

A compilation of methods and approaches



Documentation



Capitalisation  
Sistematización

Bertie van der Meij, Karen Hampson and Jorge Chavez-Tafur



# Documentation *Sistematización* *Capitalisation*

A compilation of methods and approaches

Cover photo: A meeting with farmers, presenting the results of an initial documentation process.

Alxa League, Inner Mongolia, China.

Design and layout: Jan Hiensch, Leusden, the Netherlands

Translations: Carmen Rosa Bello, Tournecoupe, France

© ILEIA, Centre for Information

on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture

P.O. Box 2067, 3800 CB Amersfoort, the Netherlands

[ileia@ileia.nl](mailto:ileia@ileia.nl)

<http://www.leisa.info>

June 2008

# Contents

## 9 Introduction

## 11 Methods and approaches

- 12 Documenting, evaluating and learning from our development projects: A participatory systematization workbook**  
Daniel Selener, Christopher Purdy and Gabriela Zapata, 1998.  
IIRR, International Institute for Rural Reconstruction
- 14 Systematization to capture project experiences: A guide**  
Pushkin Phartiyal, 2006.  
ENRAP, Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia/Pacific Region
- 16 Guía metodológica de sistematización**  
Jaime Almenara Merel, 2004.  
PESA, Programa Especial para la Seguridad Alimentaria en Centroamérica / FAO
- 18 Methodology for capitalization and enhancement of the experiences of IFAD programmes in west and central Africa**  
Ndèye Coumba Fall and Adama Abdoulaye Ndiaye, 2005.  
FIDAFRIQUE, Information Network for Rural Development in West and Central Africa
- 20 Introduction a la capitalisation d'expériences  
Note de synthese du module de formation**  
Gilbert Graugnard and Véronique Quiblier, 2006.  
CIEDEL, Centre International d'Etudes pour le Développement Local
- 22 Sistematización de experiencias locales de desarrollo rural: Guía metodológica**  
Julio Berdegue, Ada Ocampo and German Escobar, 2007.  
FIDAMERICA – PREVAL
- 24 Learning and sharing experience: Lessons for learning processes in NGOs**  
Philippe Villevall and Philippe Lavigne Delville, 2004.  
Serie Traverses No. 15, Groupe Initiatives
- 26 Writeshops: Producing information materials through participatory writeshops**  
Paul Mundy, 2007. Online information

- 27 PIPA – Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis**  
Boru Douthwaite, 2008. Online information
- 28 Story guide: Building bridges using narrative techniques**  
Stephanie Colton, Victoria Ward and Jeannine Brutschin, 2006.  
SDC, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- 30 Giving voice: Practical guidelines for implementing Oral Testimony Projects**  
Panos Oral Testimony Programme, 2003. Panos Institute
- 32 Recording and using indigenous knowledge: A manual**  
David G. Abbass, Evelyn Mathias, Ana Reylene J. Montes, Paul Mundy, Jaime P. Ronquillo and Terri Willard (eds.), 1996. IIRR, International Institute for Rural Reconstruction
- 33 Construção do conhecimento agroecológico: Novos papéis, novas identidades**  
Paulo Petersen (ed.), 2007.  
Caderno do II Encontro Nacional de Agroecologia. ANA, Articulação Nacional de Agroecologia
- 34 Insights into participatory video: A handbook for the field**  
Nick and Chris Lunch, 2006. Insight U.K
- 36 Documentación de experiencias campesinas con uso de Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación: Un instrumento de gestión del conocimiento local**  
Luis Carlos Aguilar, Jocelijn Francois, Anne Piepenstock and Sergio Quispe, 2005.  
Fundación AGRECOL Andes
- 38 The “Most Significant Change” technique: A guide to its use**  
Rick Davies and Jess Dart, 2005.
- 40 Tools for knowledge and learning: A guide for development and humanitarian organisations**  
Ben Ramalingam, 2006.  
RAPID, Research and Policy in Development Programme, Overseas Development Institute
- 42 Learning from Experience: A manual for organising, analysing and documenting field based information**  
Jorge Chavez-Tafur, Karen Hampson, Anita Ingevall and Rik Thijssen, 2007.  
ILEIA, Centre for Information on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture

## 45 Projects and organisations

- 46 **ENRAP – Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia/Pacific Region**  
<http://www.enrap.org>
- 47 **KariaNet – Knowledge Access in Rural Interconnected Areas Network**  
<http://www.karianet.org>
- 48 **ActionAid**  
<http://www.actionaid.org>
- 49 **FARM Africa**  
<http://www.farmafrica.org.uk>
- 50 **PROLINNOVA – Promoting Local Innovation**  
<http://www.prolinnova.net>
- 51 **CEAAL Programa Latinoamericano de Apoyo a la Sistematizacion**  
<http://www.alforja.or.cr/sistem/index.html>
- 52 **The Encyclopedia of Sustainability**  
<http://www.bothends.org/encycl/encycl.php>
- 53 **Progreso Network**  
<http://www.progresonetwork.org>
- 54 **InfoAgrar**  
<http://www.infoagrar.ch>
- 55 **Water, Land and People: Voices and insights from three continents**  
<http://www.waterlandpeople.net>
- 56 **IICD – International Institute for Communications and Development**  
<http://www.iicd.org>
- 57 **Oxfam KIC**  
<http://www.oxfamkic.org>
- 58 **Rural Radio Resource Pack Programme, CTA**  
<http://ruralradio.cta.int>

**59 Dare to Share**

<http://www.daretoshare.ch>

**60 Agroecologia em Rede**

<http://www.agroecologiaemrede.org.br>

**61 The Communication Initiative**

<http://www.comminit.org>

**62 Farming Solutions**

<http://www.farmingsolutions.org>

**63 ILEIA**

<http://documentation.leisa.info>

## **65 Further reading**



# Introduction

Most of the ideas, concepts or approaches behind what we call “sustainable agriculture” are the result of the work of millions of small scale farmers and of the organisations that support them. The same can be said about the fight against poverty or the promotion of human rights: much of what we know in terms of effective approaches or strategies is the result of the field experience of thousands of individuals, many times differing to the ideas of researchers or academicians. The development of knowledge is happening all the time, in many places and at many levels.

However, in spite of a greater recognition of the fact that this is happening, a large portion of the knowledge developed in the field is rarely written down, is not published, and therefore remains largely unknown. Many NGOs, in the same way as many governmental programmes, spend most of their time and resources implementing their respective projects. But beyond the preparation of annual reports, very little time is dedicated to examining and documenting what has happened as a result of their efforts. Recognising this as a major bottleneck for the exchange, dissemination and further development of knowledge, ILEIA started its Documentation Programme in January 2007, aiming at increasing the documentation of field-based experiences. Our objective is to facilitate processes which help development practitioners learn from their own experience, and thus contribute to the development of practice-based knowledge.

Since the beginning of the programme we have been working with and supporting various organisations, in many different countries. The results of this programme have been positive in many ways – we have successfully developed and used a practical methodology in different contexts; we have encouraged organisations to start their own documentation process; we have received several articles for *LEISA Magazine* produced as a result of a thorough documentation process; and we have learned a lot about the difficulties which many organisations face when trying to document their experience.

In addition, it has been very interesting to see that quite a number of organisations are also promoting the documentation of field-based experiences. These efforts, taking place around the world, are all based on different methods or approaches, showing that there is not one way of documenting, nor one basic recipe to follow. Rather, each method has been developed in and is suited to different contexts, cultures or situations. This booklet aims to present some of the methods and approaches currently being used, together with some basic information about several projects and organisations specifically working around these issues.

The purpose of this booklet, therefore, is to provide readers with an overview and taste of the many methods available. Considering the limited space available for each case, we have tried to show the most relevant features, encouraging readers to look for the whole version (most of which are freely available on the internet). Having all these resources listed together makes

it easier to see the differences and commonalities between them. Our objective is not to show which one is best, nor to qualify them in any way. We have not done a theoretical analysis, nor look in detail at the subtle differences which some may see between “documentation” and the precise English translations of the Spanish “*sistematización*” and the French “*capitalisation*”. Despite the differences in names and languages, the methods and approaches presented here share a common objective: all of them seek to organise information, analyse it in detail, draw conclusions and share the results. This booklet presents some ways to reach the same objective.

Looking at the common elements seen in all cases, or at the main differences, we invite readers to select the one which is better suited to their context or situation, or to combine elements from different approaches, and to use this to start a documentation process. We will be very interested to hear about this and about your results.

# Methods and approaches

## Documenting, evaluating and learning from our development projects: A participatory systematization workbook

by Daniel Selener, Christopher Purdy and Gabriela Zapata, 1998.

ISBN 9978-04-241-5. International Institute for Rural Reconstruction, IIRR, Y.C. James Yen Centre, Silang, Cavite 4118, the Philippines / Apartado 17-08-8494, Quito, Ecuador.

E-mail: [information@iirr.org](mailto:information@iirr.org)



As stated by the authors, this workbook was written to help satisfy the need to depart from the traditional practice of only measuring project results, and the need to seek a more dynamic and comprehensive understanding of a project's processes, partly through the active participation of the project's beneficiaries. It looks at the concept of systematisation, presents a method to plan, follow up and evaluate a systematisation process, and includes some useful tools for conducting this process.

### What is systematisation?

The first section of this guide looks at this question, defining systematisation as “a methodology which facilitates the ongoing description, analysis and documentation of the processes and results of a development project in a participatory way”. This process leads to the generation of new knowledge, which is then fed back and used to make decisions and improve performance.

After mentioning several reasons why projects should systematise their experiences, the authors present six major objectives of a systematisation process: preserve information; improve performance and results; promote empowerment, self-reliance and sustainable development; contribute to mutual understanding and co-operation; enhance organisational capacity; and strengthen civil society. Specific activities are to be performed in order to achieve these objectives.

### Planning the systematisation process

In order to efficiently plan a systematisation process, it is necessary to start by looking at the principles which guide such a process. It is thus necessary to look at the relevance and the need to systematise a project, and start it only if all participants perceive it as useful. This process needs to consider the broader context in which the project is found, as well as its historical perspective. Other issues to consider are the necessary plurality of opinions and knowledge, the combination of local and scientific knowledge, and the participation of all those involved in the project. In a similar way, it is necessary to consider a series of aspects, such as:

- the reasons for starting a systematisation process;
- who is to lead the process, and who is going to participate in it;
- the methods and tools to use, and the procedures and time frame to follow.

This section finishes by looking at the major constraints which are frequently found (lack of time, lack of financial resources and lack of staff skills) and at the possible solutions for them.

### Areas of analysis

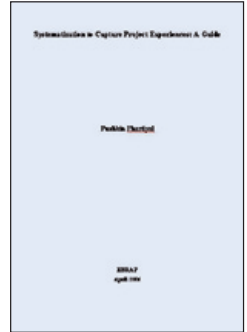
The guide looks next at the four “areas of analysis” within each project, which, as part of the systematisation process, will be documented, described and analysed. It goes on to look at the analytical framework necessary for doing this.

1. *The conceptual framework.* This is where an organisation’s ideology is presented, together with the strategy chosen to achieve its goals and objectives. At this moment, questions should be asked about the general goals and objectives (and about the organisation’s mission and vision), as well as about the development strategy as such.
2. *Context.* This refers to the general environment in which an organisation and project operates. Here, information should be gathered about the historical, political, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the project; considering the community or local context, the regional, national and even the global context.
3. *Characteristics of participants and nature of the project.* This area of analysis looks in detail at those involved in the project (grassroots organisations, NGOs, donors, government agencies), and then at the nature of the project. Special attention is therefore given to the problems it aims to solve, to the beneficiaries, its main activities, its budget, and the mechanisms established to ensure sustainability among others.
4. *Implementation, results and impact.* Finally, this area looks at the practical implementation, the results and impact. It considers the activities carried out to achieve the goals and objectives, the actual achievement of these goals, and how problems were or are solved. Attention is given to the roles played by the different actors, the factors that contributed to achieving results (or prevented them from being achieved), and to whether the benefits relate to the original expectations which the community had or not.

The next section looks at an additional step: that of sharing the lessons learnt. It does this by presenting a series of questions to be asked, referring both to the project (what generalisations can be shared? Have theories been generated?) as well as to the systematisation process in itself. It also examines the different ways in which these lessons can be shared. Finally, the authors include a “toolbox” section, with a number of tools that can be used to obtain the information required.

## Systematization to capture project experiences: A guide

by Pushkin Phartiyal, 2006. ENRAP, Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia/Pacific Region. IDRC Regional Office for South Asia, 208 Jorbagh, New Delhi 110003, India.  
<http://www.enrap.org>



This guide is based on ENRAP’s experience, in particular on an exercise conducted on request of the North Eastern Regional Community Resource Management Project (NERCRMP) in Meghalaya, India. It starts by defining systematisation as an evaluative and participatory technique for documentation. It is a methodology that, with the help of a facilitator, helps projects describe and analyse the situation before a project intervention, after the intervention, and the process of change which results from it. The process is not simply “stories from the field”, but a more in-depth analysis and review of project experiences. Its objectives therefore include assessing project influence and impact; assessing emerging needs for achieving project objectives; learning about unintended outcomes; capturing lessons and sharing them in different ways. The uniqueness of this process “*lies in bringing all primary stakeholders at a common platform*”.

