. Special Training program, Camps and Educational tours to imbibe special knowledge and skills and to monitor growth in organisational strength and self confidence.

As part of the training a tour program was organised to visit development projects in Gujarat and Maharashtra. The groups went to visit Rangour, Ashram, Anand, Vedachi, and several other organisations, which are engaged in rural development.

During this year programs of agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperatives and several others as mentioned above were taken.

Peer Group Initiated Projects

Most significant work done was peer group participation in analysing their village problems (particularly those which they can do without outside help) preparing plans and launching programs. This was the result of peer group specialised training.

Some examples of the programs undertaken by different village groups are as follows:

- Village Ghati-Link Road, community well etc.
- Village Kalyanpur - village cleaning etc.
- Village Amarpur - construction of school building
- Village Rel - establishment of self-help cooperative and a non-formal school etc.
- Village Sulai - help cooperative, helped to establish dispensary etc.

One of the most significant activities undertaken by the group was political education of the people about panchayat election. It was a real success. In some cases peer members and peer leaders got elected as either war panch or sarpanch.

This was not only confined to securing an elected position but some people who are now sarpanchs are initiating significant programs on a proper basis, e.g. Antodaya, Yojana - pension for disabled persons etc. Some of the nearby Panchayat in Bawalwara cluster have formed a lease group which meets two times a month to discuss the line of action that the panchayat should take. This is an interesting feature in people's participation.

Coordination with Government and Non Government Agencies

As reported earlier in describing the projects undertaken by peer leaders and peer groups several agencies are coordinating with the program. Tribal Development, Cooperative Corporation, DPAP, Block Authorities, Directorate of Extension, University of Udaipur, Forest Department (Kadna Project). Oxfam, Medical Department are all working very closely with the I.D. staff of the project.

Evaluation

The project is now completing its third year. The objectives of the project are partly achieved.

In terms of the objectives placed in the beginning the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a. That if the people are organised to understand the economic development schemes and are provided skills through such people (peer leaders) who come from their own socio-economic level then they can participate more fully;
- b. that if the people are made aware of their abilities, strength, weaknesses etc. can grow to become a strong viable organised unit and learn to plan their lives, then they can start participating in the development program;
- c. that a loose institutional infra-structure on the model of peer group can be evolved in which peer leaders with an inter-disciplinary team can bring about economic betterment and participation of the people;
- d. that in dealing with social issues more time and effort is needed on the part of peer groups. There is a constant need to bring the whole community together and a continuous educational operation on these issues.

The project is successful because of many reasons:

- a. One of the most important factors is the selection of the peer leaders. Seva Mandir was able to find them because of its earlier contacts.
- b. The inter-disciplinary staff is an important link for the success of the project. The team should be young, energetic; has a sense to work in the villages, an attitude to work with people and basic faith that people can avail themselves of given opportunities.
- c. The success of the project also depends on the collaboration and coordination with government and non-government agencies in the area. A personal rapport is needed to create this relationship between the I.D. staff and other agencies. The better relationship will be the involvement of the people.
- d. Another factor which at least has helped in the successful implementation of this project is the imaginative direction by the project leader and Seva Mandir authorities to the peer leaders and I.D. staff.
- e. The training of the type envisaged must be considered as an important component for the success of the project.

All these factors may help in devising similar models of rural development projects.

Conclusion

The project is going on well and it has shown a remarkable success towards

achieving its goals. The peer leaders and peer groups are becoming an important link in bringing about more benefits to the people of the area. Also, people are getting confident that they can organise their life and activities for a better tomorrow.

It appears from this experience that this project is a promising model for socio-economic development in the tribal area of Rajasthan.

SEVA MANDIR, UDAIPUR

Achievements of Peer Group Projects from April, 1975 to October, 1978.

S.No.	Component	Achievements		Total
		Bawalwara Since April, 1975	Kherwara Since April, 1977	
A. AGRICULTURE				
1.	Agri. Training Camp	15	21	36
2.	Demonstration of Hybrid Maize	425 Bigas	66 Bigas	491
3.	Demonstration of H.B. Wheat	675 "	80 "	755
4.	Demonstration of paddy (Jaya and Pusa 33)	117 "	15 "	132
5.	Kitchen Gardens	258 "	73	331
6.	Plantation	1354 "	473	1727
7.	Compost Pits	335	176	511
8.	Seva grain training camp	6	3	9
9.	Animal husbandry disease camp	3	3	6
10.	Farming Discussion Groups	3	3	6
B. COOPERATIVES				
1.	Increase in membership	660	66	726
2.	Loan distributed	425262/-		
		For seeds and Fertilizer only		425263/-
3.	Share capital of peer group society	6000/-	1820/-	7820/-
4.	Self-help society and members	3/110	3/89	6/199
5.	Cooperative training camp	5	8	13
6.	Consumer store	3	2	5
7.	Loan Recovery	65937/-	Continue	659337/-
C. RURAL ENGINEERING				
1.	Contour bunding	566 Bigas	31 Bigas	597
2.	Socketpit	7	4	3
3.	Anicut construction	3	-	3
4.	Earthen bund repairing	1	1	2
5.	Road repaired	3 Kms	2½ Kms	5½ Kms
6.	Socketpits	42	-	42
7.	Well construction/repairing	1	1	2
8.	House repairing	100	-	100
9.	Maganchulha	20	-	20
D. OTHER MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS				
1.	Number of Peer Group and the members	24/434	24/291	48/725
2.	Film demonstration	8	6	14
3.	No. of participants in educational tour	15	21	36
4.	No. of participants in 'Kisan Mela'	150	45	195
5.	School building constructed	3	1	4
6.	School being run by P.G.P.	3	2	5
7.	Guinea-worm education Camp	1	1	2

GRAM VIKAS MANDAL*

Belgaum Gram Vikas Mandal is a voluntary organisation working in villages around Belgaum city. One of the initial activities of the GVM was the organisation of the powerloom workers in and around Belgaum. We in the BGVM propose to start Community Centres where the rural poor could informally meet and discuss their problems. We would only act as catalytic agents, providing new material for thought and action. Different activities like the organisation of village libraries, group songs, literacy camps would be taken up. Already three centres have started functioning and the response is encouraging. In all this we are convinced that popularising science among the people especially in the rural areas, with a view to developing a scientific approach to development problems is very important.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE POWER LOOM WORKERS OF BELGAUM
(Under the leadership of Belgaum Gram Vikas Mandal)

It will be a great surprise, even to the inhabitants of Belgaum, to learn that Khasbag, Madavnagar, Vadgaon, Bharatnagar and Shahapur areas of Belgaum house not less than 5,000 powerlooms and that there are over 8,000 people working for the flourishing powerloom industry of Belgaum.

These powerlooms are owned by over 200 well-to-do individuals. The owners of these small factories are well organised under "The Belgaum Powerloom Owners and Twisters Association". Some time in the past the Government of Karnataka had orders passed to include powerloom industry under the preview of the Factory Act. But nobody was serious about implementing the provisions of the Factory Act. It remained a paper tiger - but not for long. The owners' association connived with the government authorities and got the order changed to exclude such factories from coming under The Factory Act. They exploited the situation to the maximum. Besides working out ways of tax evasion and the like, the owners had also developed ways of exploiting the workers.

To start with, the 8,000 powerloom workers of Belgaum were not even recognised as workers. They were not given an appointment order or a service card, nor was there any official register showing the workers names. As a result of this, the workers could be sent away and replaced by others at the whim and fancy of the owner. The "trouble makers" could easily be got rid off. There was nothing strange in it, nor was it a rare occurrence, when an owner told a worker, who had been working for him for years, that he was not employed by him. The workers had to be grateful to their benefactors for providing them with employment when hundreds of others did not even have employment. The powerloom workers had to work overtime without getting overtime wages. The maximum earning of a powerloom worker was about 100 to 120 rupees a month. There was discrimination in the wages paid to the male and female workers. Workers were at the mercy of the owners. They had no guarantee of getting work every day. If the owner so wished, he could tell the workers that there was no work for the next few days and so no pay

*Belgaum, India. (A report)

too. Workers enjoyed neither paid holidays nor paid leave. They were not given any bonus.

Workers continued working under these conditions for years. From time to time they tried to organize themselves to demand their rights, but every time they met with failure and frustration. There were two trade unions for these powerloom workers. Many of them were registered members of one or the other union. But how much interest did their leaders show in bettering the workers' condition? They were interested only in the votes of the workers. A vote had value, but not the worker who voted!

The workers were divided among themselves. There were numerous things that divided them. Their caste affiliations: some were of low caste, others were of high caste. Their party affiliations: some were pro-congress, some pro-communist, and others pro Janata. Their language; some spoke Marathi, others Kannada, some wanted Belgaum to be in Maharashtra, while others preferred Karnataka. Their religious affiliations too had its role in dividing them. With all these the powerloom workers of Belgaum had hardly any hope of coming together, of fighting together, of establishing their identity as workers. Such was the situation of the Belgaum powerloom workers. Will their condition change?

But then, as it used to happen on a number of occasions earlier, the fire of anger and frustration that lay buried in the heart of these workers was fanned into a small but visible flame when a group of 70 workers in one of the factories decided to go on a strike on November 14, 1977. As usual, the workers involved were threatened. Their strike was declared illegal. They had not given a prior notice. They could now be thrown out and replaced with others, at least the leaders could be victimised. The workers became panicky. What next? How to save their face?

Some of these workers had come to know a group of young men and women in Belgaum. They were known under the name "The Belgaum Gram Vikas Mandal" (BGVM). Some members of this group had been to the place where they work, had chatted with them, they had even conducted study classes for them. They had listened to their problems and shown sympathy.

The members of this group were known for their commitment to people. They had opened their eyes to the social reality around them. They had seen the poverty, misery and oppression which their less fortunate brothers and sisters had to put up with daily. They felt angry about the way people were treated. They were willing to fight to change this situation by working to build up power among the powerless.

They were analytical, were observant and took note of facts, sought to find the deeper realities behind the apparent. They were selfless not buried in a little world of their own self-interests, not even of their immediate family. People of Belgaum had seen them active in Belgaum city and in the villages around. When the Aluminium Factory workers were struggling for their rights last summer, these people openly supported their struggle. In all that they did they affirmed their faith in the oppressed classes and people knew that one of their ambitions was to unite all the workers and other poorer sections of society in Belgaum city and in the villages around.

With this aim in mind they had organized the workers' day celebrations with a rally and public meeting on May 1, 1977.

In their predicament, the powerloom workers who had dared to go on strike now approached the members of the BGVM. They got a sympathetic hearing. They were shown that their strike was perfectly legal. They were not bound to follow the provisions of the Factory Act or give a prior notice since they were not covered under the said Act. Their demands were minimal and just:

1. that they should be recognised as workers, hence every worker should be given an appointment order and service card,
2. that they should be given extra wages for over-time work,
3. that they should be given paid holidays in a year,
4. that when there is lay off, they should be given lay off wages,
5. that they should be given 8.33% bonuses, and
6. that those who participate in a struggle should not be victimised.

The members of BGVM felt obliged to support this struggle. They joined the workers in their strike and March. As a result of this, on the fifth day of the struggle (November 19, 1977) the owner concerned agreed to give the workers their demands. This group of workers celebrated their victory that evening and reported to work joyfully the next morning.