### The systematisation process

The process is divided into three stages, covering a total of 13 interlinked steps.

*Stage 1, Grounding.* This first stage prepares the process, covering a suggested period of approximately 30 days. This includes:

- selecting questions based on the themes or interventions that the project wants to study;
- forming teams, representing all stakeholders, and dividing responsibilities among its members;
- identifying a facilitator to conduct the process (preferably one who understands the process and knows about participatory approaches);
- training of teams, so as to ensure that all team members are aware of basic participatory tools. It may also be advisable to train team members on report and case study writing, and on the analysis of the data generated;
- village selection, identifying the project villages for field study on the basis of given criteria. Selected villages should not only include the best performing communities, but also those where the project did not work well; and
- collecting secondary data, including the project baseline survey and implementation records. Possible sources for additional data should also be identified.

*Stage II, Strategy, field visit and documentation.* In approximately seven to eight days, the team visits the field and documents their learnings and findings. The five steps which make this phase include:

- team briefing, reviewing the process going on, and including an overview of the project's objectives and activities;
- team meetings and preparation. This step consolidates the work of Stage I: team members discuss the key question once again and prepare to go to the field;
- field visits, with the main objective of collecting information. This will mean interviews, focus groups discussions, transit walks, and other participatory tools. Regular summing up meetings can help assess progress and also identify tasks that still need to be done;
- documentation. When the teams are back from the field, the facilitators guide them in the report writing process. Documents must include the successes or failures of project interventions; and
- presentation and finalising findings. All teams come together to present their findings to other teams for their critical comments and suggestions.

*Stage III, Sharing and dissemination.* The systematisation process is completed when results are validated and when others learn from the project's experience. In approximately 30 days, this means:

- sharing findings. Documents are prepared and circulated among all the project stakeholders and partners. These provide feedback and suggestions, contributing to mutual learning; and
- preparing communication products for targeted audiences. Information resulting from the process is repackaged to develop communication products for various target audiences, including flyers, videos, cards, etc.

## **Annexes**

The guide finishes with a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of a systematisation facilitator, as well as with general tips for managing participants. It also includes the questionnaire used by NERCRMP, basically looking at the situation found before the project started, and then at the situation after the project interventions had taken place.

## Guía metodológica de sistematización

by Jaime Almenara Merel, 2004. Programa Especial para la Seguridad Alimentaria PESA en Centroamérica / FAO.

Col. Ruben Dario, Calle Venecia No. 2216,  
Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

<http://www.pesacentroamerica.org/biblioteca/guia-met.pdf>

E-mail: [pesacam@fao.org.hn](mailto:pesacam@fao.org.hn)



Written in Spanish, this guide was prepared for FAO's PESA programme in Central America. This is a food security programme currently running in Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua, described as one of the most important initiatives started in order to fight hunger and malnutrition in the region. This programme looks at a systematisation process as a reflection and critical analysis of field experiences, carried out by those directly involved in them. By looking at the major successes and failures, such a process aims to discover the main elements behind them, and then aims to share the lessons which can help improve future interventions. Systematisation helps provide feedback to an organisation's planning, monitoring and evaluation system. Building on the results of a workshop held in Managua in 2003, this guide looks first at the theoretical background, and then presents a systematisation methodology.

### General aspects

Before presenting a definition for systematisation, the authors mention that this is not a new concept, nor a new practice. Since the early 1980s, different organisations in Latin America have been working with different approaches, all of which shared and share a common idea: systematisation is a way of generating knowledge on the basis of a practical experience. This is a participatory process, involving all those actors and stakeholders who are part of that experience.

A more precise definition needs to consider the relevance that such a process has for a food security programme, or for rural development projects in general. It must also consider that a systematisation process implies communication between different parties, as a two-way flow, reflecting the importance of feedback and socialisation as part of the process. A systematisation process is then presented as a learning tool, as it helps understand an experience in detail. However, in contrast to traditional learning theories, its main emphasis is not on teaching, but on learning, paying special attention to the needs and interests of those who participate in a given process. This section finishes by comparing a systematisation process to an evaluation and to research.



## A systematisation methodology

The process is divided into three main steps: an initial planning step; the description, analysis and interpretation; and the communication of the results. For every step, the guide describes the expected final products, as well as those aspects which need to be taken into account for a successful implementation.

1. *Planning.* This step refers to the design of the whole process, in which it is necessary to:
  - identify the process' main objective, the expected products, and the use these will have within the organisation (and outside it);
  - select the systematisation object, or the experience to look at. An important point here is to try not to be too broad, as this might make the analysis more difficult. It is also important to consider aspects such as relevance or usefulness;
  - identify the main axis or the specific focus for the whole process. In order to do this, it helps to look at the reasons or at the particular aspects which make a given experience interesting; and
  - select the method to follow, deciding when the process will start, and who is going to participate in it.
2. *Description, analysis and interpretation.* This step results in the final systematisation document, describing the situation initially found in the field, the project's intervention, the final situation and presenting the lessons learnt. It implies:
  - collecting information, considering primary and secondary sources;
  - ordering this information on the basis of pre-defined categories or according to given themes. This is better done with a small chart, considering these categories and also the sources of information;
  - analysing the information found, together with farmers and beneficiaries. This means getting their opinions, identifying those points where they all agree and those where they do not, and drawing conclusions;
  - drawing lessons, considering what needs to change or to be done differently.This step finishes providing a basic framework for the final document.
3. *Communication.* This last step looks at the diffusion of the results. This needs to consider:
  - elaborating a communication strategy, deciding whom to work with, and with what type of publications;
  - designing and writing documents and material to share; and
  - organising events to share the materials. These events must also consider how to get feedback, as well as how the lessons learnt and shared will be put into practice.

The guide finishes with a description of a series of techniques for gathering and analysing information, and with a detailed bibliography.

## Methodology for capitalization and enhancement of the experiences of IFAD programmes in west and central Africa

by Ndèye Coumba Fall and Adama Abdoulaye Ndiaye, 2005.  
FIDAFRIQUE, Information Network for Rural Development in  
West and Central Africa. Immeuble Ousseynou Thiam Gueye - Point E,  
rue 4, angle G / 12524 BP 15702, Dakar Fann, Senegal.  
<http://www.fidafrique.net>  
E-mails: [ncfall@frao.org](mailto:ncfall@frao.org) ; [andiaye@frao.org](mailto:andiaye@frao.org)



This document is the outcome of a request formulated by the FIDAFRIQUE network to build an approach based on the capitalisation and enhancement of experiences which could be easily used by the IFAD projects and programmes. This approach is designed to help them implement an internal reflection, experience and knowledge sharing process. It starts by defining capitalisation as a process “*meant to build up a capital from information or knowledge available in an organisation, in order to develop them by making them available to other institutions or actors*”. While knowledge is defined as “*a precise and restricted set of information, capable of sparking changes or inspiring more efficient actions*”, the management of knowledge supposes creating, sharing and updating it.

### “Experience capitalisation” and enhancement

In order to stimulate reflection and analysis among project officers, this document first presents a preliminary activity, then looks at what projects should capitalise on, and only then at how to do it. The preliminary activity is a diagnosis of the capitalisation and communication practices within the projects, with the objective of drawing a baseline. This is done, for example, by using a self-assessment form which considers a series of variables (e.g. “communication”) and sub-variables (e.g. “information”, “consultation”, “exchange”). Each sub-variable is broken up into different affirmations or organisational situations, all of which are scored, according to the participants’ perception. Total scores show the organisation’s initial position.

The second step is to consider what to capitalise on. This starts by identifying the knowledge and experiences which the officers and their partners have acquired during the project implementation phase. But “*it is not a matter of just identifying successes and failures. One has to justify why they are considered as successes and failures, and provide explanations for these results*”. The authors recommend using the SFPO tool (for successes, failures, potentialities and obstacles), complementing it with a discussion on the causes of problems, the possible alternatives, the future plans and necessary tools. Next comes the definition of criteria for the knowledge exchange and capitalisation themes, all of which derive from the project’s objectives, its intervention strategies and its unexpected results. Through a concerted approach, the team must then choose the themes and designate the people in charge of steering the capitalisation process for each theme.

## How to capitalise?

Having looked at the project's successes and failures, and having selected the most interesting capitalisation themes, the project leaders can then use different tools to document (or capitalise) the themes.

1. *The experience sheet.* This is a form where, on one page, an individual or group presents the title of the capitalisation theme, some key words, a brief description of the experience, comments and notes. It also includes the complete identification of the author or authors.
2. *The life story.* A person's story is collected through interviews, where the individual tells his or her experience with a project, and what they have learned. This account is collected and put onto paper, after which it can be shared and discussed.
3. *The good practice registration sheet.* This is a detailed description of an innovation registered by a project's officers during its implementation. The description of the practice and the results is done by those directly involved in it, and this is then shared with others.
4. *The partnership case study form.* This is a form which focuses on the history, development and results of a given partnership. It consists of different slots, where information is given regarding the parties involved, the services rendered, the accomplishments and the decisive moments in the process.
5. *The systematic analysis of experience.* This is a group activity, where a given experience is described and then, on the basis of "turning points", divided into phases. Each phase is then analysed in detail, determining the main changes observed, and the causes and consequences of these changes.

The guide then presents a series of methods for sharing knowledge within projects (such as periodic exchange meetings, retreats or reflection breaks) and also with beneficiaries, such as farmers' workshops, rural radio programmes or exchange visits. These, as well as the capitalisation tools, are illustrated with examples.

## Introduction a la capitalisation d'expériences: Note de synthèse du module de formation

by Gilbert Graugnard and Véronique Quiblier, 2006. CIEDEL,  
Centre International d'Etudes pour le Développement Local.  
19 rue d'Enghien, 69002 Lyon, France  
<http://www.ciedel.org>  
E-mail: [ciedel@univ-catholyon.fr](mailto:ciedel@univ-catholyon.fr)



This document was written to support a two-day course aimed at the staff of non-governmental development organisations working in the field. It starts by discussing why it is necessary to work on the “capitalisation” of experiences. Among the reasons, the authors consider the need to “fight against the evaporation of experiences”, and the importance of being part of a collective process for the generation of knowledge. They then look at different definitions, pointing out that capitalisation is a process that helps give value to what people have learnt and know, and ensures this knowledge is not lost. Capitalisation differs from an evaluation (which compares an initial situation to one found after a period of time), and is also different from research or an external study.

Capitalisation aims to improve local practices by building on the experience acquired. It is therefore more than a description of facts or activities. It is normally an activity that takes place during a project (“capitalisation in vivo”). The process needs to be adapted if, for different reasons, it is necessary to carry it out after a project has finished (“a posteriori”).

### A capitalisation methodology

According to the authors, a capitalisation process must not follow a fixed methodology. It should only be based on a flexible structure that can adapt to the context in which it will be used. After considering who is to be involved, the authors propose four major phases as a basic structure to follow: the definition of a reference framework, the identification of major turning points, the identification and classification of local knowledge, and the definition of a pattern or model (“modelisation”).

- *Reference framework.* The first step is to create this framework on the basis of the capitalisation project or experience. This is done by collecting information from all the actors involved in it and from previously written documents (such as project reports), to establish a chronological timeline. This can be done by asking all participants to make their own timeline, and then agreeing on a collective one. It can also be done by looking at different life histories, not necessarily taking place simultaneously, but shaped by common elements.
- *Major turning points.* These are the most significant changes taking place during the chosen period of time, or the internal and external factors which shaped the development of a project. These are identified in the timeline resulting from

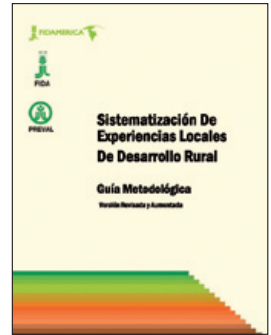
the first step. Identifying these turning points helps keep the documentation process in focus, preventing those taking part in it from getting lost in information. Preferably, these turning points must be given by those involved in the experience, and not by external agents.

- *Identification and classification of local knowledge.* This third step starts by looking for new competences or new abilities among the stakeholders involved as a result of the experience being looked at. This is done on the basis of the turning points identified above. The aim of the capitalisation process is to understand how these elements were built, and how the major difficulties were solved. It is therefore essential that the analysis goes beyond a simple description of the preliminary situation and of that found after the project, or beyond a list of ideas justifying the decisions taken during it. These competences, abilities or knowledge, are then divided, separating those which are specific to a given context, and those which are transferable. At the same time, they are divided between those which can be seen as coming from outside and those emerging from the project itself (“endogenous”). This is important when looking at the way to improve one’s own actions, or when thinking of practices which can be replicated elsewhere.
- *Definition of a pattern or model.* The objective here is to provide ideas for future actions (bearing in mind that the context will never be identical), or to identify alternative options to the path followed by the project. This is also the moment to present all those lessons or ideas which, not being limited to a particular experience, can benefit other projects. This is done by identifying the best media for diffusion. The guide makes a difference between a model and theory. While the first is just meant to inspire readers, a theory is supposed to “fit” in similar ways in all situations, with “reproducible” results. And while theory is generally made by an external observer, keeping a distance from the object, a model is produced by the actors themselves.

The authors finish by looking at the capitalisation process within the project cycle (as a process which can be employed at various stages and times), and by presenting different ways of seeing it and carrying it out.