The successful struggle triggered off a chain reaction. From November 23rd onwards, one after the other, the other factories wanted to go on strike, with the same demands and under the leadership and guidance of BGVM. Of course, the BGVM had played its catalytic role very effectively. Now the BGVM had the tremendous task of educating the workers, of organising, of planning and of co-ordinating their struggle.

The BGVM was not a trade union. If it had to represent the workers it needed authorization from the workers. Hence the workers of respective factories had to have their own meetings and had to reach a unanimous decision to authorise the BGVM to represent their cause. They had to set up their own committees, elect their own representatives, etc.

The BGVM had the task of educating the workers, of conscientising them about their problems, about their strength and weaknesses, about the factors that divide them, about the strength and weaknesses of the owner's association and the strength of their money and influence with other power structures, how the Government, the law and order system and the police force in the country worked, about the powers and limitations of people like the Labour Commissioner, the District Commissioner (DC), etc. BGVM had to create hope of success, create confidence, had to show that the workers' sole strength was their unity, co-operation and determination to win. The struggle had to get public sympathy; sympathy from other unions and organisations. BGVM had to establish its own identity. It had to show that it had no axe to grind in the bargain, that it was not representing any

political party, it was not interested in votes but in the workers themselves. It had to counteract accusation thrown against it. All this meant a lot of activity.

Day after day, almost round the clock, members of the BGVM were with the workers, listening to their problems, seeking solutions together, dispelling the darkness to their ignorance and fear, helping them to grow in awareness, confidence and hope. Street corners and market places soon became schools of learning. Morchas, street corner meetings and open public meetings were part of the daily routine. People were already getting used to the police and C.I.Ds. They had realized for themselves that there was no room for violence in workers' struggles. The BGVM never failed to impress upon the workers how any form of violence would defeat their cause in the given situation.

Within a week 800 workers belonging to 17 different factories were on the streets on strike. Workers and the members of the BGVM now clearly saw that they had to form a union. The owners' association had refused to negotiate with the BGVM and the workers' representatives on the ground that they were not a recognised union. So a union was formed: "The Shramik Shakti Sanghatana". Members were enrolled, office bearers elected, constitution and by-laws framed and all the necessary papers for registration sent to Hubli.

The powerloom workers were one of the poorest sections of workers in Belgaum. 800 of them were already on strike, many more wanted to come out on strike. How long would the strike last? How could the families of the poorest of workers save themselves from starvation? These problems worried the leaders. So the BGVM took a few decisions together with the workers: no more workers would be allowed to come out on strike. Committees should be set up in each of the 17 factories to study the economic condition of the strikers. The poorest among them should be helped. The respective committees would decide who needed help and how much. Funds should be raised to buy food grains for rationing to those in dire need. An action committee was to be set up to chalk out the day-to-day program and to evaluate the current events and developments.

Neither the BGVM or the workers had to beg for donations. Sympathizers, rich and poor were giving what they could to see that the workers' struggle continued till their demands were met. Contributions in cash and kind came in from varied directions. Now even the poorest of workers need not fear starvation. They could at least have one meal a day. The workers who were not on strike supported the ones on strike. They had by now learned the meaning of brotherhood.

Negotiations at the Labour Commissioner's office on the 2nd and 13th of December ended in failures. The owners were adamant in not giving the workers their demands, the workers were not willing to compromise on their minimal demands. The workers were determined to fight, to put up a good resistance. They were united. Nothing and nobody could break their unity now. They saw their strength in their unity. For once the workers were ONE. The other unions joined in, support came in from all directions. The BGVM

succeeded in doing the impossible; uniting all the powerloom workers of Belgaum.

This strike was not just a time of noise and slogan shouting only, it was not a time for sitting idle at home. It was a time for learning. This was the BGVM's way of conducting a school of non-formal education, issue-focused learning through the methodology of action reflection (praxis). It was a time for people to learn the value of co-operation and corporate action, of concern and love for one another, a time for affirming in practice the brotherhood of man and asserting their own human worth.

The struggle went on and on, a disciplined struggle, non-violent beyond imagination. The regular public meetings were attended by hundreds of people. Often the speakers in these meetings were the workers themselves. Men and women who had no voice so far were very eloquent now.

Half way through the struggle one morning the newspapers carried good news for the workers: The Factory Act is made applicable to powerloom workers. If this is implemented, all their demands would be met. But on the next day, December 22, the owners declared lock-out for the whole industry. The lock-out, anybody could see, was an attempt by the owners to break the workers unity. They thought that the victims of the lock-out would turn against the strike. But the owners were disappointed. The workers saw through their wicked tactic, and decided that those on strike and the victims of the lock-out should work hand in hand, tooth and nail. The Bandh organized on December 20 a huge rally and a public meeting that was attended by thousands of workers which should have given the owners an idea about their unity, but the owners refused to learn.

The victims of the lock-out had committed no crime, placed no demands, had not gone on strike, were reporting regularly on duty, and yet were jobless now - thousands of them. The BGVM had to guide and organize these workers too. With the worker's unanimous consent, all marched to the D.C's Office. They decided on an indefinite dharana day and night at the D.C's Office till the lock-out was removed. Five to six hundred people sat day and night at the D.C's Office, calm and peaceful, demanding to provide jobs for 7,000 workers rendered jobless overnight through the lock-out. They were a force!

Workers on strike continued going to their respective factories during work hours for demonstrating in front of the factories. Outside the factory hours they came for meetings. Now, regular meetings were held at the D.C's Office and in the open spaces around it. Here again many more workers got time to reflect on their social reality of oppression, of poverty. On an empty stomach they seemed to learn faster. The cold of the winter nights did bother them, but they couldn't care less for it, for the fire within them gave them warmth. They were prepared to suffer and even die for justice, for their rights. This was again a school of learning. Men and women learning together, understanding the social structures. They saw with the help of their friends from the BGVM how the established values and patterns of the society cared for those who have and reduced the have-nots to things to be manipulated and used.

Workers with red flags became a routine sight at the D.C.'s Office. The satyagraha and chain fasting continued, the strike too continued without even a stray instance of violence from the part of the workers. Attempts at reconciliation by the D.C. on December 23 again failed. There remained hardly anything to be done at the District level. Now the matter was referred to Bangalore.

Though the struggle had been going on for the last 32 days, the workers were not tired, at least not their spirit, their body sometimes fainted with fatigue. This struggle for them was a matter of life and death. They had faced too many defeats in the past, so this time they must succeed. They mustered strength to go on. For them it was their schooling period - a luxury.

But there were cracks in the owners association - a lot of infights. They could not hold on longer. Their powerlooms were getting rust eaten. Individual owners began to negotiate with their respective workers. Privately they admitted that the lock-out was illegal, they were willing to pay some compensation. They requested the workers to go back to work, they were ready to grant their demands and agreed to abide by the final agreement when it was reached. Under these conditions many workers started working again.

Soon there was an order from Bangalore (on January 7) banning the lock-out. The workers were jubilant. Victims of the lock-out went back to work. But those on strike continued the struggle. But soon another order followed that banned the strike too. The case of the powerloom workers was now before the Labour Court for decision. But the workers could not afford to wait for the decision of the Labour Court - it may take years. They knew that if they continued the agitation they could now be arrested and jailed. The leaders had these things explained to them. But the decision was theirs; they continued the strike peacefully. The leaders were now threatened by the police and were requested again and again to call off the strike. But they did not heed to this, they and the workers were willing to take the consequences of continuing an "illegal" strike.

On the 18th January, a group of strikers decided to celebrate the 50th day of their struggle, in a peaceful and reflective manner. On the same day the owners too were having a meeting in a nearby temple. During the meeting some gundas sent by the owners burned the workers' red flag. The workers shouted slogans challenging this unwanted action. In the confusion one of the scooters parked nearby was set on fire by someone! This was enough to accuse the workers of violence. The police interfered and arrested and lathi-charged the workers. Leaders and workers were arrested not only at the meeting place but also at different other parts of the city. Police violence did not scare away the workers. They assembled in thousands. Took out a morcha to the police station in protest. There they were lathi-charged again. Altogether 54 people were arrested and carted off to the jail. While the arrested people were being taken away there was only one cry to be heard from the workers united in their thousands: "Shramik Shakti Zindabad".

This incident did not destroy the workers' unity. In a public meeting that followed the arrest and lathi-charge, workers unanimously decided to continue

the struggle; in place of the arrested leaders new leaders sprang up. Those in jail were not eager to come out. They intensified their learning sessions. Jail life for them was a seminar on social problems lasting for fourteen days at the expense of the Government.

The owners again began to see that nothing could break the workers' struggle. They began searching for ways of reconciliation. By January 25 some possibility of settlement was seen. So, two of the leaders came out on bail. On the January 29, after a long session lasting from 5 p.m. to 2.30 a.m. an agreement was made in which practically all the demands of the workers were met. On January 30 all the arrested people were out on bail. On the 2nd February, at another meeting with the owners, another agreement was signed stating that agreement signed on January 29 would be binding on all the members of the Belgaum Powerloom Owners and Twisters Association and the members of the Belgaum Shramik Shakti Sanghatana. Thus ended the 70 day old struggle of the workers.

"Shramik Shakti Sanghatana" is the name of the trade union born of the struggle of the Belgaum powerloom workers under the leadership of BGVM. It was officially registered on January 10, 1978. It is a new trade union, with a new leadership, with stress on workers' participation at all levels, at every decision-making. It is open to all workers. A unique union, its leaders suffered with the workers, they shared the hardships of the workers, sleepless nights and hungry stomachs. Their life-style, more than what they talked, communicated to the rest of the workers the joy that comes from suffering for the sake of justice. In all that they spoke and did, the leaders affirmed the dignity of man, even of the least, the worth of human labour, values of sharing, co-operation, corporate action and common brotherhood of man.

Now that the strike is over, the Shramik Shakti Sanghatana has the task of making sure that the 8,000 workers of Belgaum powerlooms get what is promised to them in the agreements signed. This will keep them busy for over a month.

PARTICIPATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN TRIBAL AREAS:Seva Mandir's View*

Kishore Saint

The problem of weakness and vulnerability of communities in tribal areas has many facets. The environmental, technical and social factors are here locked into a spiral degradation of resources and quality of life. These regions are constantly drained of their surplus in produce and deprived of their educated and skilled manpower. Progress to the extent it takes place proceeds along lines of individual gain preserving or improving the status of the well-off and further impoverishing the weak. For the rich and poor alike, the population pressure on land, water, pasture and forest resources had assumed proportions which are intolerable in terms of the future viability of these communities.

In human development terms, the most crucial ones concern the knowledge the people have about development and their capacity to organise and act for their own development. With the exception of a few well-to-do and well placed individuals, the people in rural areas have very little right knowledge about the development processes that are under way in their area and the opportunities that exist for them to benefit from these. They also lack the know-how, the means and often the will to organise themselves and to act to gain access to these opportunities. In general, it could be said that the community at any particular village or small area level lacks self-concept as a development group which could mobilise itself and undertake sustained development at its own level.