## Sistematización de experiencias locales de desarrollo rural: Guía metodológica

by Julio Berdegué, Ada Ocampo and Germán Escobar, 2007.  
FIDAMERICA / PREVAL. Leon de la Fuente 110, Magdalena,  
Lima 17, Peru.  
<http://www.preval.org>



This is a revised edition of the guide published in 2000, which has been used to document many of the projects supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Latin America. It starts by looking at “*sistematización*” as a concept, presenting different definitions, and looking at the main ideas behind these definitions (e.g., that it is based on critical reflections, or that it is a participatory process). The first part of this document also looks at the role which such a process has (or must have) within a project.

The second chapter looks in detail at the many different experiences which can be documented, and then at the main purpose of a systematisation process. The next section presents a general model, as a basic framework to follow. This highlights the importance of involving different stakeholders throughout the process, aiming to have “multiple perspectives”, and the need for defining a set of working hypotheses. The framework looks in detail at the initial situation and context, at the intervention process, at the current (or resulting) situation, and at the main lessons or recommendations.

### A systematisation methodology

On the basis of the model described above, the guide then presents a methodology, divided into 12 steps.

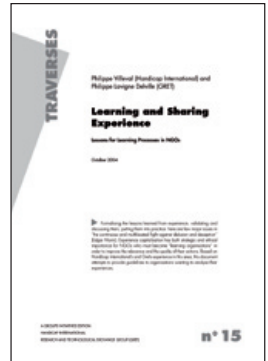
1. *Formation of the systematisation team.* The first step is to set up a team, selecting representatives of different institutions and inviting those who have been actively involved in the experience to be documented. Ideally, a team must include between 6 and 8 persons.
2. *Selection of the experience.* Having chosen a specific theme to look at, the team then needs to identify the most relevant or interesting experience. This is based on a series of criteria, such as its relative size, or its results.
3. *Definition of the experience’s main turning points.* This step aims to look at the initial situation and context, and then describe the experience itself as a chronological sequence of activities. The timeline drawn needs to show when and how activities took place, and also who was involved at each point.
4. *Definition of the main focus point.* The initial planning process continues with identifying the main aspects or elements on which the systematisation process will focus: what precisely do we want to learn from this experience?

5. *Identification of the main actors involved.* Following from the objective of including “multiple perspectives”, it is necessary to identify all those individuals and institutions who were part of the process. They are then invited to provide information and, more importantly, to give their opinions.
6. *Compilation and analysis of the information available.* This step puts together the secondary sources of information, including all project documents (proposals, reports, etc.). It is necessary to look at what type of information is included in each case, and determine its potential use.
7. *Formulation of questions or working hypothesis.* Having defined the aspects which are to be looked at in detail, the next step is to formulate the questions which will help with the analysis, and which will guide the interviews or focus groups.
8. *Individual and group interviews.* Taking into account the results of the previous steps, at this moment it is necessary to determine who will be interviewed, and what exactly will be asked. Interviewees may be chosen purposefully, on the basis of their potential contribution. “Participant observation” may also be used as a complement to all interviews.
9. *Organisation and analysis of the information gathered.* The information obtained is organised according to the main elements of the process: the initial situation, the intervention process, the current situation, the main findings and lessons, and the recommendations. Depending on the number of information sources, this can be done manually or with computers.
10. *Feedback.* This step focuses on the analysis of the whole experience, aiming at drawing lessons and recommendations. This is basically done through one or several group meetings, looking for a joint reflection and for the opinions of all participants.
11. *Writing up the systematisation report.* Having agreed on the main ideas, the next step is to write a basic report. This must not exceed a total of 30 pages, and must be as clear as possible. Those in charge of it must especially consider who the readers will be.
12. *Definition of a communication strategy.* As a last step, it is important to determine how to disseminate the results of the systematisation process, and how to promote their use. An important aspect to consider is the use of different media for different target groups.

As part of this methodology, the authors have also developed a set of 12 “field guides”. These provide specific tools and additional information for each step.

## Learning and sharing experience: Lessons for learning processes in NGOs

by Philippe Villeval and Philippe Lavigne Delville, 2004.  
Serie Traverses No. 15. Groupe Initiatives, 45 bis avenue  
de la Belle Gabrielle, 94736 Nogent-sur-Marne Cedex, France.  
[http://www.groupe-initiatives.org/pdf/traverseuk\\_15.pdf](http://www.groupe-initiatives.org/pdf/traverseuk_15.pdf)  
E-mail: [gr-initiatives@groupe-initiatives.org](mailto:gr-initiatives@groupe-initiatives.org)



This document provides guidelines for organisations wanting to analyse their field work experiences. The authors start by highlighting the importance of “experience capitalisation”, as a crucial activity towards improving the quality of actions undertaken by NGOs. Looking at this process in detail, they see in it a demanding exercise, and point out some of the reasons why many organisations do not document their work (lack of time, lack of resources, or because “*I don’t know how to...*”).

### Producing intelligence

Making a difference between tacit (or implicit) knowledge and explicit knowledge, the authors look at the necessary process of creating collective intelligence, and at the importance of learning collectively from experience. Capitalisation is seen as a process of externalisation, as it makes tacit knowledge explicit. Furthermore, taking part in the process of capitalisation can develop the capacities of organisations implementing projects similar to the one analysed. This is not to be an academic exercise conducted by theoreticians. On the contrary, “*it starts from practices and enriches practices*”.

The document looks then at what one should capitalise. It recommends identifying an organisation’s crucial knowledge, and capitalising experiences related to this knowledge. It then looks at the need for communication and dissemination of the results: “*the lessons learnt from experience must be available equally to those directly involved in the experiences capitalized and to any other stakeholder facing the same issues*”. The importance of ensuring that dissemination takes place is thus highlighted, as an integral part of the capitalisation process. A simple and inexpensive method, for example, is to place documents online. These documents, however, need to be attractive and easy to read. This may mean extra work in terms of format, layout and style.

### A capitalisation project

The authors consider that the best way to succeed in capitalisation is to conceive and implement it as a project. “*This means defining the objective, expected results, and necessary resources, and then planning, steering and assessing it.*” After making the objectives explicit, this requires:



- identifying a question or capitalisation subject, as one which will shed light on one experience. Subjects are chosen on the basis of the organisation's interests, basically considering the information which a given experience can provide, and if this information is of interest to the field teams;
- identifying "potentially concerned parties" in addition to the persons who are going to be actively involved in the capitalisation process, and then considering the participation of external partners;
- defining the method to follow. This will depend on different factors, such as the expected final product (whether it is an article or a video); the number of people participating in it; the sources and types of information available; and the way in which the whole process is validated.

Next comes the process of elaborating a document, from the definition of the specifications to the final distribution. This needs to consider who "wields the pen" or has the main responsibility for writing the document, and who (and when and how) will support the process. Attention must also be given to distribution, the language in which it will be made available, and deciding if it is sent to field teams, to partners or to other organisations.

### **Benefits for learning organisations**

The goal of a capitalisation process must be to contribute to modifying practices within an organisation. This is not an easy process: the authors present here a series of obstacles frequently experienced while improved practices are evolving. A common one is that *"one often prefers to move quickly on to something else (another project, another fad) rather than take the time to question oneself and learn from one's practice"*. It is therefore necessary to see capitalisation as part of a larger framework of knowledge management, and not as a solitary exercise. This means considering –and budgeting– the capitalisation process from the beginning of a project (not just preparing for it at the end of the project) and linking it strongly to the project's assessment.

## Writeshops – Producing information materials through participatory writeshops

by Paul Mundy. Online information, last revised in October 2007. Müllenberg 5a, 51515 Kürten, Germany.  
<http://www.mamud.com/writeshop.htm>  
E-mail: [paul@mamud.com](mailto:paul@mamud.com)



This site looks in detail at the advantages of “writeshops” for producing information materials. This technique was developed by the author and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) in the Philippines, and is seen as an extremely flexible approach. Writeshops are especially useful because they speed up the production process and make it far more efficient. The aim is to develop the materials, revise and put them into final form as quickly as possible, taking full advantage of the expertise of the participants taking part in the process (scientists, researchers, government personnel, teachers, NGO staff, extension agents and farmers). The diversity of skills, organisations and backgrounds of participants is key to ensuring that numerous ideas are represented in the materials produced.

Before the writeshop, a steering committee lists potential topics and invites resource persons to develop first drafts on each topic, using guidelines provided. These participants bring the drafts and various reference materials with them to the writeshop. Early in the writeshop, the participants brainstorm ideas for new topics (other than those already prepared) that should also be part of the publication, and these are assigned to knowledgeable participants. During the writeshop itself, each participant presents his or her draft paper, using overhead transparencies of each page. Copies of each draft are also given to all other participants, who critique the draft and suggest changes. After the presentation, an editor helps the author revise and edit the draft. Each participant then presents his or her revised second draft to the group a second time. Again, the audience critiques it and gives suggestions. After the presentation, the editor and artist again help revise it and develop a third draft. Towards the end of the writeshop, the third draft is made available to participants for final comments and revisions. The final version can be completed, printed and distributed soon after the writeshop.

The writeshop allows inputs from all participants to be incorporated. It allows ideas to be validated by a range of experts in the field. The concentration of resource persons, editors, artists and desktop-publishing resources at one time and place enables materials to be produced far more quickly than is typical for similar publications. And the sharing of experiences among participants develops networks that continue to be fruitful long after the writeshop itself.



## PIPA – Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis

by Boru Douthwaite. Online information, last updated in March 2008.  
<http://boru.pbwiki.com>  
E-mails: [b.douthwaite@cgiar.org](mailto:b.douthwaite@cgiar.org) ;  
[b.s.alvarez@cgiar.org](mailto:b.s.alvarez@cgiar.org)

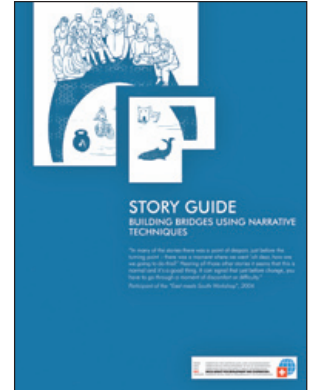
Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis (PIPA) is a project planning, monitoring and evaluation approach. It is a relatively young and experimental approach that draws from programme theory evaluation, as well as from social network analysis and research, to understand and foster innovation. It is designed to help the people involved in a project, programme or organisation make explicit their theories of change - in other words, how they see themselves achieving their goals and having impact. PIPA developed from work at the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) on innovation histories, and was first used in a workshop in January 2006 in Ghana, with seven projects funded by the Challenge Program on Water and Food. The information on this website is also available in Spanish.

PIPA centres on a three-day workshop, which is attended by project implementers, next users, end users and politically-important actors (where next users are the people and organisations who will use what the project will produce, and end users are the people the next users serve). The workshop starts by drawing a problem tree, and then deriving project outputs. A third step is to create a common vision among all participants, which leads to drawing network maps. A next step is to develop an outcomes logic model, and then to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan. The workshop process is designed to help participants surface, discuss and describe their hypotheses for how project activities and outputs could eventually contribute to desired goals such as poverty reduction. The description of these hypotheses is a description of the project's "impact pathways", presented as either (i) causal chains of activities, outputs and outcomes through which a project is expected to achieve its purpose and goal; or (ii) network maps showing how the actors involved work together, influence each other and influence the general environment for the new knowledge or technology being developed. The workshop process develops the two perspectives in turn and then integrates them through the construction of an outcomes logic model.

The outputs developed during and after a PIPA workshop can be used for *ex-ante* impact assessment, monitoring and evaluation, laying the foundation for *ex-post* impact assessment, and also to produce programme level network maps. Because of many non-tangible results (such as the identification of synergies between participants, group formation and organisation), carrying out a PIPA workshop is considered to be worthwhile even if there is no follow-up to develop an impact narrative or evaluation plan.

## Story guide: Building bridges using narrative techniques

by Stephanie Colton, Victoria Ward and Jeannine Brutschin, 2006.  
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Federal  
Department of Foreign Affairs. CH – 3003 Berne, Switzerland.  
[http://www.deza.ch/ressources/resource\\_en\\_155620.pdf](http://www.deza.ch/ressources/resource_en_155620.pdf)  
E-mail: [knowledgeandresearch@deza.admin.ch](mailto:knowledgeandresearch@deza.admin.ch) ;  
[info@deza.admin.ch](mailto:info@deza.admin.ch)



This guide highlights the fact that telling a story is a simple and familiar process, while working with stories for a specific purpose can be more complicated. The authors aim to help individuals “develop competence and confidence as tellers or facilitators of telling”, considering that people can benefit from such a process in many ways. Storytelling can help individuals and groups to connect with each other and share their experiences. It can help them understand a situation and also lead to shifts in attitudes and behaviours. Perhaps more importantly, the process of telling a story can have an empowering outcome.

This guide starts by showing the difference between a report and a story. It then presents four simple exercises meant to help a group get started and foster an adequate environment for story telling. Next, it presents a series of questions to use in order to encourage an individual to tell his or her story (such as “Tell me about a time when you and your team faced a dilemma in a project...”, or “Tell me about a moment when you were really inspired by what was going on around you”). Specific questions are needed at given moments, e.g. when more precise information or examples are needed, in order to identify “turning points” or specific changes, or when it is necessary to address the audience in a particular way. In general, all questions must reflect an open and interested attitude.