It is the contention here that the way out of the present impasse and stagnation is the development of this self-concept as development entities at particular group, village and area levels. In a sense this is what community development in an earlier, more hopeful era was all about. However, community development was overtaken and discarded in favour of agricultural development and extension, with its preference for the individual entrepreneur farmer, supported by the packages of inputs for exploitative farming. Thus, while agriculture and the better off agriculturists have prospered, the rural community has failed to evolve any contemporary character, self-confidence or concern for its own future.

Yet, with the rural communities both among the farmers and other groups there are individuals, usually young adults with some schooling, who show some sense of concern and responsibility beyond their own family. They have a realistic perception of the problems that confront the rural community. They are familiar with the 'official' ropes and quite adept at pulling them for their own benefit, some of them feel that much more could be done for their communities if the people acted in an organised and concerted manner. These young adults in rural areas might be viewed as potential leaders and 'vanguard groups'. Through appropriate education, cooperative organisation

*Presented at Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi during February 7-9, 1979.

and institutional support they can become a locally rooted, productively engaged force that can mobilise its own and external resources to move beyond prevailing constraints and to initiate a process of all round development of the villages and areas in which they live.

The development sequence following the above approach may be summarized as follows:

The first stage is the formation, reorganisation or consolidation of community organisations, for development at the village, village cluster and area level. These might be single function or multi-purpose organisations. Their role might be operational, co-ordination or supportive. The particular mix and pattern would depend on the prevailing situation. There would have to be separate organisations for the weaker sections.

The second stage would involve the education through discussion, analysis, information and skill inputs of these groups in terms of villages and area development problems, possibilities and planning processes.

At the third stage, planning and development strategies at the particular group, village and area-level are worked out.

This includes the deciding of priorities, identifying resources and refining tasks for development.

The fourth stage concerns the negotiation and obtaining of commitment for financial, technical and other support for projects from local government bodies, banks, voluntary agencies in the context of or in addition to the local, state and national-level planning.

The fifth stage involve the launching of group, village and area level projects for development, e.g., in irrigation, social forestry, animal husbandry, nutrition, preventive health, small industries, communications, appropriate technology.

It is clear that the success of the approach outlined above depends on a fair degree of expertise and sophistication in the arts of organisation, planning and management of development strategy and projects. As things stand today, the rural communities cannot be assumed to possess these skills. However, this very situation defines the magnitude and complexity of the educational task for the development of the community, by the community.

Here a vital role has to be performed by a supportive catalyst institution staffed by a team of development workers. The team would comprise men and women with training and background in community education, sociology, agriculture, engineering and family life. The group has to initially undertake for itself a program of self-education in the setting of the area. This would involve organisational work in the community as a means to learning the nature of the task, the development potential and the problems to be faced, and to prepare the material for the training of community leaders and organisers for development amongst the young adults and the weaker sections. At a later stage, these development workers have to be actively involved as promoters, coordinators, supporters and monitors of the organisational and educational process for development. Even as they assist the community organisation at group, village and area level in gaining

self-recognition and self-confidence as active agents of development and reconstruction at the local level, they have to maintain the stance of co-learners and partners in the process.

The catalyst institution and development groups support has to go beyond educational and organisational work. As the development planning and project implementation get under way, the catalyst unit will have to provide institutional back-up and intermediary support for project preparation, negotiation and management of finances and project management. However, these support arrangements have built into them the educational dimension to prepare for the taking over of these functions by the local leadership.

The approach outlined here has been developed from conviction based on empirical knowledge that the younger generation of working adults in the rural areas has the capacity to comprehend, take hold of and transform the existing situation towards possibilities for a better future for the generation to come. They cannot do it alone. They need assistance and guidance from the present generation of the educated young adults who are prepared to work with them. The initiative can and has to come from us.



PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: AN APPROACH IN A TRIBALNON-FORMAL EDUCATION SETTING

D. Subba Rao*

My own association with classical research and action research were associated in my own research studies for my M.Ed. and Ph.D degrees and also while working with Teachers and students in pre-service and inservice programs. As I became deeply involved in Adult and Continuing Education programs and non-formal education programs, I felt some of the short comings of the classic research approach.

My own experience in the participatory research program came in a conscious process when I began to tackle the program of non-formal education for tribal youth in Khammam District in Andhra Pradesh. The immediate problem we faced was to evolve a methodology and a research approach to devise a suitable curriculum to suit the tribal needs.

At the invitation of Mr Chandrasekhar, a social worker, living in the tribal area, myself and two of my research students camped for three days, during which time we met with twenty youths and one instructor for training to design a non-formal education program for development.

The choice of the problem of devising a suitable curriculum came from their own volition to educate themselves as a result of exposure to some of the currents of modernity following construction of a new bridge on the River Sabari in their tribal setting. The effort at problem solving was a joint venture on the part of myself, my two research students, the social worker and the students. The choice of the instructor was based on the cooperative effort extended by the youth, as he belongs to their own community.

On the basis of conversations, close observation and living with them for three to four days, we evolved a reader for them, developed a methodology of teaching and also progress reports and evaluation instruments to get the things going on.

We evolved a sentence pattern approach for reading, writing and learning. The pattern has to be changed, as one of the research workers during his next stay found it difficult through interaction with the instructor and students. Through participatory approach, we evolved the word order method and prepared a series of lessons and also a few non-formal lessons for dialogue and enlightenment in regard to time sense, co-operation, cattle development, sharing, our village, our field, our forest, hunting, marketing, our work and leisure time activities. The research student and the tribal

*Head, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, Andhra University, India.

Presented at Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi during February 7-9, 1979.

illiterates had constant interaction and he made a series of visits.

After six months of learning, we thought what next to be done to change their work situation. Through the help of Grameena Bank in the neighbouring village, they took loans, started a dairy and a co-operative farm to grow fodder grass, suitable food crops, corn and other things needed for their living and work.

As we proceeded with non-formal education projects, we developed some instruments for study and evaluation of the progress in different directions. We are trying to develop self-evaluation models, so that the participants in the program can play a key role in their own progress and set a model of development of their own. Our own view in getting involved in the project is to make the participants develop a self consciousness and also understand the dynamics of co-operation, progress and self development and finally self reliance in their own setting.

We didn't develop an experimental and controlled model as was done in another experiment of non-formal education for illiterate women, for the development of the child in Mahboob Nagar Dt. in A.P. under the aegis of the council for social development with the help of U.N.I.C.E.F. We were mainly interested in the outcomes of the project like changes in their situation and life-styles, increased knowledge base for the developmental activities, in regard to various government schemes sponsored and undertaken by different departments like Integrated Tribal Development Authority (I.T.D.A.), Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Grameena Bank and other developmental oriented departments. As we proceeded with the experiment, we had an exposure into the success and failures of co-operative dairy, co-operative farming, individual work schedules, economic and social development and so on. So the experiment led to greater awareness among the participants to enquire into and change their social and economic situation and also pave way for the developmental oriented programs, leading to self reliance. Perhaps our weakness is that we didn't develop many sophisticated research designs, nor carried any multiple analysis methods as pointed out by Dr Rajesh Tandon in his paper. With the experiences gained by other friends, with greater insight gained out of the present conference, we hope to carry research experiments into this new phase of research in social action settings where the researchers and participants can play a key role at a micro-level and report our experiences in a greater depth in our subsequent meetings and conferences.

WAGE NEGOTIATIONS AS PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH?

P. Chadha*

The procedure I followed in a recent wage negotiation in which I was involved appears to fit into the framework of the "Steps in an 'ideal' Participatory Research Approach" represented in Dr Rajesh Tandon's paper - Participatory Research: An exploratory statement at Figure 2, page 7. I am not certain, however, that the situation satisfies the major element of 'ideological/normative stance' referred to by Dr Tandon in his explanation of Figure 2, and I will look forward to clarity on this aspect.

The REQUEST in this case came from the Employees Union in the form of a charter of demands.

Recognition of the Union, by management, as the sole bargaining agent constituted the JOINT AGREEMENT.

The union negotiating team and the management negotiating team jointly constituted the SMALL GROUP at one level. A smaller group of three members from either team later constituted a second level SMALL GROUP.

The modus operandi for negotiations, like agreed reference groups, framework for negotiations etc., represented JOINT DESIGN.

JOINT DATA COLLECTION was taken recourse too for gathering relevant information from the reference groups.

Agreed procedure for costing of demands and successive proposals, and screening of irrelevant data from the relevant one, were the first stages of JOINT DATA ANALYSIS. Formulation of final proposals for acceptance by the employees at large, and the top management - the prime actors - was the second stage of joint data analysis.

Negotiating teams were continually reporting to the respective prime actors employees and the top management - and getting feedback, and thus SHARING with them.

Depending on the feedback, more innovative proposals reconciling the views of the two prime actor groups, had to be developed on several occasions, till the final CHANGE PLAN - the settlement is reached.

*Senior Fellow, Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi.

Presented at Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi during February 7-9, 1979.

The settlement, although reached, has not yet been written down and formalised. The question of IMPLEMENTATION will no doubt arise as soon as the settlement is formalised.

CONSOLIDATION OF LEARNING is normally not undertaken by the parties after Settlements are reached/implemented, although most text-books recommended it. In this situation it is possible, and as a consequence of Dr Tandon's paper, I propose attempting it.

Can this process be legitimately called 'Participatory Research Approach'?

REPORTS ON MEETINGS ON PR



A REPORT ON REGIONAL
WORKSHOP IN SOUTHERN INDIA

A.V. Natarajan

Background

The Institute of Educational Strategy Studies and Socio-logical Research, Tamil Nadu jointly with the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, Andhra University organized this workshop on Participatory Research for Development and Change, sponsored by the International Council for Adult Education, Canada, and Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi. The workshop was held at the Village Reconstruction Organization, Guntur from 26-28 December, 1979.

Within the framework of the Participatory Research Project of the ICAE, and under the area of innovation : "Participatory Research for Development and Change", this workshop was the second in India of a series of activities in the Asian Network. The first one comprised of Participatory Research Meeting held in New Delhi from 7 to 9 February, 1979 to identify major issues of Participatory Research and to develop guidelines for further activities.

Terms and Reference

The main aim of the workshop was to provide an opportunity to the theoreticians and practitioners of social-action at the grass root level to get together and to exchange their knowledge and experiences and to formulate guidelines for strengthening their capacities for managing innovative programs for rural development and change through Participatory Research Approach. The specific objectives were to explore trends, problems and issues, to exchange and synthesize experiences and to analyse how the on-going and proposed programs for rural development could be improved through Participatory Research Approach. This also included to plan out strategies for effective dissemination of Participatory Research.

Participation

Thirty-five participants attended the workshop. The participants represented diverse disciplinary backgrounds and came from various organizations and institutions concerned with rural development.

Documentation

The documentation of the workshop included case studies and other papers on relevant experience in the Asian region. The Reports of the Regional (Asian) Participatory Meeting held in New Delhi (February 1979) and the Regional (Asian) Meeting of Participatory Research held in Bangkok, Thailand (April 1979) were used as reference documents.

Inauguration

The workshop was inaugurated by Professor Surveswara Rao, Vice-Chancellor

of Nagarjuna University. In his inaugural address he specifically emphasized the need for new approaches and innovative methods and singled out the need for ensuring the mobilization and conscious participation of population. Professor Windey welcomed the participants and expressed his appreciation on the initiative taken in organizing the workshop by the Institute of Educational Strategy Studies and Sociological Research and Andhra University.

Methods of Work

The workshop discussed the highlights of Participatory Research in detail, with the specific existing understanding of the Participatory Research Approach explained by A.V. Natarajan, Director and Head of Participatory Research Unit, I.E.S.S.S.R., Tamil Nadu.

During the course of the workshop the participants had an opportunity to visit the centre for Blind and Handicapped and to try PR approach in a tribal setting with Youth Club functioning under Nehru Yuvak Kendra. Participants found the visits extremely interesting and valuable in their own learning about PR approach.

At the concluding session the workshop arrived at a number of clarifying statements, formulated tentative PR approach module and recommendations.

The workshop proved to be an important step in further clarifying our ideas about Participatory Research, and strengthening the network.

CHAPTER II

Workshop Experiences Their Synthesis Problems and Issues

A number of conceptual, methodological issues in Participatory Research emerged during the workshop. They were important, though there was no consensus in resolving these issues, for achieving further clarity on them in near future. The participants started their discussion by analysing the title of the workshop and clarifying the concepts involved therein.

1. Majority of the participants felt that the term "Research" is a sufficiently misleading concept as far as the "Participatory" aspect of the process is concerned.

"The participants felt that the "Participatory Process is a process that HUMANISES the research process, both orthodox and contemporary by extending the role of being subjects of Research to the participants. This Humanising Process is a Welcome sign in recognising the subjectivity of the Human persons involved in the research and thus elevating Human Dignity above the materialistic plane."

2. The major criticism against Participatory Research, as in previous meetings, is that it is more akin to Community Development than any Social Science Research. There was a lively discussion and a sharp distinction was tried. It was agreed that while the aim of both Participatory Research and Community Development is for social change,

the principles on which they rest differ, Participatory Research rests on the following principles:

- . The dissemination among local communities of scientific and technological knowledge necessary for social change.
- . Promotion of an increased awareness of the relationship between people and their physical and cultural environment, and an interest in, the possibilities of a better way of living.
- . Ensuring individuals conscious, stimulatives of individuals and group action, within the local community, for effective incorporation into working life and for solving problems and improving ways of living.

Community Development Program rests on the following principles:

- . Planning Programs on both local and national levels for the improvement of living conditions.
- . Organizing the bodies necessary for the implementation of the programs and co-ordinating between programs.
- . Opening possibilities for group participation in the planning and implementation of Community Development Programs.
- . Emphasizing the educational aspects of community development.

It was agreed that PR differs from Community Development Plans in that it rests mainly on guidance and on people's initiative to handle their problems within their own abilities and the potentialities of their community. It was also understood that while economic development assumes increasing significance in the Community Development Programs, Participatory Research reflects another change, and that is, the integration of social and economic development in the overall development pattern.

3. It was felt by the participants that the process can be well understood as a "Participatory Action" instead of "Participatory Research" since the credence of the process lies more in action than in Research. Participants defined Participatory Action as translating a concept of development felt by the people into a program of development by themselves meaning, helping people to become whole so that they have a sense of responsibility to each other and to the entire community. Participatory Action, it was felt, leads us to affirm that the primary development focus is on people and the situation in which they live and work.
4. Issues of Development and Change were discussed in the light of Participatory Action. Participants viewed development as the commitment to work for improved social, cultural, economic and political conditions and for basic human rights for all people. Participatory development, therefore, comes about through people's own creative action in an effort to increase their control over the environment. It was expressed that development must be seen as a situation in which man becomes both the subject and the object of his own improvement, and not merely an instrument in a process imposed upon him from above or from outside his own society.
5. Participatory Social Development was discussed and found to imply the readiness for change in society on the part of man himself. This calls, it was viewed, for the recognition that social justice is a fundamental purpose of development in every area of human activity. While participatory Social Development through Participatory Action should be immediate and concrete, practical and political, how could it be in a

"Silent Society" (as expressed by some participants) reluctant to change. It was strongly felt that the Silent Society is not exactly silent in a true sense, it seems to be so just as the sleeping volcano, and it becomes 'active' and creative when it is united and begins to organize itself. The reason, it was expressed, is not that they do not want change. The reason is the whole system which does not offer them any opportunity for change. And people need only (to be harnessed?) to initiate, direct and control change and to accept and to adjust to change and its consequences. In this context Attitudinal Change was found to be the key to all development and to call for a great effort at education and information exchange so that understanding and Participatory Action can occur. It was felt that attitudinal change is a "Long Range Process".

6. The discussion to some extent then centred about education. Participants strongly felt that education is the most effective force in the Participatory Social Development Process for the individual or group adjustments to the new life situations and in the Community integration and co-operation. It was also argued that education must occur in the community as a whole community programs seeking solution to the problems of the individual in his total environment. Emphasis in the Participatory Social Development process then, it was suggested should be on the education of citizen rather than upon the factor of change itself. It was felt that education in India is not making a satisfactory contribution to the changing society or to the peoples' adjustment.

It was also argued that while the purpose of education is the liberation of man, he can raise to his own liberation through literacy - dialogue and action. Since the means by which people involve in the Participatory Social Development Process are as important as the ends, it was found, effective ways are to be resolved to counteract the deep-seated social and cultural factors and human communication barriers. This invariably requires a collective multipronged approach by cultural anthropologists, social psychologists and rural sociologists of which education should form essential (but education of what kind?) component.

CHAPTER III

Highlightening Participatory Approach

1. Participatory approach is a process of Incorporation and not a process of elimination. It tries to incorporate every person and agency in the vicinity to work together in a closer collaboration, thus reducing duplication and wastage of resources.
2. This process of Incorporation in active involvement will comprise of the whole community, though not at the outset.
3. WITNESS OF PRESENCE will form an integral and essential part of the educative process in the participatory process.
4. Confidence and commitment on the part of the individual participants, and on the part of the participants as a collective community with the understanding that the Researcher (the catalytic agent) is one among the participants is a pre-requisite of this joint venture.

5. It is not only the community which undergoes change through this approach, but the "COMMUNITY" which includes the organization of the catalytic agent, because they are in a mutually educative process standing on par with each other in the participatory social development process.

6. Participatory approach enables inter-disciplinary approach for development. (It is a non - compartmentalisation approach bringing diverse development agencies to work in closer collaboration with each other and the community as co-participant).

7. Initiative is essential in participatory approach. The one, either the catalytic agent (the organisation) or a representative of the community (or the community) express an explicit initiative with the presupposition that the other has an implicit initiative and that in reciprocation the other will make it explicit for establishing a relationship. Once the relationship is established the entry point into the social system and social enquiry is made (multilateral entry points - suggested).

8. The catalytic agent or the organisation needs to acquire adequate knowledge of the behavioural pattern of the community, (social, economic, cultural, political etc.), and this process of acquiring knowledge (coming to know) can be preceded or followed by explicitation of the initiative.

*Now that the relationship is established by the catalytic agent and the community by way of expressing the initiative and understanding the behavioural pattern of the community PARTICIPATORY ACTION commences. Until now it has not assumed the participatory dimension.

9. After the establishment of relationship between the researcher and community, and strategically placed in the social system and social enquiry, the researcher may start with being a participatory observer and gradually merge with the community to the extent of experiencing the local problem as his own. This experience of oneness in the struggle is essential for identifying with the suffering community and to work in closer contact with them for alleviating the suffering, (always remembering that he does not come as researcher).

10. Once the problem has become a common phenomenon, by way of dialogue with the members of the community (a multi-channel relationship) each come to know of the experience of the other and try to work out a strategy.

*At this juncture, the community (including the researcher) try to make a social analysis of their situation and chart out their problems. They set up priority for the problems before setting up a strategy.

*Such questions as : will an outsider be in a position to interpret the responses? Is he sufficiently sensitive and knowledgeable about the socio-cultural context with which he must function, can be counteracted and the participatory social Development Process can best be carried out by agents rooted in the local milieu? Implicit in this is the strong belief that program operations are interpreted only within a specific cultural context.

*Participatory Social Development Action is very effective in micro-level. Small communities in their attempts to carry on their activities provide

opportunities over a wider range of individuals, and the chance of picking up and organizing different experiences are greater at micro level.

11. Evolving the strategy requires another important element namely the 'envisaged goal'. What do we want to become in the future from this present? Hence they also have to set up a GOAL towards reaching which the strategy is to be drawn.

This setting up of priority, evolving and acting according to the strategy and facing the consequences of the action whether favourable or adverse is a participatory Social Action.

12. Evolving strategy also requires assessment of the resources available locally. If the strategy will require additional resources, whether financial, technical or resources of intellectual nature, the group has to excavate the possibility of acquiring such resources from the neighbourhood or other agencies.

13. The community puts forth a concerted effort in the actualisation of the strategy evolved, intermittently reflecting on the change (growth) towards the envisaged goal. (Change is not adequate an expression since change does not necessarily imply growth. It can also mean deterioration. Hence it should be understood that PR is geared towards participatory societal growth (Development - Progress) and hence change denoting growth).

The following presentation may highlighten the strategic formation - a travel from the PRESENT TO THE FUTURE.

Present:	Strategy:	Future:
Identification of the problems and setting up priority for strategy.	Identification of Resources. Acquiring additional resources if needed methodology - Action - reflection - Action. Action - Research - Action.	Envisaged goals.

*The strategic action makes future a reality. If so the approach is a success. If the strategy does not bring out the required change, then the strategy is to be changed. Hence it is recommended that during the course of acting upon strategy the community involves in Action - Reflection - Action. (The catalytic agent along with this: Action - Research - Action).

*Participative skills develop during the process and the mutually interacting process (counter current phenomenon) systematically reduces the communication gap and in this sense PR is not a system to be implanted but an 'objective to be realized' through a process.

CHAPTER IV

Recommendations

The interaction, discussion and deliberations on participatory research in the workshop led to the formulation of guidelines on specific and important aspects. It was felt that all Government/Non-Governmental, Institutions/

Organization should try to evolve PR approach to play a more dynamic role in rural development.

A. Recommendations to the ICAE, PECCE (Asian Network PR):

The following recommendations are given for the consideration of International Council for Adult Education, and Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education.

1. There should be greater regional co-operation as staff visitations and exchanges, critical but constructive evaluation of programs, more involvement of grass-root workers in seminar, effective strategies for the training of catalytic agents specially those working at the field operational level.
2. Seminars and workshops from national to field levels should be conducted for the development of various aspects of PR.
3. Greater exchange of literature and publication such as inventories, case studies, reports of meetings at national level should be encouraged.
4. The workshop recommends two main aspects (a) equitable access to participatory social development opportunities, and (b) fuller utilization of human resources for participatory social action as the strategy for development.
5. The workshop recommends three development programs as the major participatory social development (a) Human Resource Development, (b) Social Infrastructure, (c) Social System vs. Environment.

B. Recommendations to Indian Government and Human Resources Development Institutions/Organizations:

The following recommendations are given for the consideration of Indian Government and Development and Research Institutions.

1. Governmental Institution, Non-Governmental organisations should strengthen and recognize the importance of PR and its application in rural development programs.
2. Organisations should realistically involve the people they serve in decision making and determination of programs.
3. Human resources development institutions such as universities should incorporate field work and work experiences as a part of training, and they need to review the structure, approach and methodology currently employed for training of trainers involved in rural development and educational innovations.
4. Education opportunities should be universalized as a process for developing creativity and self-actualisation with the over-all aim of furthering personality development and personality activation which form the concept of participatory research.
5. Local youth - students - competence and elaboration of their role as facilitators to identify social attitudes for the correct assessment of their own community should be enhanced.