### Shaping and sharing stories

The next section presents a template used for accessing, shaping and sharing all kinds of stories (though recognising that this is just an intermediate step to help collect and enrich memories of experiences. Stories can also be captured with recording equipment and then transcribed). This template is best used when working in pairs. A story is told, focusing on a “turning point” or on a situation when the storyteller has experienced change, describing the events before, during and after that moment of change. After the story is finished, the template is used to develop a stronger, deeper version of that story. As if having a conversation, questions are then asked in order to get a deeper understanding, following the seven elements of the template:

- landscape: sets the scene in time and space;
- dwelling place: the precise location where action occurred;
- characters: the cast list, their descriptive attributes and their roles in the story;
- challenge: the problem or task that triggered the action;

- action: the sequence of events before, during and after the turning point;
- resolution: ending, including the lessons learned or message; and
- images and objects, to help the teller remember and retell the story.

After rehearsing, the story is told again, without looking at the template.

This section finishes with three checklists: for tellers, for facilitators and listeners, and in order to help create a safe and productive story environment. Tellers are recommended to tell only stories that matter to them, to get to know the audience in advance, to rehearse with a partner, and to disguise locations and names where the material is sensitive. Facilitators must allow tellers sufficient time, and must ask for permission before recording any story, considering potential issues of confidentiality or anonymity. The best environment is one where participants feel they can express their ideas, where there is no aggression, and where there is a productive tempo and rhythm.

### Different story techniques

The authors then describe different techniques to use in a workshop, including a detailed example for each case. Among these are:

1. *Objects and displays.* Objects are used as symbols for an idea or experience, considering that they, for example, “*have the power to both evoke and contain stories*”. An individual tells a story by focusing on one tangible object, and then other participants use the seven-element template to structure it.
2. *Postcards.* This is a way of recording insights and condensed stories, using a common postcard as a metaphor. Stories are told in response to a question, and then discussed for a short time (focusing on, e.g. the specific ingredients which contributed to a particular experience). This is summarised on the postcard, making sure that no important words are missed.
3. *Jumpstart stories.* Participants in a group tell each other a story, after which each participant tells the same story to a new group of people. Everyone selects the most inspiring story, aiming to find the top three stories in the room, which are then told again in the plenary.

The guide finishes with a troubleshooting section, looking at the things to watch out for. It also considers the moment after the storytelling workshop finishes, highlighting that the process of the workshop may have been much more important than what was produced in it. It is thus necessary to look at the intangible outcomes (stronger networks, improved personal confidence), all of which can have a more lasting effect than a document or “product”.

## Giving voice: Practical guidelines for implementing Oral Testimony projects

by the Panos Oral Testimony Programme, 2003. Panos Institute, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD, United Kingdom.  
<http://www.panos.org.uk>  
E-mail: [otp@panos.org.uk](mailto:otp@panos.org.uk)



On the basis of the experience accumulated by the Panos Oral Testimony programme, this manual provides simple and practical guidelines for implementing an oral testimony project (also available in Spanish and French). It starts by presenting a definition for an oral testimony, and by looking at the relationship it can have with development. The manual then looks then at how to develop an oral testimony project and at the different steps required: running a workshop, preparing and carrying out an interview, checking progress, and then working with the testimony. It finishes by looking at the necessary evaluation of the whole project.

### An Oral Testimony project

Oral testimonies refer to “*the result of free-ranging, open-ended interviews around a series of topics*”. The Panos Institute started using them as a way of generating and distributing information, raising awareness, and communicating the concerns of the marginalised sectors of society. A key aim has been to generate information for development. The narratives or testimonies that result from the interviews are seen as subjective, anecdotal, selective, partial and individual. “*But what some might call ‘flaws’ in the evidence are in fact strengths, for the way that people remember or describe something tells us what is important about it to them.*” They show the complexity of individual experiences. Most important, they give a voice to those who are frequently marginalised by their gender, age, education or ethnic identity.

Planning an oral testimony project demands looking in detail at the aims and objectives, as well as at different practicalities (timeframe, budget). It is also necessary to look at the expected outputs, or at the way the testimonies are to be used, and the activities required to achieve all this. Particularly important is the definition and distribution of roles and responsibilities among those who will be involved. Selecting who the interviewers will be is also a key decision. The selection needs to consider their age and sex, and also to choose between those who are closely associated with the narrators and with the local context and those who are not, considering that there are advantages in either case. Equally important is to select narrators: “ordinary” people of different ages, occupations, social backgrounds and experiences. Next comes the process of planning the fieldwork, looking at the number of interviews which will be carried out and the implications this will have. This step needs to take a series of ethical issues into account, such as those resulting from the relationship between interviewer and narrator, and the potential power imbalance there may be. Another important issue is the way the results of the interview will be used: narrators

need to be completely clear about the objectives of the project, and they need to approve that their testimonies can be used.

A special part of the project may be running a workshop. This can be useful to discuss the aims and objectives among all participants, to develop a framework of questions or to train interviewers. The manual provides detailed guidelines for such a workshop and its different sessions.

### **The interview**

A next step is to prepare for the interview. After looking at the necessary equipment, it is also important to define what type of interview will take place (choosing between, for example, an individual life story, covering all aspects of someone's life, and an issue-focused interview). The guide looks then at possible topics for a life story (family life, working or social life), and then at specific ways of obtaining qualitative information, encouraging narrators with specific questions (“*Why do you think this happened?*” “*What do you feel about this?*”). Questions need to be prepared in advance: most of them should be open, encouraging the narrator to expand on an issue, while leading questions and “double-barrelled” ones should be avoided.

It is equally important to adopt an appropriate attitude during the interview. This means trying to be a good listener, and to be tactful and alert. It will be necessary to know the topic to be discussed, and to be familiar with the area and location. During the interview it is better not to take many notes and to record the whole testimony, and to “take time and relax” together with the narrator.

### **After the interview**

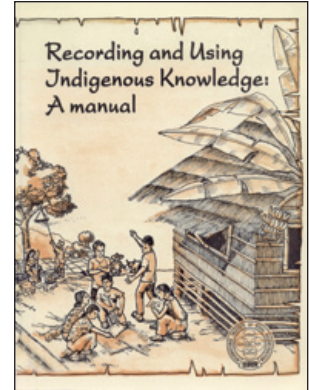
The guide looks then at what happens after the interview, recommending to share all audio-visual records and documents with the local population. Attention must be given to the way the tapes are stored and documented, preferably having a written summary of all interviews. Important activities are the transcription and translations of all interviews. The guide finishes by focusing on the potential outputs of a project, and at the possible uses for each.

## Recording and using indigenous knowledge: A manual

by David G. Abbass, Evelyn Mathias, Ana Reylene J. Montes,  
Paul Mundy, Jaime P. Ronquillo and Terri Willard (eds.), 1996.

ISBN 0-942717-70-8. International Institute  
for Rural Reconstruction, IIRR. Y.C. James Yen Centre,  
Silang, Cavite 4118, the Philippines.

E-mail: [information@iirr.org](mailto:information@iirr.org)

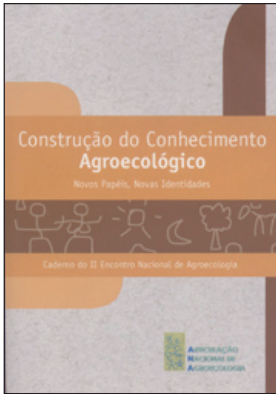


This manual looks at indigenous knowledge as an important element towards self-sufficiency, and as a factor that can have a positive impact in development work. It is seen as a valuable resource for development, but at the same time the authors recognise that it is a “neglected resource”. Therefore it is important to document indigenous knowledge to make it available to those working in development. One of the major reasons why it has been neglected is the lack of guidelines for recording and applying this knowledge in development programmes and projects. But there is no single approach to recording indigenous knowledge, nor does this manual propose a new methodology. It describes how existing methods can be used to record it: “*It provides government and non-governmental rural development workers with the information and tools they need to integrate indigenous knowledge into their development work.*” These are not ready-to-use approaches, but rather “building blocks” which users can put together according to their specific objectives and needs.

The first section looks in detail at indigenous knowledge, defining it as the knowledge that people in a given community have developed over time, and continue to develop. It is based on experience and adapted to the local culture and environment. And it does not only refer to technologies, but also includes beliefs, tools, biological and human resources and materials. This section compares indigenous to “western” or “modern” knowledge, pointing out why indigenous knowledge is easily overlooked. It looks then at a few steps to follow when aiming at using indigenous knowledge in development.

The next section looks then at how to collect, record and document indigenous knowledge, presenting a series of steps, rules and procedures to follow. These include basic preparation issues (such as defining the study objectives, selecting the best methods and obtaining permission from the community) and those which help learning about the local practices and knowledge. The authors also consider the issue of intellectual property rights, with guidelines to prevent work on indigenous knowledge from being abused. The manual then focuses on the sources and possible forms in which indigenous knowledge can be documented. This is followed by a series of tools and techniques: those covering observation and interviewing techniques (case studies, participant observation), those based on working with groups, using diagrams (flow charts, matrices) and audio-visual media. Part Three looks at a set of criteria for assessing indigenous knowledge, followed by a group of “mini case studies” which show how development can build on local practices and knowledge.





## Construção do conhecimento agroecológico: Novos papéis, novas identidades.

by Paulo Petersen (ed.), 2007. Caderno do II Encontro Nacional de Agroecologia. Articulação Nacional de Agroecologia, ANA. Rua da Candelaria no. 9/6 andar 20091-020 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.  
<http://www.agroecologia.org.br>  
E-mail: [secretaria.ana@agroecologia.org.br](mailto:secretaria.ana@agroecologia.org.br)

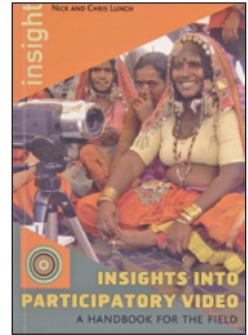
The different chapters which make up this book were written by those directly involved in the experiences which are described. They were all presented, discussed and analysed at the *II Encontro Nacional de Agroecologia*, held in Recife, Brazil, in June 2006. This meeting united more than 1700 people – rural and urban producers, farmers, representatives of several social movements, NGOs and national and state agroecology networks. The systematisation of their experiences, as a precondition to attending the meeting, followed the guidelines prepared in advance by the organisers of the meeting, the country's *Articulação Nacional de Agroecologia* (ANA) – and in particular by those members of its working group focusing on the generation of knowledge. All the resulting documents started as a process of reflection about concrete field experiences. All the experiences involved a number of different actors, many of whom were also involved in the preparation of the document. The systematisation guide (or the Terms of Reference for all participants) was made up of a series of components:

- the context: those factors on which the actors had no control, but which influenced their decisions and actions;
- the initial situation found, including the problem to be solved;
- a description of the intervention process;
- the analysis, exploring the reasons behind actions and decisions; and
- the main lessons learnt, as the basis of the knowledge generated by the process.

Instead of showing a fixed and homogeneous methodological approach, the set of articles shows the different ways by which results were achieved, and the major difficulties which these organisations face. They all show the many different ways by which the organisations which promote sustainable agriculture in Brazil are improving their work. The first section of the book looks at the experiences analysed and presented by Brazil's different networks, at a regional and also a national level. The second section presents the results of the systematisation processes of eleven institutions, coming from different parts of the country, while the last section includes two examples of formal education activities. ANA sees this book as part of a process which is still going on. All cases provide an interesting and motivating input to all organisations willing to broaden their own agroecological perspectives. All of them, however, need to continue being developed. The way in which this work will continue will depend on those involved in each case.

## Insights into participatory video: A handbook for the field

by Nick and Chris Lunch, 2006.  
Insight U.K., 3 Maidcroft Road, Oxford,  
OX4 3EN, United Kingdom.  
<http://www.insightshare.org>



This handbook is a practical guide to setting up and running participatory video projects, written for anyone who wishes to facilitate them, anywhere in the world. It is based on the experience of the authors and of Insight, a company based in the U.K. and France that focuses on developing participatory video methodologies. As it is the work of practitioners, and not academics, the authors hope it will further spread awareness of participatory video and its advantages, clarify how it is done, and encourage others to use it and to develop it further.

### What is participatory video?

The first part of the guide presents participatory video as a set of techniques to involve a group or community in the process of sharing and creating their own film. This is seen as a very good way of bringing people together to explore a particular issue, to voice concern or to tell a story. *“This process can be very empowering, enabling a group or community to take action to solve their own problems and also to communicate their needs and ideas to decision makers and/or other groups and communities.”* In contrast to “regular” documentary films, in participatory video the subjects of the film are the ones who made it, shaping it according to their own sense of what is important and what needs to be said. This technique can be a powerful tool for documenting people’s experiences. It can initiate a process of analysis and change in which all members of a community have a say. *“Participatory video gives a voice and a face to those who are normally not heard or seen.”*

### The PV process

The next section looks at the participatory video process, dividing it in seven main steps:

1. *Setting up a PV project.* Having decided on participatory video, the starting point is to visit the area and discuss the process and logistics with local representatives. Some research may be necessary, as well as some team building activities with facilitators, guides, translators and trainees.
2. *Getting started.* The second step relies on a series of games, using the camera to develop specific skills: how to work as a group, how to listen to others, and how to communicate one’s experience clearly. One of these, for example, is the “disappearing game”. The whole group of participants stands as if posing for a photo. The person filming records for three seconds and then stops, after which he asks one member of the group to leave. She films then again for three seconds and then stops again, repeating the process several times. The film is watched immediately afterwards; it looks as if people appear and disappear. The game *“is good fun, it teaches to record and pause, ensuring everyone is able to perform this fundamental skill”*.