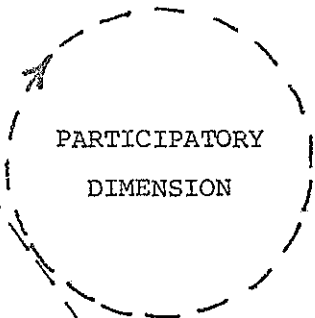
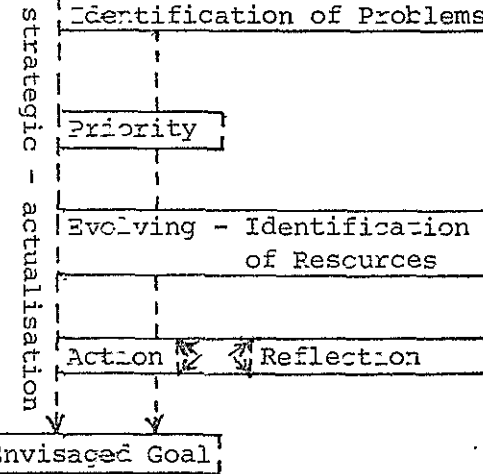
ENTRY POINT

Participatory Researcher
(Explicit initiative)

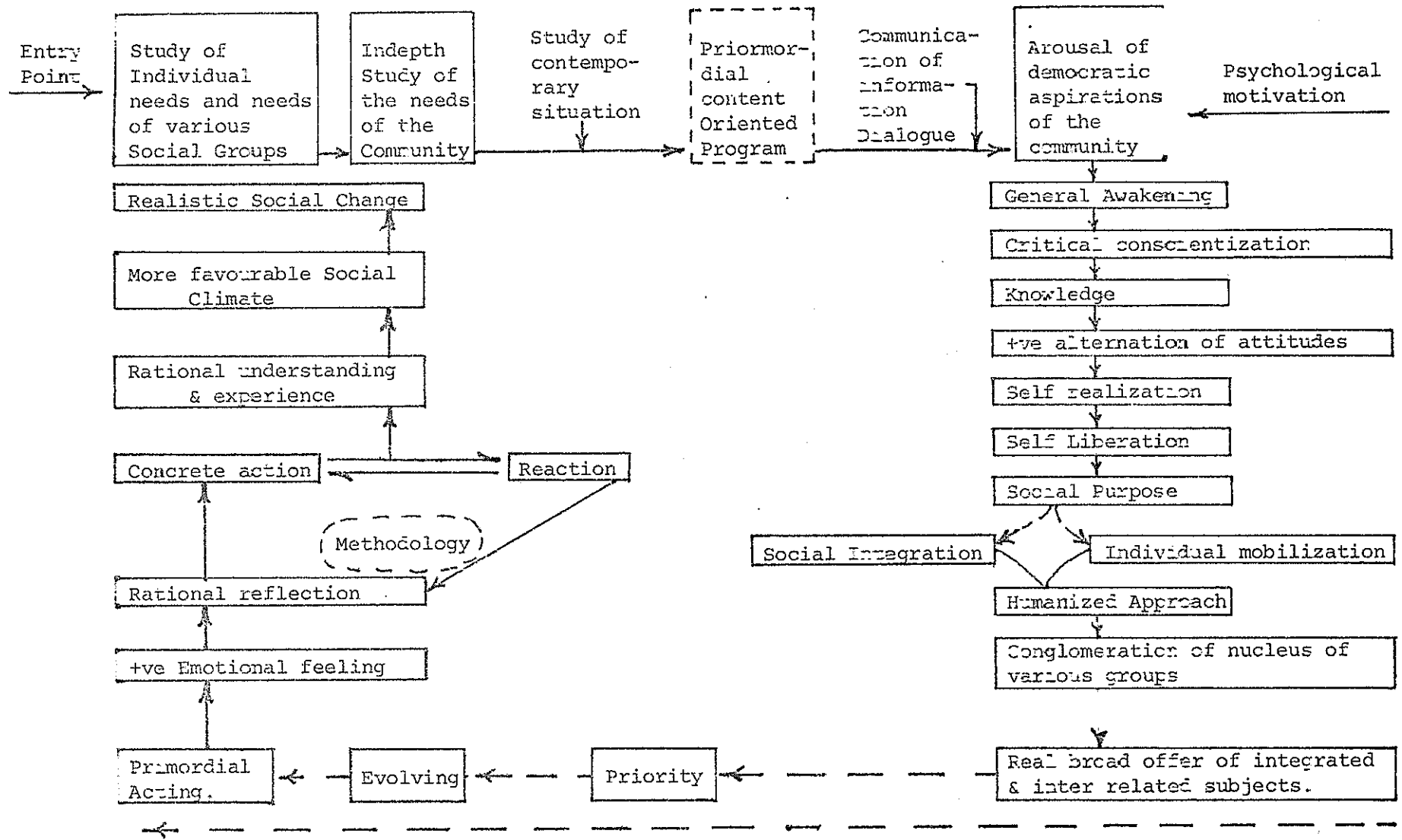
community
(Implicit initiative)

mutually educative
counter-current flow

COMMUNITY
(Community + Participatory Researcher)



PARTICIPATORY SOCIAL ACTION



STRATEGIC ACTUALIZATION

A REPORT ON PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH MEETING IN INDIA*

A meeting of Participatory Research in India was held at Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi during February 7-9, 1979. The meeting was attended by 35 participants from all over the country. These participants were a mixture of activists, field-level workers, researchers and practitioners. This diversity of people were invited for two primary reasons:

- a) To provide intellectual and emotional support to those working in educational and research institutions and government agencies who are beginning to engage in activities which can be broadly called Participatory Research (PR).
- b) To catalyze systematic reflection and documentation by those who are working in voluntary groups and associations.

This diversity posed major challenge to the meeting and at the same time resulted in a very stimulating and creative exchange of ideas and experiences. The four broad purposes of this meeting were:

- i) sharing of experiences in PR;
- ii) elaboration of the various aspects of PR approach;
- iii) development of a network of people engaged in such efforts in India;
- iv) exploration of mutual interest and common understanding in future PR activities.

At the beginning of this meeting, the participants shared their personal reasons for this meeting. There were three major themes in these personal statements:

1. For one group of participants, their present frustration with existing forms of research was the major reason. As one participant put it there has been 'tremendous development of research technology, while reality has remained untouched'. For another, 'books and reports have hardly made any impact on the life of the people'. A participant trained in traditional empiricist paradigm expressed the need for 'rehabilitating understanding instead of explanation' through PR. For another, there was no opportunity to go out in the field in existing research institutions. One participant felt very strongly about the monopolistic control of research by a few people, while another expressed a personal crusade against the existing irrelevance of research in terms of its cost to a poor country like India. This was one set of personal reasons.

2. Another set of personal reasons emerged from the existing failures of programs of development. For one participant, it was due to bureaucratic malaise and he wanted to 'take the shop to the doorstep of the poor'. One

*Prepared by Dr Rajesh Tandon, Fellow, Public Enterprises, Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi.

participant was bothered about the continuous failure of programs like adult education; several participants wanted to improve such programs and some of them had experimented with alternatives that proved effective in the field. For another participant, how to make community education and tribal development programs more effective was the major issue. Education of slum children, housing for urban poor, emancipation of women etc., were other major concerns of some of the participants. Protection of consumers from organization (business and government) through research was the concern of another participant.

3. The third set of responses focused upon education and learning as a method of social transformation. Some participants wanted to understand how systematic educational efforts can lead to social change. One participant called 'education a tool of usher in social metamorphosis'. For another, it was to understand how the poor can be mobilized to stand on their own feet. One participant wanted to discuss his method of mobilization in order to learn from others.

These three sets of personal reasons highlight the range and type of concern people brought to this meeting. After briefly describing several case studies that were presented in the meeting, we will return to some of these concerns in the context of PR.

Case Studies

A. Registration of Share Croppers in West Bengal: Operation Barga

The implementation of land reforms in West Bengal was given a major thrust recently through a very innovative method. One aspect of land reforms is the registration of sharecroppers so that tenancy rights can be bestowed on the farmers. Moreover, surplus land has to be distributed to the landless. The initial strategy was to send a team of officials to the village to inspect plot-to-plot records and determine the surplus land as well as register the sharecroppers. This strategy did not have much success because when the officials arrived in the village they were surrounded by landowners and told that no surplus land sharecroppers existed. Moreover, the time cycle for the recording of a sharecropper in the alive process of law was very long, 9-12 months.

An alternative was tried in 1977. The strategy entailed organizing a reorientation camp in some villages. These camps are of 3 day duration; participants include 30-40 beneficiaries and 10-15 officials. The camps are intended to be an opportunity for these rural poor to identify their problems and to devise their solutions. Initial hesitation and suspicion needs to be gradually removed before serious, critical reflection takes place. An outcome of these camps is to identify sharecroppers with the help of the beneficiaries. Evening meetings are organized, names are recorded, plot-by-plot inspection is made, and public lists of these records are displayed for any objections/challenges. The objections are reviewed right then and final records are made and displayed. The entire process takes less than ten days.



Once the "bargadars" (sharecroppers) are registered they get loans from the bank and cooperative societies. Their exploitation by local money-lenders is reduced. In the event there is a legal case against a registered sharecropper, the officials support his case in the court as they are a party to legislation. Thus, the sharecroppers and the officials act as a mutual support system. "Operation Barga" was the name given to this approach after the first reorientation camp.

Another important outcome of this process is an increased awareness of the sharecroppers. They begin to examine and understand the dynamics of their suffering and to move beyond dependence on outsiders. The reorientation camp acts as a method of identifying and locating sharecroppers (research), recording them and assisting with loans (change), and increasing their awareness (education).

B. Joint Irrigation System among Tribals

Among the tribals of southern Rajasthan, Seva Mandir (a voluntary agency) had been working in the field of adult education. The need for irrigation was very strongly felt by these tribal farmers and Seva Mandir began to assist them. With the fragmented land as well as labour, individual irrigation schemes appeared non-viable. The government agencies had not bothered much since many of them knew about earlier experiences where tribal farmers had not cooperated with each other for the success of the group scheme. Yet, a development agency (SFDA) was willing to give 50 per cent subsidy in case of a group scheme.

Twelve families whose aggregate landholdings added up to 20 acres, were approached by Seva Mandir. The entire planning for the scheme, including identification of sources of water, procedure of sharing and methods of cooperation were discussed and planned by these 12 families along with the Seva Mandir staff. There were a number of difficulties in this process, the most important being the mutual distrust among the families. After some time, through a family elderman, it was discovered that a few decades back, there was a system of sharing waters called "Parsi". This traditional system of mutual cooperation was geared towards survival. The system had gone into non-use over the years. This discovery facilitated the task of planning as well as constructing the well. The technology chosen was such that the twelve families can participate in construction.

After this period of 18 months, the scheme became operative and has been functioning well. The group of families has been able to obtain other assistance and loans as well. This appears to be an excellent illustration of viable, self managing groups as the basis of development, not marginal, "handicapped" individuals.