3. *Fieldwork: developing the techniques.* Next comes a list of activities with which participants can start thinking about creating a story using the video. The objective is to build trust, confidence and group skills alongside the technical skills. These include, for example, the “show and tell exercise”, making a 2-minute film of a significant object, or the use of video for community mapping, drawing a map before members of the group go filming.
4. *Interviewing tips.* Asking questions to community members is one of the most common fieldwork activities. This section recommends using open questions, and provides a checklist to make sure the interviewing process works efficiently.
5. *Reflection and analysis.* This step presents exercises that encourage reflective responses and deeper levels of sharing among participants (such as “body maps”, or “visioning”). The video becomes a tool: through the lens, participants “*have the opportunity to choose what to focus on, to reveal their environment and to reach to an outsider audience*”.
6. *Organising regular screening of footage.* Screenings promote interest and raise awareness of the topics that are being focused on through the process. Most of the times it is fun, and it also helps analyse the material filmed. Playing back the footage that participants have filmed helps them improve their filming and interviewing techniques, and also builds confidence and self-esteem.
7. *Editing footage.* The participatory video process encourages participants to work together to plan and think what they want to film before they film it. A thorough preparation between the shots, instead of freestyle recording, can avoid hours of unnecessary footage. Unedited footage can thus be good enough for others to watch. Still, on different occasions it is necessary to edit the filmed material, something which can be done easily with simple computer programmes. Adding titles or music greatly improves the quality.

### **PV in action**

The next sections present different tips, looking at the process itself (and considering issues such as prior preparation and how to proceed when working with translators) and also at ethical issues. It will always be necessary, for example, to “be aware of power”, and to try to involve participants in the editing process, reflecting a collective exercise. Next comes a series of technical tips.

The guide finishes by looking at the many applications which participatory video can have. It presents ideas of how it can best be used when working with marginalised groups, for participatory research, or when working with decision makers, for example. These are all illustrated with different case studies, showing the work of Insight in many parts of the world.

## Documentación de experiencias campesinas con uso de Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación: Un instrumento de gestión del conocimiento local

Luis Carlos Aguilar, Jocelijn Francois, Anne Piepenstock and Sergio Quispe, 2005. ISBN 999905-905-0-08.

Fundación AGRECOL Andes. Calle Pasos Kanki No. 2134, zona Cala Cala, Cochabamba, Bolivia.

<http://www.agrecolandes.org>, E-mail: [info@agrecolandes.org](mailto:info@agrecolandes.org)



The methodology presented here is the result of a project run by AGRECOL Andes with farmers from different communities in Bolivia. It started when a group of farmers approached them with a set of photographs, asking for help in making nice printouts as they wanted to show their work in a local fair. This helped the AGRECOL team realise the possibilities that cameras can have in a participatory documentation process, and their potential advantages for sharing information generated and validated by the farmers themselves. The resulting project, carried out with the support of the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD), aimed to involve male and female farmers in a process of knowledge generation and exchange. This was based on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and on a farmer-to-farmer approach. This book is based on the results achieved.

### Documentation and ICTs

After a brief introduction, the authors highlight the importance of local knowledge and of local capacities in development. In order to be effective, all development processes need to start by focusing on the self-esteem of the population. They must consider the possibilities which local knowledge and the capacities of the local population can bring, especially when looking at agroecology, agricultural production and rural development. The farmer-to-farmer approach (or *campesino a campesino*) is seen as an effective way of increasing self-esteem, as it is based on what farmers know and aims at building local expertise, validating it and disseminating it. The documentation of local knowledge plays an important role in this process, helping promote local development.

The use of ICTs has many advantages, and can therefore contribute in many ways to an effective documentation process. Digital cameras, for example, can be easily used by non-experts or by those with no previous experience. They help give an instant visual message, containing elements and ideas which are easily conveyed and understood (in contrast to, for example, a written text). Their use can be easily complemented by portable computers and multimedia equipment.

## A documentation methodology

AGRECOL's work with 15 organisations helped develop a structure for documenting farmers' experiences. It starts by considering what type of experiences can be documented (on the basis of a set of criteria), and looks at the different actors who can take part in it. The actual process begins with an initial preparation phase, followed by a training stage and then by the actual *in situ* documentation. The third phase validates the results, leading to the exchange of experiences among participants.

- *Preparation.* In this step the experiences to be documented are identified, as well as the organisations and individuals to be involved. It is necessary to present the process clearly to the community leaders and to the whole population. Then a group of local facilitators can be selected, as those who will support the documentation process.
- *Training and documentation.* The purpose of this step is to help the local team become acquainted with the use of cameras and computers, for which a set of training courses is organised. The team then prepares a tentative script, as a sequence of activities to follow, selecting the issues which participants want to show and the specific message they want to convey. The team then goes to the field and takes a series of photographs, all of which are saved. At this point it is important to record all the relevant information related to each image: location, names of those involved, objectives, etc., either as a text or as an audio file.
- *Validation.* A short presentation is made of all photographs, helping those involved to express their opinions and recommend changes (e.g. in the sequence, or in the information provided). It may be best here to work in sub-groups. After the necessary changes are made, the whole group prepares the final product (often a Power Point presentation).
- *Exchange and dissemination.* This is an important step in every documentation process, for which it is important to establish links with other communities and organisations. In this case, the community itself becomes an open space for communication and horizontal interaction between farmers. Those who have documented their experience can show their work in their own and in other communities; going to other villages also helps them start a new documentation process. In both cases, the electronic presentations are easily complemented by songs, plays, or simply by visiting the farmers' own plots.

The guide then looks at the main advantages of this methodology: it helps to show the value of local knowledge, while at the same time introducing new ideas and concepts. The whole process helps create a common and collective knowledge, which is easily shared. This is all presented in detail through a series of lessons learnt, and is complemented with examples of experiences documented.

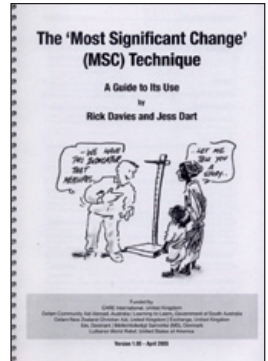
## The “Most Significant Change” technique: A guide to its use

by Rick Davies and Jess Dart.

Version 1.00 – April 2005. 82 Bishops Rd, Trumpington,  
Cambridge CB2 2NH, United Kingdom.

<http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm>

E-mail: [rick@mande.co.uk](mailto:rick@mande.co.uk)



The Most Significant Change (MSC) technique is defined as a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation. In brief, it refers to the collection of significant change stories emanating from the field level, and the systematic collection of the most significant of these stories by a group of individuals. These stories are then read and discussed in detail, focusing on the value of these reported changes. This technique is presented as a good means of identifying unexpected changes, and as a good way of identifying the values that prevail in an organisation, or with a group of people. It encourages analysis as well as data collection, as those using it have to explain why they believe one change is more important than others.

### The guide

After a brief introduction, the guide presents ten steps for the successful implementation of this technique. This is followed by a “troubleshooting” section, looking at the major concerns expressed by those trying this technique before. Chapter four then looks at the resources an organisation may need in order to implement MSC. The next two sections look at MSC as part of a broader monitoring and evaluation framework (particularly when set up with the objective of organisational learning), considering issues of validity and potential biases. Chapter seven looks at how this technique compares to other approaches and epistemologies, such as “appreciative enquiries” and case studies. The following sections describe how MSC developed, and present some ideas for its further improvement.

### The ten steps

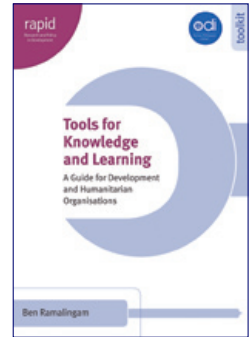
1. Getting started. The process starts by selecting “champions” (as those who will help with the process, and also encourage others to participate) and becoming familiar with the approach. This means introducing MSC to a range of stakeholders, and fostering interest and commitment to participate.
2. Establish “domains of change”. It is then necessary to select the broad categories into which the significant change stories can be grouped. Unlike indicators, these categories (such as, for example, “changes in people’s lives”) are deliberately left loose, to be defined by the actual users.

3. Defining the reporting period. A third step requires deciding how frequently to monitor the changes taking place in these domains.
4. Collecting stories of change. The central part of this technique is an open question, such as “*Looking back over the last month, what do you think was the most significant change in the quality of people’s lives in this community?*” Stories can be captured during interviews or during group discussions. Most important is that all stories must include information about the person who collected the story and the time when events occurred; a description of the story itself; and the significance (to the storyteller) of the events described in the story.
5. Reviewing the stories within the organisational hierarchy. People discuss the stories collected within their area and submit the most significant ones to the level above, which then selects the most significant of all those submitted by the lower levels and passes this one on to the next level. The task of reducing the pile of stories to one per domain can follow different criteria: majority rules, scoring, iterative voting, etc.
6. Providing stakeholders with regular feedback. This is a crucial step, where the results of the selection process are fed back to those who provided the stories. Whether it is provided verbally or not, feedback needs to explain which story was selected as most significant and why.
7. Setting in place a process to verify the stories (if necessary). A reported change may be even more important, or more details and wider implications may emerge.
8. Quantification. All individual stories should try to show how many people were involved, how many activities took place, and to quantify effects of different kinds. Later on, once the most significant story has been selected, participants can be asked about similar changes they are aware of, trying to come up with a total amount.
9. Conducting secondary analysis of the stories. This refers to the examination, classification and analysis of the content (or themes) across a set of stories. At the same time, meta-monitoring focuses on the attributes of the stories.
10. Revising the Most Significant Change process; looking at the way the technique is implemented, and at the changes and adaptations through which the technique goes.

The authors invite readers to join the MSC mailing list, and thus learn more about other people’s experiences.

## Tools for knowledge and learning: A guide for development and humanitarian organisations

by Ben Ramalingam, 2006. Research and Policy in  
development Programme (RAPID), Overseas Development Institute. 111  
Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7JD,  
United Kingdom. <http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid>  
E-mail: [rapid@odi.org.uk](mailto:rapid@odi.org.uk)



Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) is a programme under the United Kingdom's Overseas Development Institute. It undertakes research, advisory and public affairs work on the interfaces between research and policy to promote more evidence-based development policy and practice. The RAPID team recognises that tools and techniques are not always enough, as other factors are also involved. Nevertheless, their research has shown that knowledge and learning tools “*have the potential to transform the efficiency and effectiveness of development and humanitarian agencies*”.

The aim of this toolkit is thus to present entry points and references to the wide range of tools and methods that have been used to facilitate improved knowledge and learning. Considering the Five Competencies Framework (from the “Learning to fly” series, published in 2001), the author groups the tools according to five competencies: strategy development, management techniques, collaboration mechanisms, knowledge sharing and learning processes, and knowledge capture and storage.

### Strategy development

This competency refers to how an organisation looks at its knowledge and learning in a strategic manner. Among the relevant tools, the author adds the Five Competencies Framework mentioned above, together with the Most Significant Change technique (see page 35). He also includes Outcome Mapping, as a participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation methodology which focuses on the contribution of a programme to changes in the actions and behaviours of the people, groups and organisations with which a development programme works directly. “*Outcome Mapping establishes a vision of the human, social and environmental betterment to which the programme hopes to contribute, and then focuses monitoring and evaluation on factors and actors within that programme's direct sphere of influence*”. By using Outcome Mapping, a programme is not claiming the achievement of development impacts, but rather looks at its contribution to outcomes.



### Knowledge management techniques

In simple words, management is defined as the process of doing things right. The tools presented here help assess managerial responses to mistakes, or look at the forces for and against organisational changes. This set includes, for example, the Structured Innovation tool, an approach based on listing the characteristics of a specific problem, and then brainstorming the possible variations.

### Collaboration mechanisms

This group of tools look at ways to facilitate effective collaborative practices. Within this group, for example, the author includes Communities of Practice, defined as groups of people who share a problem or a particular situation, and “*who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis*”. The tool describes a process which starts with the birth of the group (although clearly stating that these cannot be managed into existence), looking at its development and growth, and then seeing how it stops working as such. The same group of tools also includes Mind Maps, a graphic technique for clearer thinking and learning, helping capture the natural flow of ideas among a group of participants.

### Knowledge sharing and learning

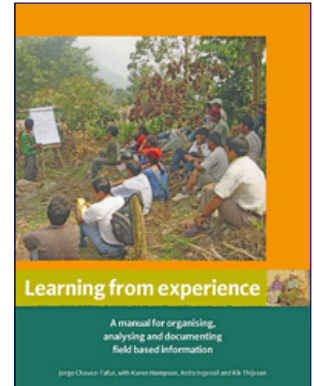
These are simple techniques to try to build on past experiences to improve activities in the future. The set of tools includes some related to modern information and communication technologies, such as Intranet Strategies or E-mail Guidelines. It also includes more traditional approaches such as storytelling, a process that, among its benefits, it “*enables the articulation of emotional aspects as well as factual content, and thus allows expression of tacit knowledge that might otherwise be difficult to share*”. Another tool is the After Action Reviews (AAR), with which a group gets together to think about a project and responds to simple questions, looking at what was supposed to happen, what worked and what did not, and what would need to be different the next time a similar project is implemented.

### Knowledge capture and storage

These tools are meant to make sure that essential knowledge is retained by an organisation and not lost. Once again, it includes “modern” techniques such as blogs, the facilitation of an electronic discussion, and at the same time is also includes traditional tools such as Taxonomies and Exit Interviews. This set of tools, as the ones grouped under the previous competencies, are illustrated with detailed examples.

## Learning from experience: A manual for organizing, analysing and documenting field based information

by Jorge Chavez-Tafur, Karen Hampson, Anita Ingevall and  
Rik Thijssen, 2007. ILEIA, Centre for Information on Low External  
Input and Sustainable Agriculture.  
P.O. Box 2067, 3800 CB Amersfoort, the Netherlands.  
<http://documentation.ileisa.info>,  
E-mail: [ileia@ileia.nl](mailto:ileia@ileia.nl)



This guide looks at documentation as a process which seeks to organise the available information, analyse it in detail, draw conclusions and generate new knowledge, and share these results. A main objective is to show that a documentation process does not need to be complicated, and that it does not have to be run by an external consultant. It presents some basic principles (like the importance of involving as many stakeholders as possible) and some general conditions needed (such as institutional support). These ideas, as well as the methodology that follows, build on the work of several authors and on the efforts of different organisations.

The process starts with the selection of the experience to be documented, determining who will participate in the process, who will co-ordinate it, what are the available resources, and what exactly is this process aiming at. These definitions are followed by three separate stages. The idea is to organise the information available through a set of charts, which are continuously improved on during the process.

### Setting the boundaries

The objective of this phase is to specify the project to be documented, separating the main items that must be taken into account from those that can be set aside. This means looking at the project's location, identifying the main stakeholders, and determining the starting date and duration. It is then important to consider the objectives (what did the project want to achieve?) and the main strategy followed. A next step looks at the "components", as the way the workload was structured or divided during the project. This is also the stage where the chosen project is put into context, adding three more columns to the previous chart: the general context, the "problems" that were to be solved, and any earlier activities carried out in an attempt to tackle these problems.

### Describing the project

At this stage those documenting the process describe everything that was done and achieved during the period of time chosen, including the unexpected results, the main difficulties faced, and the results or targets that were not reached. As in the previous stage, a simple chart can be used to organise the information that is already available. This chart can also help in identifying

what information is still missing but which would be good to include. The completed chart gives a full description of the selected project, identifying everything that was done and everything that was achieved through it, with all activities organised sequentially .

### **The analysis**

This stage serves to compile and present opinions, criticisms and value judgments about all that was done and achieved. First it is necessary to define some criteria to assess the project as a whole, on the basis of the objectives and strategies outlined in the first chart (considering, for example, its relevance, impact, or sustainability). For each criteria, it is then useful to identify some indicators. These are used to measure an idea in detail, and to present the most relevant aspects of each criteria. Each indicator is used to look for “causes” or “reasons” behind the results. Everything that has had a positive influence or has contributed to the achievement of a target, as measured by one indicator, is considered to be a “positive aspect”. In the same way, everything that had a negative influence or kept the target or objective from being attained, is considered to be a “negative aspect”. The advantage of a chart such as this one is that it forces whoever is doing the analysis to consider all aspects, resulting in better conclusions.

Having completed the analysis, the next step involves identifying the main lessons learnt. This is helped by looking at the positive and negative aspects mentioned for each criteria, and is then followed by the identification of specific recommendations.

The next step is to present the results of the whole documentation process. This can be done in many different ways: posters, photographs, a video or radio presentation, or as an article or book. This implies a fair amount of editing work, design and printing, and making the final product visually agreeable. But before all that, this implies a process of writing up the information. Considering it impossible to provide a recipe which, when followed, will guarantee a well written text, the guide only gives a few recommendations that may help those who will be presenting their ideas, to do it in the best possible way. This is followed by a “real life” example: an experience documented using this set of charts and then presented as an article.



# Projects and organisations

## ENRAP – Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia/ Pacific Region

<http://www.enrap.org>

ENRAP, c/o IDRC Regional Office for South Asia. 2 o8  
Jorbagh, New Delhi 110003, India  
E-mail: [amishra@idrc.org.in](mailto:amishra@idrc.org.in)



ENRAP is a collaborative programme between IFAD, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the Canadian IDRC, the International Development Research Centre. It was designed to bring the benefits of accessing and sharing global information resources to IFAD-supported rural development projects in the Asia/Pacific region. It is now in its third phase, running until 2010. Its goal is to develop the necessary skills to access, manage and share knowledge, considering that *“an effective use of the internet and electronic communication by project staff and, ultimately, by project communities, will contribute to the empowerment of rural people and help them better address their development objectives”*. Their website provides an electronic space for collaborative work and exchange of information. It allows for interactive access to the database, posting of documents and photographs in their original formats by all users, conducting electronic conferences, and contributing web pages on line. At the moment, the website includes information from the different countries where ENRAP works. These are also grouped according to various “development themes”.

Among its “development themes”, ENRAP includes digital video documentation, with leaflets and information resulting from, for example, a digital video production training held in the Philippines. It also includes a paper discussing the advantages of digital video as a tool for fighting rural poverty. Another ENRAP theme is rural communication, with a section on its website that includes a link to a series of systematisation leaflets and also to a systematisation guide, as *“an evaluative and participatory technique on documentation”*. During July and August 2007, ENRAP facilitated an electronic discussion on systematisation, looking at the challenges and at the benefits it brings. The final consolidated summary is available on its site, highlighting, for example, the need to select suitable and experienced facilitators, or to plan for sufficient time to carry out the process efficiently. One of the main benefits of a systematisation process, as agreed by all participants, is that it gives all stakeholders a feeling of ownership of actions and decisions.



## KariaNet – Knowledge Access in Rural Interconnected Areas Network

<http://www.karianet.org>

KariaNet, c/o IDRC Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa, 8 Ahmed Nessim Street, Dokki, Giza, Egypt.

KariaNet is multi-stakeholder partnership between IFAD, the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) and ten development projects in the Middle East and North Africa. It fosters a process of knowledge sharing and the exchange of experiences by setting up an ICT-mediated network of projects in the region. In order to be successful, KariaNet aims at enhancing the capacities of its members in using ICTs, and at developing skills for documentation. One of its major objectives is to nurture a culture of documentation and sharing experiences among the staff of its member projects. Its perspective is that knowledge sharing and the access to useful information greatly contributes to the improvement of project operations and to the achievement of their objectives. KariaNet started its first 3-year phase in January 2005.

Its website provides an electronic workspace for the use of different collaborative tools, such as the online Development Forums. It also allows members to access useful resources, documents and photographs, or to access a “knowledge map”, presenting interesting topics and issues. From time to time, the KariaNet Regional Coordination Unit organises electronic discussions using one of its collaborative tools.

At the moment, the website includes information about the different member projects, all of them located in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia. This includes many different “success stories”, all of which have been written by the projects’ staff, using techniques such as storytelling (in 2006) or extended case-studies (in 2007). Prepared on the basis of a set of priorities decided in advance, these papers are presented at the most important knowledge sharing platform that KariaNet organises every year: the Annual Thematic Workshop. Since 2007, these cases are also shown as videos (after the organisation of a Regional Training Workshop on Videofilm Making for Knowledge Capture and Dissemination). To date, one of the main outcomes seen is that some member projects are attaching the results of their documentation efforts to their annual progress reports to be addressed to their donors. Most of the projects’ staff are very positive about the new skills they have acquired.

## ActionAid

<http://www.actionaid.org>

PostNet suite #248, Private bag X31, Saxonwold

2132, Johannesburg, South Africa

E-mail: [mail.jhb@actionaid.org](mailto:mail.jhb@actionaid.org)



ActionAid is an international agency whose aim is to fight poverty worldwide. It works in many different countries around the globe with local partners, in a way that “*makes the most of their knowledge and experience*”. Following its core principles, ActionAid works combating poverty together with poor people, local partners and organisations, and focuses on addressing the causes of poverty. It prioritises five areas of work, as those where they can make the most difference or achieve the greatest impact: education, HIV and AIDS, food rights, emergencies, women and girls, and governance.

The Knowledge Initiative is a space within ActionAid. It sits alongside ActionAid’s organisational functions and themes, like an internal think-tank that strategically identifies gaps in knowledge, thinking and practice, and aims to fill these gaps with new knowledge. It also aims to deepen the existing organisational knowledge, and to package it into an accessible format for the organisation and beyond, for example by creating tools, methodologies and reports. The Knowledge Initiative is particularly interested in creating the opportunity for new knowledge development through the identification of synergies between local and outside knowledge.

One of the ways the Knowledge Initiative works is through producing “Critical Stories of Change”. These are “*a way of critically learning about the work of ActionAid and its partners, and creatively documenting it*”. These stories differ from conventional case studies, as these involve few people and are not always linked to a learning process. The “Critical Stories of Change” attempt to facilitate learning at every level; from dialogue around the process, to critically challenging stake- and rights-holders on the work, to situating the work in the broader political, social and economic context, and provoking readers into a deeper understanding of human rights based approaches. The documentation process is also different, and how it is done in detail is open to the creativity of the writers or facilitators. The aim is to democratise knowledge generation so that all those who played a part in the learning process are acknowledged appropriately in the final work as co-creators. Critical Stories also aim to be written very well, in an engaging, journalistic and narrative manner.





## FARM Africa

www.farmafrica.org.uk

Clifford's Inn, Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1BZ,  
United Kingdom

E-mail: [farmafrica@farmafrica.org.uk](mailto:farmafrica@farmafrica.org.uk)

FARM Africa is an international non-governmental organisation that aims to reduce poverty in eastern and southern Africa. It works in partnership with marginal farmers and herders, helping them to manage their natural resources more effectively and thus build sustainable livelihoods on their land. It also establishes partnerships with governments, local organisations, international NGOs and the private sector to develop strong rural livelihoods. Its different projects are carried out in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and more recently in Southern Sudan, concentrating on three key themes: pastoral development (improving the livelihoods of pastoral people and demonstrating the viability of a diversified pastoralist way of life); community forest management (enhancing the livelihoods of forest-users and conserving forests through developing sustainable forest management plans); and smallholder development and land reform (improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers through intensifying production and improving access to markets and services).

FARM Africa is particularly interested in sharing the results of their work with others as a way of ensuring that it has a maximum impact. As a result, its website includes a “Case Studies” section, providing stories about their work with small-scale farmers and herders, and showing how this has improved the lives of thousands of rural communities in different African countries. There are also audio and audio-visual materials available, including films of projects, staff radio interviews and discussions on African agriculture, all of which provide a clear image of their rural development work. FARM Africa also works on a “Best Practices” series, presenting technical information drawn from its different programmes, providing practical information and expertise, and including tools and models for those working directly with rural communities. This is primarily aimed at community-based organisations, NGOs and government extension staff. The latest case in the series, for example, presents a range of innovative technologies designed to make a difference to the lives of smallholder farmers, developed as a result of the support received from the Mandeleo Agricultural Technology Fund. Titled “Improving livelihoods through innovative partnerships”, this publication is a collection of case studies which show different technologies, ranging from a variety of crops already grown by farmers, to entirely new farm enterprises or new ways of managing existing enterprises.

## PROLINNOVA – Promoting Local Innovation

<http://www.prolinnova.net>  
c/o ETC EcoCulture, PO Box 64, 3830 AB Leusden,  
the Netherlands



PROLINNOVA is an international programme which aims to build a global learning network to promote local innovation in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management. It focuses on the recognition of the dynamics of indigenous knowledge, and on enhancing the capacities of farmers (including forest dwellers, pastoralists and fisherfolk) to adjust to change – to develop their own site-appropriate systems and institutions for resource management so as to gain food security, sustain their livelihoods and safeguard the environment. The programme seeks to demonstrate the effectiveness of user-led innovation processes for sustainable development, to set up platforms for reflection, analysis and learning, and to stimulate a national and regional policy dialogue in favour of local innovation. At the moment, its “country programmes” involve organisations in Cambodia, Tanzania, Bolivia and several other countries.

One of PROLINNOVA’s thematic projects looks at farmer-led documentation, defined as “an empowering process in which local communities take the lead role in the documentation process”. The results of such a process are meant to facilitate the learning processes of farmers and community members in general, as well as to help the exchange of information between communities (horizontal sharing) and between communities, development agents and policy makers (vertical sharing). The PROLINNOVA partners are seeing that there is a growing interest in farmer-led documentation in many development organisations, and that there is increased recognition of the opportunities and advantages that such a process can bring. However, the best designs or methods for such documentation processes are not widely known, nor is there sufficient knowledge available in relation to the use of media, including (but by no means being confined to) the use of information and communication technologies. Another set of important questions relate to the impacts of a farmer-led documentation process: how it has led to a wider dissemination of knowledge, a wider development process, and ultimately to livelihoods improvements. At the moment, all PROLINNOVA country programmes are exploring the possibilities and advantages which farmer-led documentation processes can bring in supporting participatory innovation development.