C. Organisation of landless agricultural labourers: Shramik Sangathana

For the past seven years, this organisation has been in existence in Shahada and Tabda Talugs of Dhulia District in Maharashtra. The movement of Saldars - yearly contract labourers earning about Rs 300/- per annum - was started in 1972, against low wages, lack of weekly rest day and inhuman

treatment. The movement has been successful in obtaining minimum wages for the Saldars and has been extending its activities gradually.

One of the major aspects of this movement is the mobilization of tribal women. Roughly 60 per cent of the population of these areas is tribal and landless labourers also account for 60 per cent. The mobilization of women began from a camp organised for them. During the camp, women shared their experiences and liquor emerged as their major enemy. Alcoholism by men resulted in all sorts of miseries for women. These women then moved to the nearby village and broke all the brewing pots. They asked the local women who participated in the camp to identify the drunkards who were surrounded by the women and asked to bow to their wives. In future it was decided that the punishment would also include tying to a tree and beating by women.

The police patel of that village was then called by women to explain why he was not checking assaults on women. It was during this dialogue that a very sensitive dynamic was unmasked. The police patel used to arrest a few drunkards, then also bail them out himself. This way he maintained his control over the men of the village. By himself bailing them out, he became a respected man. The women asked the police patel who paid for his salary. "The Government", replied the police patel. The women then reminded him that the government gets money through taxes which are contributed by the poor villagers when they buy soap, bidi, etc.

In the initial stages of the movement, the Sangathana had fought for restoration of land to tribals as it was illegally alienated from them. The entire process of identification of this land and whom it belonged to was carried out by the activists and the local tribal population. This was a major research task since written records of landownership are not easily accessible. The Sangathana engages in many such surveys for its various activities. All of them are carried out by the activists and the villages together. For example, women of many villages collected information from their villages about cases of wife beating and alcoholism. This information is then used for concrete action - either a "Morcha" or a protest. Even during negotiations with landlords or government officials, the delegates are continually controlled by the people. All protesters silently wait outside while their delegates are negotiating inside. The delegates cannot take a decision inside without first consulting the people sitting outside.

One of the major activities of the Sangathana in recent years has been non-formal/adult education. Camps have become an integral part of their organization. Tarun Mandals have come up in many villages. The Sangathana demonstrated the validity of participatory research approach through its actions and methods.

A number of other case studies were presented either briefly or to smaller groups. It is important to make a note of them:

1. A group of young people have begun some work among the bastis of Chandigarh. Despite the architectural megaplan of Chandigarh, bastis (slums) of poor people have emerged. This group has attempted to assist the residents of one basti in improving the quality of

construction of their houses.

2. A voluntary agency has been assisting artisans from a village near Ahmedabad in setting up their own economic activity. A weaver's cooperative and creche for children have emerged. Women have also begun economic activities.
3. Another group has been active in educating the children of Poona slums. The effort has been to involve the children in developing their learning materials.
4. The development of village-based groups of poor farmers, self-help cooperative societies, etc., has been an ongoing activity of Seva Mandir.
5. Action India, a voluntary group in New Delhi, has been working in the various resettlement colonies in attempting to educate the adults.
6. Various efforts in mobilizing women were mentioned; there is an ongoing attempt of organizing rural women near Ahmednagar.

During the Participatory Research meeting, most men participants joined the women participants in a protest demonstration against the "virginity test" of Indian women seeking entry into Britain.

Issues in Participatory Research

Various conceptual, epistemological and methodological issues in Participatory Research emerged during the meeting. Though there was no consensus in resolving these issues, they were important enough to occupy the discussion. Many of these issues are mentioned here as questions, with a view to achieving further clarity later.

1. One main theme of the discussion was the relationship between participatory research and participatory social action. It was basically agreed that Participatory Research must, at some stage, lead to participatory social action. To the extent that the line between Participatory Research and participatory social action is rather thin, is there a marked difference between the role of the researcher and the activist? Should the purpose of Participatory Research be only understanding and knowledge? Or should it also include the initiation of changes? It was generally agreed that Participatory Research must entail in its purpose some concrete changes in accordance with a certain value stance. It is very difficult to isolate the components of Participatory Research from those of participatory social action. To that extent, Participatory Research puts a much greater responsibility on the researcher as compared to the classical research.

2. Two related issues were also raised in the meeting. First, it was felt that Participatory Research is a logical outcome of certain types of human evolution. Therefore, the socio-political implications of Participatory Research are important. In some ways, Participatory Research is linked to a participatory democratic form of life and living. The value premises of Participatory Research are integrally subsumed under it. Participatory

Research is an approach towards building a more egalitarian form of society, organizations and groups.

The second related issue is the dichotomy between the researcher and the activist. In the present context, the two roles are assumed to be or seen as mutually exclusive. The discussion in the meeting pointed out a large area of overlap in the functions and activities of the researcher (under PR) and the activist. It was not suggested that the distinction between the two will completely evaporate in Participatory Research, but that there will be a major overlap and hence a greater scope for shifting roles. Moreover, this overlap will also significantly reduce the existing gap between the activist and the researcher.

There was a brief reference to the fact that two possible approaches in practising Participatory Research are the researcher moving into the setting or the researcher emerging from the setting. It was generally agreed that both are important approaches and both must be encouraged. I personally believe that this is a very critical tension for Participatory Research to manage. Emergence of a researcher from an action setting has to be seen as a very legitimate and important aspect of Participatory Research. Hence, the activists must be a part of Participatory Research networks and encouraged to systematically reflect upon and document their experiences.

It is a general experience that the poor are made dependent on outside resources and ideas. It was suggested in the meeting that while the outsiders (activists/researchers) have an important task in assisting the poor, caution must be exercised in ensuring that further dependency is not enhanced. The researcher or activist may push his/her own ideas on the community and thereby reduce their ability to control their actions. It was suggested that one way to ensure that the researcher's ideas do not get pushed on is to engage in a joint analysis of the situation. If the researcher and the members of the community jointly analyse the data obtained about the existing social reality, it will reduce the chances of the outsider perspective prevailing fully.

4. There was a lively discussion on the points of entry in Participatory Research, understandably so given the diverse background of the participants. It was generally agreed that various entry points are possible in Participatory Research. One can begin with adult education, land alienation, health care or drinking water. However, there is a common stream of struggle, participation and political implications in all these entry points.

Similarly, it is difficult to lay down precise rules and sequence of steps for Participatory Research. Participatory Research process emerges uniquely in every case and is based on the concrete context of our work. To specify rigid guidelines for Participatory Research will be to contradict its very philosophy. However, how does one call some activity Participatory Research? Or should there be some identifiable characteristics of the activity if it is Participatory Research? What are those components, keeping in view that we have labeled the activity Participatory Research?

5. A very fruitful comparison was made between Participatory Research and classical research (CR). The five major principles on which the distinction between Participatory Research and Classical Research was drawn are notable. First, CR is based on the principle of exclusion while PR is based on inclusion. CR attempts to exclude influences, styles, approaches, values and emotions that deviate from its rigidly laid down procedures; PR is an inclusive approach in terms of emotions, values, influences and styles. Second, CR is engaged in highlighting differences between phenomena, systems and processes; its methodological hallmark is to delineate those differences and provide an explanation. Moreover, the proof of theories and concepts is also based on the principle of differences. On the other hand, Participatory Research approach appears to be based on the principles of similarity; it is a process of recognizing similarities between phenomena, systems, people and problems. Participatory Research uses consensus and agreement as a principle for extending understanding.

Thirdly, CR has emphasised only thinking as a legitimate mode of inquiry. Feeling and action mode are considered "unscientific". To the extent that humans are simultaneously thinking - feeling - acting beings, inquiry modes can be all these. Participatory Research recognises it, and encourages feeling and action as equally legitimate processes of knowing, just like thinking. It emphasises the notion that action systems are simultaneously learning systems and emotions can be a powerful mode of knowledge, just like thoughts. The fourth principle is a derivation of the third, that Participatory Research is holistic in comparison to Classical Research which is partial. Classical Research attempts to enhance partial, linear understanding of miniscale issues; Participatory Research is an attempt to develop holistic, systemic and circular (iterative) understanding of micro issues as related to the larger macro context.

Finally, Classical Research is based on the principle of consumption; it encourages consumptive trends by explaining established status quo. By claiming that it is value-free, Classical Research may, inadvertently, support existing systems. Participatory Research, on the other hand, is premised on liberation; it attempts to change the existing system in accordance with those values that support the liberation of have-nots.

These distinctions between Classical Research and Participatory Research appear to be an important step towards further clarifying the conceptual underpinnings of Participatory Research.

6. Finally, the characteristics of a researcher in Participatory Research were discussed. In some ways, it was felt that the researcher in Participatory Research is challenged much more than in Classical Research. It was emphasised that the researcher is the most important "tool" in Participatory Research. The empathy and self-awareness of the researcher are critical ingredients in effective Participatory Research. The phrase "calibration of the researcher" was used in this context.

Similar points were raised in calibrating the activist. It was suggested that

the "liberation of the activist" is an important precondition to his/her effective efforts in liberating the oppressed. The researcher and the activist, both need to develop awareness about themselves and empathy with others. The ability to understand oneself in a context is an important skill for Participatory Research.

There were several thorny issues that were left somewhat untouched. It was discussed that Participatory Research is not a total replacement to existing modes of research. Survey can be a useful method for knowing certain things, for example. But under what conditions and for what issues Participatory Research is more effective, needs to be specified more closely. Then there is an important question of communicating knowledge. In classical research, written form (with due guidelines) is the only acceptable form of communicating the research findings. It appears that the scope and methods of communication are much broader in Participatory Research, but alternative forms need to be identified and practised more seriously.

In some ways, this meeting was an important step in extending Participatory Research. Some participants have identified various projects and ideas since then. They were excited to move ahead with Participatory Research approaches. Some of them indicated a need to hold smaller regional meetings and volunteered to arrange them. Some others have agreed for a more systematic reflection and documentation of their efforts. I hope that we can extend this network of Participatory Research more effectively as an outcome of this meeting.

A REPORT ON THE ASIAN REGIONAL MEETING OF
PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH*

A regional (Asian) meeting of participatory research was organized in Bangkok, Thailand with the assistance of ASPBAE during April, 1979. The participants included one representative each from Philippines, Korea, Bangladesh, Australia and India, and ten Thais. In addition there was representation from UNESCO and from the International Council of Adult Education (Dr J.R. Kidd was present for part of the time). Two Canadian colleagues presently doing fieldwork in Thailand also joined.

This was a first meeting of its kind organized in a limited fashion to strengthen Participatory Research in Asia. Specifically, the objectives of the meeting were:

- (a) to discuss and understand the concept of Participatory Research approach;
- (b) to share experiences of Participatory Research from various countries in Asia;
- (c) to develop mechanisms for extending the network of Participatory Research in Asia.

Since this was the first such get-together in Asia, there was a need to specify the existing understanding of the Participatory approach. This task was undertaken by Rajesh Tandon, the Asian Coordinator of Participatory Research Network. This presentation led to a very stimulating discussion on the concepts, elements and methods of Participatory Research. Before these issues are discussed here, it is useful to briefly sketch some of the case studies that were presented in this meeting.

Case Studies

1. Research and Development Unit: Songkla

Two very interesting efforts have been initiated by the research and development unit of Adult Education located in Southern Thailand Songkla (Contact: Somsak Boonyawiroj). The first attempt was made within the administration of the unit. After a series of initial dialogues, the seven person administration unit began to engage in a systematic effort of Participatory Research in identifying approaches to improving the administration. The effort has generated significant knowledge about the unit and key changes based on the same have been implemented.

The second effort is in the Integrated Rural Development Program. The area in the southern part of Thailand is primarily inhabited by farmers, fishermen, animal-raisers, etc. A pilot project was begun in three villages last year.

*Prepared by Dr Rajesh Tandon, Fellow, Public Enterprises, Centre for Continuing Education, New Delhi.

An initial survey of the village is carried out by the staff of the unit to be used as a means for getting the villagers together. A group of villagers (each village has about 300-500 families) have been asked to identify their problems and prioritize them. In one case, for example, irrigation facility was singled out as the main problem for developing a solution to this problem, outsiders provide technical expertise. It was decided consensually to dig deep wells. This group of villagers then identifies a set of families who will be willing to take up this project as their own. In this case, fifteen families have decided to go ahead with the wells. This is an ongoing project and many new areas are opening up.

2. Farmers' Assistance Board: Philippines

This is a service institution to the various organisations of farmers in the country (Contact: Eileen Belamide). The board assists existing farmers' organizations in enhancing their awareness and skills through educational programs. The research process is linked with the process of organising. The board organises social analysis seminars for the farmers' groups and they decide to initiate different programs after that for example, one group has taken up collective marketing of their produce.

Presently, FAB is engaged in the process of training grassroots researchers. They have been carrying out most of their activities primarily with the help of the outsiders (non-local, non-farmer). They have now begun the effort to enhance the skills of these farmers' groups to carry on their own research/mobilization effort and outsiders will be available to them to provide data about the national and the international perspective.

3. Rural Development Laboratory: Korea

An experiment was initiated in the four villages of rural areas south of Seoul in 1973 (Contact: Ji Woong Cheong). The project was an outcome of the field experience of some researchers who had used a Participatory Research approach to develop data about the rural life style and to alter it according to the needs of the local community. During this phase, it was found, for example, that the functional literacy of the village population was much lower than that mentioned by the classical researches conducted by the university. Moreover, the villagers themselves requested the professional researcher to assess the actual extent of the present indebtedness and developed solutions to remedy it.

The purpose of this effort was to train and organise the small Korean farmers so that they can become self-managing in their collective interests. This experience showed that a Participatory Research approach could not only generate relevant and valid data but also lead to some very concrete benefits. One of the interesting aspects was the emergence of cooperation among two groups of villagers who had been divided in the past.

4. People's Health Centre: Dacca

Started in 1973 with the objective of providing alternative health services to rural poor, this effort has now evolved in the areas of agricultural development, adult and children education, etc., (Contact: Rezaul Haque). The

project has demonstrated the effective use of paramedic personnel trained locally in improving the health of the people. A number of interesting Participatory Research illustrations are available in the project's history. One example is the school for landless agricultural labourers' children. In order to assist them in understanding their own position in society, these children carried out a survey of their village. They counted the number of rooms, doors and windows in all the houses, number of cattle, chicken and other birds, etc., and made an analysis of this data for their own learning. An important outcome of this was also a very authentic data-based on all the households in the village.

The project has also demonstrated the need for an initial initiative from outside as a first step towards an effective Participatory Research process. One worker of the project lost his life because he had learnt the reality - he had obtained very sensitive information not available to the public. Risks of Participatory Research??

Besides these case studies, a brief account of which is given above, some case studies from Australia, India and Thailand were also presented briefly. Since details about them are already available and circulated (like Operation Barga in India), they have not been presented in this report.

Theoretical Issues

A number of theoretical issues were raised and discussed during the meeting. These can be categorized in the following manner.

1. The major criticism against Participatory Research is that it is more akin to community development than any social science research. If action or change is an important aspect of Participatory Research, some doubts were expressed about its relevance in generating new knowledge that is applicable to a wider context. What is the difference between Participatory Research and Community Development? Is it more a method of training and implementation of change than finding out what exists? Is it more an education approach than research methodology?
2. Other important issues that were discussed, were the political implications of such an effort. Given the socio-political climate of many Asian countries, this is a sensitive and critical issue. Examples of oppressive impact of such efforts were quoted in the meeting. If the Participatory Research approach results in the education of the vulnerable and deprived groups, and they undertake some concrete actions, then the existing political structure is threatened and this invariably leads to some repercussions. Some discussion was also held about the possible strategies of neutralising such political implications.
3. A third set of issues was related to the methodology of participation. Who participates and in what manner? When the community or the social system in focus is organized, participation becomes easy. In the event of an under-organized or unorganized community, these questions are difficult to answer. Some form of organization-building might precede any Participatory Research effort on a long-term basis. In any event, the initial organization-

building is an equally legitimate area of Participatory Research.

4. A number of clarifying statements about the Participatory Research approach were made during the meetings:

(a) While the label "action-research" has been in currency for a longer time, Participatory Research presents an improvement over Action Research. Action Research generally implies that an outsider (outsider to a particular system) initiates his/her own project, Participatory Research is an attempt to join the people. Moreover, Action Research generally does not imply the participation of the members of the system in the research process.

(b) Participatory Research implies loss of complete control by the professional researcher. The influence during research/change process is shared between the members of the system and professional researcher.

(c) The easiest, and perhaps most useful way to learn about Participatory Research, is to engage in it personally.

(d) Participatory Research is an evolving process. Unlike other research approaches, it is not possible (or even desirable) to specify all the steps a priori. Steps of the process unfold and emerge as the Participatory Research process develops in a setting. This implies that rigid/fixed time schedules cannot be ascertained in the beginning. Furthermore, the Participatory Research process is much longer in time duration by its very nature. It, therefore, demands a much greater commitment from the researcher.

(e) The goals and objectives of the researcher are explicitly questioned and examined in Participatory Research. What concrete role the researcher is planning to play or interested in playing is discussed in the very beginning.

(f) PR believes that people can think. Ordinary people can also contribute to knowledge. It is a liberating process and it entails the liberation of the researcher as well.

5. Finally, the issue of researcher skills in PR was discussed. It was felt that in PR the researcher needs a much wider repertoire of skills than presently available with most researchers. The social skills of interaction, empathy and interpersonal trust appear to be most relevant. Does the researcher also need a set of skills related to participation of others and its facilitation?

A REPORT FROM REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP, BANGLADESH*

For a long time it was felt necessary to arrange a workshop formed by the workers who are associated with Development Programs.

As a first step, the first National Workshop was held at Bangladesh Palli Progoti Parishad Training and Resource Centre (TARC) Savar, from 18.9.78 to 23.9.78.

The nominated participants (who are engaged in organising the distressed women, marginal and landless farmers) attending this program were from twenty-one organisations.

The workshop gave unanimous importance to arranging the workshop programs on a regional basis. As a result, a true picture of collective development could be expected through an exchange of experience, ideas, visits to various development projects and general communication among participants.

Keeping this objective as a first priority, a group of seven development workers from seven different organisations visited nine projects from 12.3.79 to 12.4.79. The main objective of these visits was to observe success and failure, study new techniques and mechanisms of development and acquire experience through exchange of opinions.

Immediately after this Gono Unnayan Prochesta (GUP) arranged a workshop at Rajshahi from 14 to 17 May, 1979 with the help of representative workers from Barisal, Faridpur, Jessore, Kushtia and Khulna organisations associated with development programs.

Introduction

The organizers of the Workshop delivered a welcome to the participants and outlined the aims and subject matter to be covered. After this the participants gave a resume of their own programs. Then they divided the responsibility for conducting different sessions of the workshop among themselves.

Aim of the Workshop:

The fundamental aim of the workshop was to unite the development workers of the above mentioned areas in arranging a communication among themselves as to their experience so as to ascertain appropriate trends in development and possible means of bringing about social change. They also wanted to learn

*Received from Dr Rezaul Haque, People's Health Care Project, Bangladesh.

which groups are responsible for directing these development trends.

They discussed how collective organisations could be formed among the landless, marginal farmers, daily labourers and distressed women to try and draw up an outline for social change linking these people with existing organisations so they are attached with development activities and social change. To implement this program there were small discussion groups, collective discussions, visits to various projects and then the submission of the respective statements and reports.

Presentation of Work Schedule:

Each participant presented their respective program report and this was followed by a general discussion on its details and methods of implementation. As a result of this it became clear that the various organisations are not familiar with one another's activities, target group and the means they use in implementing their programs. From this they became convinced of the importance of developing a system to be followed by all those associated with social development.

They concluded that under the present socio-political and economic situations, development organisations must give importance to increasing awareness among the disadvantaged (the majority of the population).

Why is it necessary to organise the landless, marginal farmer, daily labourers and distressed women?

In small discussion groups consensus was reached on this topic. Along with 48.8% landless persons; marginal farmers, sharecroppers, daily labourers and distressed women form about 75% of the population of this country and they are deprived of their fundamental rights, i.e., adequate food, clothing, housing, health care and education. Though the majority of these people are directly linked with the production cycle of society, they do not get appropriate wages and are deprived of basic facilities which society and the nation should offer. Under the policy followed by the present Government, there is a tendency for the major backward section of the population to become poorer and the rich, richer.

Under the circumstances, the participants expressed their opinion that it is necessary to work for the development of the poor majority. Importance was given to attempts which can be helpful in implementing change in the conditions of this majority by all development programs.

Our Aims:

In respect to the prevailing condition of society, social awareness must be increased to bring about understanding relationship between the landless, marginal farmers, daily labourers, distressed women and other low-income group workers. Organisations should be formed to make these people aware of the oppression and class differences in their society. These small organisations should then communicate between one another to form an

organisation on the Union level. Besides this, they should be encouraged to take part in economic and social activities which will make them a powerful pressure group, ultimately helping them to realise their legal demands in society.

Obstacles:

The participants discussed in small groups and collectively the obstacles they anticipated in bringing the above mentioned aims to materialization. These obstacles arise generally due to religious taboos, rich class, group differences and misunderstandings.

Reactionary groups tend to utilize religion as an instrument to satisfy their own personal interests. For example, if a worker of such a development organisation belongs to a religion other than Islam, the development works are mischievously publicised as conversion and, especially in the case of women, they spread scandal.

Development works are also obstructed in different ways due to social prejudice. The rich always believe that unity among the poor and oppressed is a direct threat to their wealth and social status. They (the rich) therefore create obstacles at the primary stage to prevent this unity. Sometimes they give suggestions and even economic assistance to one or more persons in order to create misunderstanding among the rest. At times, they then try to utilize these groups as political instruments.

Ways to Tackle the Situation:

The workshop participants agreed that only a powerful organisation could tackle this created situation. In the primary stage, small organisations could be formed which would later communicate and link together into larger organisations. Each member of the organisation should be well aware of the aims and all should be given scope for leadership. Clear conception of the ideas of reactionaries should be taught through social education so that the people of these groups are aware of their oppression and bad intentions and can thus save their organisation from destruction.