## CEAAL/Programa Latinoamericano de Apoyo a la Sistematización

<http://www.ceaal.org>;

<http://www.alforja.or.cr/sistem/index.html>

Apartado 0831-00817, Paitilla, Ciudad de Panama,  
Panama

E-mail: [info@ceaal.org](mailto:info@ceaal.org)

CEAAL, the Latin American Adult Education Council, is a network of field based organisations that started in 1982. Since then, it has been working towards “*the democratic transformation of our societies, and the conquest of peace and human rights*”, broadly following the ideas of Paulo Freire, one of the most influential thinkers on education in the twentieth century. At the moment, CEAAL includes 195 organisations in 21 different countries in Latin America and the Caribbean region. All member organisations work in the field of social development, with a special emphasis on both formal and non-formal education processes. Many follow what is known as “popular education” as a major approach. CEAAL was set up with the objective of strengthening the capacities of member organisations and of their staff, helping them reach their objectives more efficiently.

One of CEAAL’s working groups is the *Programa Latinoamericano de Apoyo a la Sistematización de Experiencias* – a programme designed to support the systematisation of field based experiences throughout the region. On its website, this programme regularly organises “electronic workshops”, and provides access to a mailing list, through which a large number of practitioners exchange ideas and experiences. The site includes a complete database of organisations and individuals working in the field. It has also a large “virtual library”, with documents, videos and radio programmes, most of which are available for free (although most of them are in Spanish or Portuguese). Documents are grouped according to various themes, such as sustainable development or gender issues. Some look at the conceptual framework and the theory behind the systematisation of experiences; others look at the methodological approaches which allow practitioners to transform the experience into sound, tidy and transmissible knowledge.

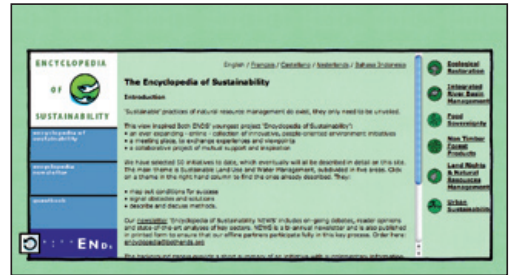
## The Encyclopedia of Sustainability

<http://www.bothends.org/encycl/encycl.php>

Both ENDS, Nieuwe Keizersgracht 45,

1018 VC Amsterdam, the Netherlands

E-mail: [encyclopedia@bothends.org](mailto:encyclopedia@bothends.org)



The Encyclopedia of Sustainability is a long term project started by Both ENDS, a Dutch organisation that supports inspiring environmental initiatives all over the world. Realising that many sustainable practices of natural resource management do exist and that they only need to be revealed, this project aims to be an ever expanding - online - collection of innovative, people-oriented environment initiatives. At the same time, it is expected to be a meeting place where it is possible to exchange experiences and viewpoints. The project is presented as an instrument which supports environment and development NGOs and grassroots organisations in documenting their experiences, in capacity building and information sharing, as well as in facilitating public debate. The cases described in the Encyclopedia allow local organisations and networks to demonstrate concrete examples of solutions to environmental management problems, showing ways to achieve social and ecological sustainable development. They also aim to help generate more recognition for the many valuable initiatives that rarely get any attention.

An important part of the Encyclopedia's work is the development of a case description of around seven pages. A specific format and some advisory support is provided, but the organisations or groups formulate most cases themselves. The format not only provides the opportunity to present the highlights of an experience, but also the socio-economic and ecological context, as well as obstacles and challenges and how people respond to these. The whole documentation phase can take several months, as the focus is not only on the end product, but also on the process and the discussion it raises between the documenters, local stakeholders and Both ENDS. Documenting inspiring initiatives generates discussions that contribute to the internal processes of an organisation, and about the content of their work, as well as on how to present themselves.

The Encyclopedia focuses on six main themes: Food Sovereignty, Ecological Restoration, Integrated River Basin Management, Land Rights and Natural Resource Management, Non Timber Forest Products and Urban Sustainability. The final case descriptions are published on Both ENDS' website in Spanish, English, French and Indonesian. Hard copies are distributed among related groups and used for an international audience, at conferences and to provide input during policy discussions.



## Progreso Network

<http://www.progresonetwork.org>

Leliegracht 19, 1016 GR Amsterdam, the Netherlands

E-mail: [info@progresonetwork.org](mailto:info@progresonetwork.org)

The Progreso Network started working in 2007, facilitating the documentation processes of several producer organisations. Since then, it aims to be a platform for exchange between organisations, and is presented as “*a professional network that connects experience and knowledge on organisations development of producer organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America*”. The network considers that the systematisation of useful learning experiences in organisational development is a process that allows producer organisations and their partners to learn from others. Their focus is “*on the excellence of the learning elements in the experience, for the purpose of optimal learning, and not so much on the excellence of the results*”. Their website seeks to facilitate such peer learning, offering a selection of experiences, and providing access to a range of useful contacts and information.

The network produces a regular newsletter, presenting some of the cases already documented, and inviting interested organisations to participate in their programme. Those interested in sharing their experiences with others are invited to compete in the Cup of Excellent Experiences, for which they are asked to submit a short description of their work, following a specific format which looks at:

- the organisation behind the experience and the context where it works, its objectives, and the people behind it;
- how its work started: the problems and challenges faced in the beginning, the situation of the institution before the process started, their aims and expectations;
- the process (or the experience itself): the organisation’s efforts to tackle its challenges; the activities carried out as part of the process itself;
- the results of the organisation’s efforts; and
- the lessons learnt, or the most important reflections made, focusing on the obstacles and the positive aspects that shaped the organisation’s work. What worked well, and what can the organisation recommend to others?

Submitted experiences are to be looked at by an independent jury: the top four will be rewarded with an elaborate systematisation of their experience by a contracted consultant. The selection of the winning experiences is based on the relevance of the experience for other organisations, the quality of the description, and on the innovative quality of the solutions to the challenges described. The winning cases will be published and promoted on the network’s website.

**InfoAgrar**  
http://www.infoagrar.ch  
Länggasse 85, 3052 Zollikofen, Switzerland  
E-mail: info@infoagrar.ch



InfoAgrar is an agricultural information and documentation service for development cooperation, set up as a project of the Swiss College of Agriculture (SHL) and chiefly financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Its aim is to facilitate general access to relevant information, based on the needs of those dealing with agricultural issues in development cooperation. InfoAgrar's services are basically oriented at staff members within SDC and its partner organisations, both in Switzerland and abroad. However, the target audience also includes any individual or organisation involved in international agricultural development, including governmental agencies, NGOs, universities, and private individuals worldwide.

Based on the experience gained during the past years, and on the basis of a flexible and multi-disciplinary team, InfoAgrar offers support in various areas. Among these, for example, they offer support in:

- writing or editing texts on agricultural issues in development cooperation;
- researching, composing and summarising documents on a certain subject;
- preparing information for online purposes and publishing it on the internet;
- maintaining internet platforms;
- compiling Power Point presentations;
- providing periodical updates on specific subjects;
- interviewing prominent actors in different fields of expertise; or
- planning and organising symposia or conferences.

As part of a broader effort, InfoAgrar collaborates with two other information service providers concerned with natural resources and forestry, constituting what is known as InfoResources. Together, these organisations publish "InfoResources Focus" and "InfoResources News", and also operate the InfoResources Search Service. Since January 2008, InfoAgrar also works in partnership with the "*Servicio de Informacion Mesoamericano sobre Agricultura Sostenible*", SIMAS, as part of a general effort to promote the perspectives of developing countries. SIMAS works towards the "democratisation of the access to information", collaborating with individuals and organisations and facilitating the exchange of information.



## Water, land and people: Voices and insights from three continents

<http://www.waterlandpeople.net>

c/o Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Ao6/1456, Freiburgrasse 130, CH-3003 Berne, Switzerland  
E-mail: [snru@dza.admin.ch](mailto:snru@dza.admin.ch)

Water, Land and People is a learning initiative implemented in Bolivia, Mali and India. It is an initiative promoted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), aimed at sharing and deepening the knowledge base within SDC and its partners. More specifically, its objective is to improve the development strategies and policies with regard to Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), with particular emphasis on the relationship between water and food. It started in 2005, when learning groups in these three countries identified and analysed specific topics related to water management, based on the experience of its members. The process in each country varied a little, but basically consisted of a series of "learning events", complemented with intermediate activities such as interviews, local meetings, debates, field visits and case studies.

The specific topics chosen varied between the three countries. The group in India, for example, looked at the rules, regulations and management systems related to water resources, and at the development of watersheds. The one in Bolivia looked at the social consensus-building processes needed for the elaboration of irrigation laws, while the one in Mali looked at gender and the access to land resources and at a participatory local planning processes. Each topic was addressed by a sub-group, providing specific inputs for discussion in the whole learning group during the following event. Story telling techniques were used to collect information, "*striving for authenticity while capturing the experiences*", and selected stories were recorded. The results are now being used as a resource base at different levels: providing local actors with access to specific know-how and technologies; enabling participants to strengthen their policy dialogue and advocacy role, or sensitising a wider public, and increasing public awareness. All summaries and lessons learnt are currently available in English, French and Spanish.

## IICD - International Institute for Communications and Development

<http://www.iicd.org>

P.O. Box 11586, 2502 AN The Hague, the Netherlands

E-mail: [information@iicd.org](mailto:information@iicd.org)



The International Institute for Communication and Development is a non-profit foundation that specialises in information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a tool for development. It works with partners from the public, private and non-profit sector to assist developing countries to “realise locally owned sustainable development by harnessing the potential of ICTs”. IICD focuses on different development sectors, such as governance, health, livelihood opportunities (especially in agriculture) and the environment. In all of them, ICTs are seen as a way to empower people, enabling them to improve their living standards and quality of life. One of the agriculture related projects, for example, aims to facilitate the exchange of market information in Santa Cruz (Bolivia) in order to empower farmers and help them increase their income. At the same time, it works to assist the exchange of information between farmers and other actors, aiming at an increase in efficiency and productivity, and thereby strengthening food security.

The collection and dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt is an important tool in IICD’s role as knowledge broker. Its main activities include the promotion of local networks of information partners in the countries where the institute works, and the distribution of the “ICT Stories”. These and other activities seek to capture the learning process accompanying the introduction and implementation of ICTs for development. There are two main reasons behind these efforts: first, best practices and lessons learnt benefit IICD’s partner organisations directly. Secondly, these are also aimed at national policy makers and at the international development community in general. Other knowledge sharing activities include the organisation of seminars and workshops, the production of newsletter and websites. As part of its strategy to strengthen local initiatives in the countries where it works, IICD also supports the creation and operation of “National ICT for Development Networks” (ICT4D). They organise meetings, produce newsletters, stimulate local research and training, and generate and share the main lessons learnt.





## Oxfam KIC

<http://www.oxfamkic.org>  
Oxfam Novib. P.O. Box 3 0919  
2500 GX The Hague,  
the Netherlands

The Oxfam KIC portal, or Knowledge Infrastructure with and between Counterparts, is a virtual platform that aims to “*connect all Oxfam counterparts and Oxfam affiliates and stimulate the active sharing of knowledge*”. It is based on activities that stimulate collaborative learning and the exchange of knowledge on practical experiences, among which it includes workshops, expert meetings, write-up workshops and the creation of collaborative networks. The site includes a separate section with a set of guidelines meant to help visitors document their work. Counterparts (and visitors) are thus encouraged to document their practices “*in order to record their knowledge and make sure that others can benefit from the lessons learnt*”. The resulting documents are easily uploaded into the site’s database. The aim is to collect good, bad and new practices. This is not limited to “Good Practices” as apart from the good ideas, it is important to make sure that bad practices aren’t repeated. Also, it is inspiring to see what new, innovative practices others have come up with.

The platform also gives members a chance to create “Communities of Practice”, or groups of people working together on documents, sharing important knowledge resources and discussing issues online. These focus on different themes: education, HIV/AIDS, sustainable livelihoods, rights-based approaches and gender-based violence.

The site also provides the latest Oxfam policy documents on sustainable livelihoods; research studies and surveys; training materials; and tools. It also offers interactive features such as forums for comments, ideas and suggestions for improving the site; on-line forms for sending materials; and surveys and opinion polls on specific issues. Resources are organised by topic and the entire site is fully searchable. One of the key issues dealt with refers to natural resource management strategies for income and food security and environmental sustainability. Nine sub-themes have been identified in which Oxfam counterparts are active and have innovative experiences to offer: food security and sovereignty, HIV/AIDS and livelihoods, biodiversity and biosafety, climate adaptation, land and water management, local development approaches, microfinance (including social impact measurement), trade and markets, and resource based conflicts.

## Rural Radio Resource Pack Programme, CTA

<http://ruralradio.cta.int>

Postbus 380, 6700 AJ Wageningen, the Netherlands

E-mail: [cta@cta.int](mailto:cta@cta.int)



CTA, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, is an institution working in the field of information for development, operating under the agreement signed between the European Union and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). With the task of improving the flow of information among stakeholders in agricultural and rural development, CTA focuses on three key areas: providing information products and services (e.g., publications, question-and-answer services and database services); promoting the integrated use of communication channels to improve the flow of information (e.g., e-communities, web portals, seminars, and study visits), and building the ACP countries' capacity in information and communication management (ICM), mainly through training and partnerships. It works in partnership with national and regional bodies, as well as with international organisations around the world.