The groups should be well connected with a production cycle through small collective economic programs and a collective fund should be created which can be utilized in solving small, local problems under special circumstances, e.g., increment of wages. Dependence on the rich exploiter should be minimized through joint economic programs. These groups should be careful to avoid clashes until they are well organised and powerful.

Ways to Form Groups and Who Will Form:

A social development worker or organiser of any program should have a clear concept of the political and social environment, group conflicts and leadership of the group they will be working with.

In the next stage, people should be selected from an area and encouraged to form a group maintaining similarity with the fundamental goals set out above. Young, landless men should be organised into an active group also to take responsibility.

The participants concluded that due to the fact that the specific aims of their organisations and methods of carrying these out vary, because sometimes the program is only a short-term one and because of changes in personnel, they themselves are not the ones in a position to actually implement a program. They have to give the initial direction, but it is only the poor and oppressed themselves who can understand from practical experience, what their problems really are.

Who Will Form Membership in The Group:

The collective opinion of the participants was that from their experiences it will be necessary to form small groups among the villagers and in turn link these groups to form a 'mass organization'. The single, local groups are often too small to make their social demands heard and as a result of the social pressures and oppression they face, cannot reach their ultimate goal. The initial impetus for the small group organization can be achieved through the work of the various development program personnel.

Leadership:

In order to plan, prepare and implement a program, it is necessary for the members to realize a capacity for collective leadership. The leadership cannot lie with one person. To be an effective program, all members must discuss the problems and take the decisions as to what means they will use to solve these.

Characteristics of the Organiser:

The participants agreed that in the initial stages, the 'organiser' is a person who plays a special role in the actual formation of the group. This person should therefore have a respect and love for the people he is working with. He should have a clear understanding of the social, economic, cultural, political and other allied affairs which affect the particular area he is working in. He should have a clear concept of the problems and proposed solutions of the group, have faith in them himself, and inspire faith in others that those goals can be reached.

He must not be one who holds to the mentality that he is someone special in the group; his must be a leadership which strengthens the group to coordinate and implement their own programs. If the group faces social or other pressures, he must be with them, encouraging them forward. These are the traits of a good organiser.

Accepted Programs to form Groups in Different Projects:

In discussion the participants shared their project means and experiences in group formulation for social education, cultural activities, small economic

programs (at collective or personal level), and credit procedures.

Social Education:

In some areas groups are being formed through social education programs. Under this approach, people are made aware of their problems and the social and power structures involved. They then try to solve these problems through group discussion. In some places they have succeeded in dealing with such things as increment of wages and correct distribution of ration goods.

Cultural Activities:

The participants also agreed and expressed their opinion that groups could be formed through religious education and literacy programs. It was also unanimously felt that cultural activities could be a good way of forming groups, but to the present, this particular means has not been used. There followed a discussion as to how drama, dance, movies, etc., which bear similarity to their life situations could be used as an instruction media.

The next stage is to maintain activity through organised participation, otherwise the group loses its initial incentive and motivation through lack of activity and there are no fruitful results.

Economic Activities:

Economic activities were seen as falling into two categories:

1. The first involves those who work individually to raise their income and are responsible for their own profit and loss. They are closed off from other peoples' difficulties and mutual co-operation is thus not possible. As a result, they may solve some of their problems, but a group approach would be a better and stronger means of facing and solving the problems.
2. The second category are those who work as a united group. Members may have the advantage of economic assistance through a joint capital fund. They also attempt to seek out sources of Government and other facilities to promote their programs. There can be various set-backs due to natural calamity, unwise decision making or inefficiency in carrying out the proposed program. The group should try to solve the problem of uneven production and distribution. The workshop participants felt that to date no group has actually succeeded in bringing about any significant changes in the system due to various limitations.

Grants and Loans:

Workshop participants in principal opposed the use of loans and grants on a large scale. They agreed that certainly short-term loans may be necessary in special circumstances, but not to the point of making the people completely dependent on loans. This leads to a decrease in self-reliance and the people taking the initiative to solve their own problems.

Visits to Projects:

The participants visited three cooperatives societies and one women's group which are organised by workers of GUP. The purpose of the visits was to observe the programs, note successes and failures and understand the mentality of those involved in programs.

The participants visited the cooperatives and discussed in detail with the members in three divided groups. From various statements it is proven that the members have a high opinion of the cooperatives, but are basically ignorant of their social condition, environment and what should be the main goals of their activities. The cooperatives are totally dependent on the staff of GUP who think in terms of economic activity and are not promoting leadership among the cooperative members.

Personal Attitude and Future Work Possibilities:

On the last day's discussion, the participants spoke about future work possibilities in their own field of interest. They felt there was not much similarity between their present works and aims, but all expressed a strong inclination to work with distressed people keeping definite goals in mind. They expressed satisfaction at the exchange of opinion and experience with other project workers and with members of the target group.

Collective Attitude and Future Work Possibilities:

The participants mentioned the advantage of arranging collective workshop involving members from different districts and sub-divisions. They also placed emphasis on making arrangements for discussion with members of various programs. They agreed to sit together again after six months to evaluate the progress of their work in light of the discussion taken during this workshop. They felt the necessity of observing as a body, their activities. To facilitate this they agreed to circulate a report of their experience, successes and failures of programs and the techniques used to solve problems among the workers.

Evaluation:

The participants appreciated the evaluation papers and the opportunity for discussion on these. They thought the workshop well arranged, but felt discussion time was too limited. Others felt there was a tendency of some participants to dominate in the discussions.

They also proposed to arrange further similar workshops for like-minded personalities.

Thanksgiving:

The workshop organisers were thanked for their sincere efforts as well as the workers of GUP for their whole-hearted cooperation. The workshop concluded with all aspiring to take an active part in like proceedings in the near future.

APPENDIXPARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROJECT: A NOTEBackground and Objectives

The Participatory Research Project of the International Council for Adult Education was formally initiated in September, 1977 after several years of informal dialogue and discussion amongst persons from many countries from varied backgrounds and work experience. The project grew out of a common concern with linking research to action on one hand and with supporting approaches which stimulated and gave voice to the analysis and interpretation of the exploited or oppressed on the other.

The objectives of the project are:

- the support of a network of persons engaged in participatory research
- the identification and dissemination of case studies and reflective writing related to participatory research
- the analysis of concrete experiences for the production of improved practical and theoretical materials

Conceptual Development

Participatory Research is usually described as a three-pronged activity: an approach to social investigation involving the full participation of those experiencing a given social reality; an educational process; and a means of taking action for development.

The following basic components of Participatory Research have been identified:

1. the problem originates in the community or workplace itself and is defined, analyzed with action planned by those affected;
2. the ultimate goal of research is the radical transformation of social reality and the improvement of the lives of the people involved. The beneficiaries of the research are the members of the community itself;
3. participatory research involves the full and active participation of the community in the entire research process;
4. participatory research involves a whole range of powerless groups of people - the exploited, the poor, the oppressed, the marginal, etc.;
5. the process of participatory research can create a greater awareness in the people of their own resources and mobilizes them for self-reliant development;
6. it is a more scientific method of research in that the participation of the community in the research process facilitates a more accurate

and authentic analysis of social reality;

7. The researcher is a committed participant and learner in the process of research, militant rather than detached.

Operational Development

The project is characterized by a decentralized approach. The centre of the project is said to be in the villages and the workplaces of the world and not a central location. Each region is independent and has developed its work and style along the lines which fit best within its political and cultural realities. A conscious effort has been made to develop work which is shared among equals engaged in a struggle which avoids dependency either financially or through the imposition of analytic frameworks. Major decisions affecting the overall project have been made by the regional coordinators working together. For convenience, certain communications functions have been delegated to the coordinator in Toronto.

Several common activities are shared by all groups:

- : identification and circulation of case studies and related papers
- : support of regional networks of persons engaged in participatory research
- : organizing of workshops and seminars

Highlights of the Regional Work

AFRICA

Central experience has grown from work in Tanzania but now includes practice in Kenya, Botswana, Sudan and Mozambique. A regional seminar in July, 1979 will examine some of these themes: The Epistemology of Participatory Research. The Development of Theory in Participatory Research, Participatory Research and World-Wide Social Struggle. Work is being done by teams of academic and non-academic persons.

ASIA

An initial seminar for Indian researchers was held in February, 1979 in New Delhi. The work in India will focus on the involvement of both activists and more formal researchers in collective analysis. National coordinators for an Asian network will have been identified in April, 1979. Projects which have been linked up include: Cultural Heritage of Aboriginal Peoples (Australia); Educational needs of Children in Urban Slums (India); Creation of Organisations of the Rural Poor (several projects in India); Analysis of Trade Union Organisations (India); Training of Barefoot Researchers (The Philippines).

EUROPE

A regional seminar was held in May, 1978 and a report of that seminar is

available from Jan de Vries. A steering committee made up of persons from several different countries was formed. Plans have been made for a newsletter and country trend reports. The Netherlands Studiecentrum is planning on publishing a book divided into three sections: social and political aspects of research, epistemological and methodological problems and description and theorizing about individual projects.

LATIN AMERICA

A network of active participatory researchers has been established. A project review meeting and a small Latin American seminar were held in Caracas in October, 1978. A report is available from Francisco Vio Grossi. A second seminar is planned in Peru in October/November, 1979. Work has focused on the development of a large scale participatory research project which is concerned with the planning of the State of Guarico in Venezuela. Other work is on-going in the barrios and rural areas of other regions in Latin America. Monographs and reports are being published as part of the network activities.

NORTH AMERICA

The North American Team has both established links with other groups engaged in participatory research and engaged itself in active work in Toronto and Ontario with a focus on fragmented working class communities, native peoples and work with organised labour. The North American team is preparing papers based on themes which have arisen from praxis. Some of the themes are: Alternative Modes of Collective Analysis; The Question of Scale in Participatory Research; Alternative Styles in Participatory Research; Methods of Participatory Evaluation. The North American Team is also working towards collective direction of itself.

INTERNATIONAL FORUM PLANNED

In April, 1980, the Participatory Research Project will bring together key case studies and reflective projects for an international workshop at which point the results of several years' communication and discussion will be brought together. The location of this workshop will most likely be Yugoslavia with participation limited to key activists in each region. Widespread dissemination in jargon-free language is being planned.

REGIONAL TEAMS

Regional working groups have been established in the following locations:

AFRICA: Yusuf Kassam, Participatory Research Project,
Department of Education, P.O. Box 35048
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

ASIA: Rajesh Tandon, Fellow, Public Enterprises Centre for
Continuing Education, Guest House Building, C-6/5,
Safdarjang Development Area, New Delhi 110 106, India

EUROPE: Jan de Vries, Participatory Research Project,
Studiecentrum ncvo, Nieuweweg 4, Postbus 351,
Amersfoort, The Netherlands

LATIN AMERICA: Francisco Vio Grossi, Apartado Postal 66.506,
Plaza Las Americas, Caracas, Venezuela

NORTH AMERICA: Ted Jackson, Participatory Research Project, International
Council for Adult Education, 252, Bloor Street West, Room S417,
Toronot, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6



PRIA
1142
PR3:3 TAN
PRIA LIBRARY

PRIA LIBRARY DOCUMENTATION CENTRE
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area,
NEW DELHI-110 062
Author TANDON, R. (ed. by)

P: 01- 12/E
|PR|
|THEORY|
|CASE STUDIES|