CTA recognises that, even though new information and communication technologies are now becoming more and more popular, radio remains one of the most important communication tools in most rural communities. It is therefore supporting rural radios through its Rural Radio Resource Pack Programme, which started in 1991. A set of 5 "packs" is produced every year, and there are currently more than 50 packs in stock. These packs are designed to encourage the use of rural radio to disseminate scientific and technical information, with the initiative of strengthening the links between extension workers and farmers, promoting knowledge-sharing between farmers, and addressing the problem of illiteracy. Each pack deals with a specific topic – ranging from crop storage to cassava production and processing, small ruminants or soil fertility. The choice of topics is based on suggestions made by CTA's partners. Each pack includes the necessary material for a radio programme on a specific topic: interviews on tapes or CDs, a transcript of the text, suggestions for introducing each interview, technical information on the topic, and also advice on how to use the pack.

The rural radio packs are produced by experienced African journalists committed to rural development issues. Across Africa, there are about a dozen journalists working on the packs at any given time. When ready, these are used by broadcasters in many different regions, most of whom choose excerpts from a radio pack to include in their own show. They do not generally broadcast a whole program, but rather pick and choose what is most relevant to their listeners. They often translate the packs or sections of the packs into local languages to ensure the widest dissemination. Excerpts are mixed with the journalists' own materials and interviews with people in the field. Among the recently published Resource Packs there is one on agriculture and health issues, one on agro-biotechnology and food security, and also one looking at weed control.



## Dare to Share

<http://www.daretoshare.ch>

c/o AGRIDEA, Dept. for International Cooperation,  
Eschikon 28, CH-8315 Lindau, Switzerland  
E-mail: [eza@agridea.ch](mailto:eza@agridea.ch)

This is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), set up in collaboration with AGRIDEA (the Swiss Center for Agricultural Extension and Rural Development). The site looks at knowledge management and knowledge sharing, considering different methods, major events and including links to related websites. A special section of the site is allocated to the Dare to Share Fair held in 2004, showing that it can serve as an example on how to organise knowledge sharing at a major scale.

This site presents a “Knowledge Management Toolkit”, with different methods and tools for knowledge sharing and learning. From April 2007 to December 2008, a new method is being added every month, with the general aim of helping people become familiar with methods and tools for planning and reflecting about their own activities, drawing lessons and sharing insights and applying them. In the end there will be a full toolkit comprising a range of useful methods to be applied by individuals, by a team, and also at an organisational level. The method descriptions are provided in four languages (English, French, Spanish, and German), and all methods are presented in two forms: a calendar sheet with a concise description, and a credit card size short summary. For each method, a comprehensive description is provided in English only, with links to websites where readers can find more information about the respective method.

The set of methods and tools includes “Experience Capitalisation”, which is described as a process where key stakeholders transform individual and institutional experience and knowledge into capital that can be used in future. Experience capitalisation is made up of learning processes that prepare change. Its output is a set of lessons learnt and of good practices; its outcome is induced changes; its main purpose is to redesign practice. The authors consider that there is no standard procedure for experience capitalisation, but that precise aims, clear questions and a deliberate openness to change are all prerequisites in order to get useful results that are easy to put into practice. They also mention that the usual phases in an experience capitalisation are four: needs assessment (looking at the aims, benefits, or readiness for change among participants, etc.), planning (considering the aims in detail, the fields of observation, process duration, roles, resources, instruments, etc.), the implementation (considering the stakeholders and the ownership of the process, its overall management, documents, synthesis, validation of outputs), and the change in local practices: the decisions taken, the planning and monitoring processes towards a changed practice, and the subsequent impact analysis.

**Agroecologia em Rede**  
<http://www.agroecologiaemrede.org.br>  
c/o Secretaria Executiva de ANA.  
Rua da Candelaria no. 9, 6º andar, Centro,  
Rio de Janeiro – CEP 20091, Brazil



*Agroecologia em Rede* is a Brazilian database which presents agroecological field experiences, research information, persons and organisations (in Portuguese). This site was designed and constructed with the objective of facilitating interaction and stimulating learning among agroecology practitioners, academicians and decision makers. All information is grouped according to nine broad themes: urban agriculture; management of water resources; agroforestry; post-harvest technologies; food, health and medicinal plants; livestock production; rural development; seeds; and agricultural production systems. All information is also indexed according to Brazil's major geographical regions, making it all very easy to find. The site provides the possibility of finding people and organisations, all of whom are also grouped according to the nine main themes. There is also a "links" page, with direct links to the websites of many NGOs working in Brazil, universities and research institutions.

The *Agroecologia em Rede* homepage includes a "manual de consulta", helping those looking for a particular experience, and also a "manual do cadastrador". This guide helps those with field based information upload it into the database, so that this can be done by as many people as possible. It also shows how to update information, or how to add complementary files. The whole site was set up and is managed by the Information Working Group of Brazil's *Articulação Nacional de Agricultura (ANA)*. This group is formed by representatives of many of the Brazilian agroecology networks and organisations, as well as by representatives of Brazil's Agroecology Association (ABA).



## The Communication Initiative

<http://www.comminit.com>

5148 Polson Terrace, Victoria, British Columbia,  
V8Y 2C4 Canada

E-mail: [info@comminit.com](mailto:info@comminit.com)

The Communication Initiative is an online space for sharing the experiences of, and building bridges between, the people and organisations engaged in supporting communication as a fundamental strategy for economic and social change. It does this through a thorough process of dialogue and debate, and by giving the network a stronger, more representative and informed voice with which to advance the use and improve the impact of communication for development. In short, it provides a forum to share, debate and advance effective communication for development progress.

One of the Communication Initiative sections looks at the use of ICTs for development, with information relating to, for example, the sustainability of telecentres in Africa. Another section focuses on natural resource management activities. Information on all sections is grouped according to their sources, according to a series of categories (such as “tools”, “approaches” or “issues”), and is also divided geographically. One of its major programmes, the Drum Beat (also known as *Son de Tambora* in Spanish) is a weekly electronic publication sent by e-mail, exploring initiatives, ideas and trends in communication for development. The aim of this newsletter is to provide a space for debate and to develop more effective development communication practices.

**Farming solutions**  
http://www.farmingsolutions.org  
c/o Greenpeace International, Chausseestr. 131,  
10115 Berlin, Germany  
E-mail: info@farmingsolutions.org



This is a site put together by Greenpeace, Oxfam, ILEIA and the Pesticide Action Network, with the aim of presenting real solutions to hunger and poverty. Farming Solutions brings examples of successful, environmentally responsible farming systems from all over the world, illustrating how farmers can protect the environment while at the same time increasing food supply where it is most needed. The site includes background information on the agricultural production systems currently found all over the world, and the fact that food is not available to a large percentage of the world's population: despite record production levels, the global food production systems “fail to deliver the basics to hundreds of millions of men, women and children who are chronically undernourished”. Having access to safe and nutritious food is presented as a fundamental basic human right, in the same way as being able to live in a safe and ecologically healthy environment.

This site also presents detailed facts and data for all countries, focusing in particular on agricultural production and on each country's levels of food insecurity (with figures for agricultural production, land use, percentage of the population which is undernourished, percentage of underweight children, etc.). Within this context, Farming Solutions “celebrates the huge diversity of ecologically sound and productive farming practices that are already being applied by farmers and their local communities around the world” – practices that do not damage the environment or pose a threat to the health of farmers, farm workers and consumers by the excessive use of toxic chemicals or genetically engineered organisms. This site provides the opportunity to see and hear farmers, researchers, community workers and activists tell their own stories. Interested individuals or organisations are invited to send their stories on ecologically sound farming practices, regardless of where the story comes from.



## Documentation programme, ILEIA

<http://documentation.ileia.info>

ILEIA, Centre for Information on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture. P.O. Box 2067,

3800 CB Amersfoort, the Netherlands

E-mail: [ileia@ileia.nl](mailto:ileia@ileia.nl)

As part of the general LEISA website, this section presents the results of ILEIA's Documentation programme. Visitors can follow the documentation processes carried out by different organisations, including those of the Isangati Agricultural Development Organisation (IADO) in the Mbeya region, Tanzania, the SEE Foundation in Inner Mongolia, China, or those implemented as part of the DURAS project in south east Asia and western Africa. These cases follow different methodological approaches. In addition to those following the method proposed by ILEIA, the site also includes other initiatives, like those of the Spate Irrigation Network in Yemen and Eritrea, or the work of *Naturaleza para Todos* in Mexico and Guatemala. Visitors are invited to give their opinions and thus contribute to the work of these organisations.

The site includes a link to volume 22.1 of the *LEISA Magazine*, which included 20 articles under the title "Documentation for change", with an equal number of documentation cases from all over the world. It also looks back at older issues of the magazine, particularly at those which focus on similar or related themes (such as volume 12.3, "Tracking change", or volume 10.1, "A new look at information"). A separate section includes links to the websites of other projects or organisations working around the documentation of experiences and around processes aimed at generating knowledge.

The LEISA website itself lets visitors access all the articles published in the *LEISA Magazine*, including those published by the regional editions which constitute the LEISA network: *AGRIDAPE* in West Africa, *LEISA India* (in English), *LEISA China*, *SALAM* (Indonesia), *Agriculturas* (in Brazil) and *LEISA Revista de Agroecología* (in Latin America). The site also presents the books and links which are included in every issue of the magazine. It is also possible to find information on upcoming events, special news, or to participate in user-run forum exchanges.





## Further reading

# Further reading

## **Successful communication: a toolkit for researchers and civil society organisations**

Ingie Hovland, 2005. Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) Programme, ODI 111 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JD, United Kingdom.

## **Learning for development: A literature review**

Katherine Pasteur, 2004. Lessons for Change in Policy and Organisations No. 6, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, United Kingdom.

## **Des histoires, des savoirs et des hommes: L'expérience est un capital – reflexion sur la capitalization de l'experience**

Pierre de Zutter, 1994. FPH, Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour les progrès de l'homme, 38 rue Saint Sabin, F 75011 Paris, France. (Also available in Spanish, as Historias, saberes y gente: De la experiencia al conocimiento.)

## **Para Sistematizar experiencias: Una propuesta teórica y práctica**

Oscar Jara Holliday, 1994. Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones Alforja, Apartado Postal 369-1000, San José, Costa Rica.

## **Knowledge sharing for rural development: Challenges, experiences and methods**

Sally Burch, 2007. Agencia Latinoamericana de Información (Latin American Information Agency). Casilla 17-12-877, Av. 12 de octubre N18-24, Of. 503, Quito, Ecuador.

## **Learning from change: Issues and experiences in participatory monitoring and evaluation**

Marisol Estrella et al. (eds.), 2000. Intermediate Technology Publications Ltd., 103-105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HL, United Kingdom.

## **Learning to practice, learning from practice: A process document**

K.S. Gopal and Edith van Walsum, 2005. AME Foundation, No. 204, 100 Feet Ring Road, 3rd Phase, Banashankari 2nd Block, 3rd Stage, Bangalore, 560 085 India.

## **Participatory monitoring and impact assessment of sustainable agriculture initiatives**

Irene Guijt, 1998, SARL Discussion paper No. 1. International Institute for Environment and Development, IIED. 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, United Kingdom.

## **Formando sistematizadores: Una guía para desarrollar competencias y generar conocimientos**

Ruth Varela, Luis Alonso Fuentes Posas and Kristina Hill, 2005. Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Pilot Project Rioplus. Tulpenfeld 2 53113 Bonn, Germany.

**Guía metodológica para la sistematización participativa de experiencias en agricultura sostenible**

Mario Ardón Mejía, 2000. PASOLAC, Programa para la Agricultura Sostenible en Laderas de America Central. Av. Olimpica No. 3133, San Salvador, El Salvador.

**Immersion: Learning about poverty face-to-face**

*Participatory Learning and Action* No.57, December 2007. IIED, International Institute for Environment and Development, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H0DD United Kingdom.

**Documentation for change**

Various authors; *LEISA Magazine*, issue 22.1, March 2006.





A documentation process seeks to organise available information, analyse it in detail, draw conclusions and share the results. Spanish-speaking countries prefer to talk about *sistematización*, while in French, many organisations refer to *capitalisation*. While some may see subtle differences in the detailed definition of these words, the main purpose of a documentation effort is the same as that of *capitalisation* or *sistematización*: the generation of knowledge on the basis of practical experience.

Many organisations, in different countries, are currently documenting their work, and thus benefiting from these experiences. What are the main differences between the approaches being followed? And what are the common elements? Is there an approach or method that works better in a given situation? Is it possible to combine elements from different approaches and adjust them to a specific situation?

As part of ILEIA's efforts to promote the documentation of field-based experiences, this booklet describes 18 different methods, including approaches such as participatory videos or story guides. It also presents the work of 18 projects and organisations, as online references. Having all these resources listed together makes it easier to see the differences and commonalities between them. The purpose of this booklet is to provide readers with an overview and taste of the many methods available. With this information at hand, we encourage you to access the full texts and try out different ideas to generate and share new knowledge on the basis of your experience.



# ILEIA

Centre for Information on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture