

Participatory Learning and Action

A Distance Learning Module

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PARTICIPATORY LEARNING AND ACTION (PLA)

Objectives:

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- I) State the various participatory methods
- II) Explain the participatory rural appraisal method
- III) Apply the participatory rural appraisal method in real life

Structure:

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Participatory Methods: An Overview**
- 3 Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)**
 - Activity 1**
- 4 PRA Techniques**
- 5 Mapping Techniques**
 - 5.1 Social Mapping
 - 5.2 Transect Walks
 - 5.3 Census Mapping
 - 5.4 Venn Diagrams

Activity 2
- 6 Ranking Exercises**
 - 6.1 Problem and Preference Ranking
 - 6.2 Ranking and Scoring
 - 6.3 Matrix ranking and Scoring
 - 4 Pair-wise Ranking
 - 5 Wealth Ranking
 - 6 Well-being Ranking

Activity 3
- 7 Trend Analysis**
 - 7.1 Seasonal Calendars
 - 7.2 Seasonality Analysis
 - 7.3 Trend Analysis
 - 7.4 Daily Activity Charts

Activity 4
- 8 Problems relating to PRA**
- 9 Practical personal tips**
- 10 Learning from the field**
- 11 Let us sum up**
- 12 Check your progress.**

1 Introduction

In Unit 2 we introduced you to the necessity of promoting people's participation in development. It is now clear to you that people's participation in the development process is both an essential input in development as well as a means of empowering the people. This unit deals with the various participatory methods and their application in the development process.

2 Participatory Methods: - An Overview

If you are an official say of the animal resource development department, you are to develop a plan for generating income and employment in your area through better and efficient use of animal resources. You shall have to collect the basic information in this regard. Based on these basic information and application of your knowledge, and taking into account the resources available under various development schemes, you may develop a plan. Your ultimate objective is to build the capacity of the people and make the development programme sustainable. But the question is how will you collect the necessary information. What will be the procedure for taking decisions regarding selection of scheme and beneficiaries? How will you monitor the programme? All these questions arise because your ultimate objective is to ensure people's participation and empowerment.

There are various participatory methods, which have been used over the last few decades. Some of these are: the Beneficiary Assessment Method (BA), SARAR and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). BA is a systematic investigation of the perceptions of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. SARAR stands for five attributes, namely – self-esteem, associative strength, resourcefulness, action planning and responsibility for follow through, which are considered to be critically important for achieving full and committed participation in development programmes. PRA has evolved from Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), which is a process of appraisal, analysis and action by local people themselves. To emphasize on the learning part sometimes the anagram PLA, which means Participative Learning and Action, is used. However PRA is the most commonly used word. It is also the method, which is mostly used to encourage and ensure people's

participation. Here we will explain this method in adequate detail so that you can use it in practice.

3 Participatory Rural Appraisal

PRA can be described as a method that enables people to express and analyse the realities of their lives and conditions, to plan what action to take, and to monitor and evaluate the results. PRA emphasises the process which empowers local people, whereas its predecessor RRA was mainly used as a means for outsiders to gather information.

You are aware that now the objective of the development activities is not only to deliver goods and services to the people but also to develop their capabilities. In this PRA plays a significant role. This is a method of collaborative decision-making and it is community-based. There are five key principles that form the basis of any PRA activity.

- **Participation:** PRA relies heavily on participation by the communities. This method is designed to enable local people to be involved, not only as sources of information, but as partners in gathering and analyzing the information.
- **Flexibility:** You can select a technique or a combination of techniques based on the size and skill of the PRA team, the resources available, and the nature and location of work.
- **Teamwork:** Generally, a PRA is best conducted by local people in which your role is that of an **initiator** and **facilitator**. You need to ensure significant representation of women and downtrodden people.
- **Optimal information:** To be efficient in terms of both time and money, PRA work intends to gather just enough information to make the necessary recommendations and decisions.
- **Reliability:** PRA generated data are not always conducive to statistical analysis due to their qualitative nature and relatively small sample size. But being generated from the people themselves the data has in-built support to ensure validity and reliability of the findings.

Activity

Distinguish between conventional methods and participatory methods in setting goals, designing plan and implementation of development programmes.

4 PRA Techniques

PRA offers a basket of techniques from which you can select one or a combination of them, as are appropriate to your development activity. The central part of any PRA is semi-structured interviewing. While sensitive topics can be better addressed in interviews with individuals, other topics of more general concern are amenable to focused group discussions and community meetings.

During these interviews and discussions, several diagrammatic techniques are frequently used to stimulate debate and find out the results. Many of these visuals are not drawn on paper but on the ground with sticks stones, seeds and other local material and then transferred to paper for a permanent record.

Some of the key PRA techniques are:

- Mapping techniques
- Ranking exercises
- Trend analysis

Visual-based techniques are important tools for enhancing a shared understanding between government officials and the people. These are likely to hide important differences of opinion and perspective when drawn in group settings. They, therefore, need to be complemented by other techniques, such as careful interviewing and observation, to crosscheck and supplement the results of diagramming.

5 Mapping Techniques

Mapping exercises as used in a PRA activity will not only provide you with information about the physical characteristics surrounding the community, but can also reveal much about the socio-economic conditions and how the participants perceive their community. The maps are usually drawn by a group of villagers either on the ground using stick or chalk or on a large sheet of paper. The exercise often attracts much attention and generates useful debate among the mapmakers and the onlookers. The final map is then recorded by the PRA team to use in subsequent discussions.

You can develop various thematic maps depending on the focus of your activity.

- Social Maps illustrate the individual households that make up the community. Different symbols can be used to show particular characteristics of the households - relative wealth, resources used, and social standing.
- Census Maps provide information about all units - be it about individual or household. This is used to put together easily quantifiable information received from the participants. The household information like – number of adults (men and women), number of children (boys and girls), education, literacy, employment, resource ownership health problems etc. can be recorded using this method.

Another type of mapping exercise is an institutional map, sometimes called Venn or chapati diagrams. Institutional maps are visual representations of the different groups and organizations within a community using the available institutions and their relationships and importance for decision-making. You can use this technique either as part of a group discussion, to generate a consensus view about the community's social infrastructure, or can be undertaken by individuals to illustrate the different perspectives of, for instance, men versus women.

5.1 Social Mapping

Here you have been given some general guidelines for applying the Participatory Rural Appraisal Method. Any development program is a deliberate intervention in a given situation defined by space and time. So, as a first step, it is necessary to undertake an exercise of physical and social mapping of the given area where a program/project is being introduced. We know what a physical map is. Let us now see what is a social map and how it can be developed as required through the participation of the people living in a given area.

A Social Map is a visual representation of a residential area containing relevant social information. It gives the physical boundaries of a given area, the settlement pattern, physical infrastructure, social, cultural and religious institutions and similar other information. Such a map is to be drawn first on the ground with the direct participation of the local residents and then transferred on paper with appropriate legends and colors. This

technique may be used at the earliest stage of your interaction with the community. Mapping generates a lot of enthusiasm among local people and acts as a good icebreaker.

Steps:

Select an open space where a map can be drawn on the ground.

- Ask the local people to prepare the map of their settlement that can help others to have a visual picture of their locality.
- Ask the group to show all the features of the settlement that they can think of, such as, rivers, hills, roads, tanks, bamboo groves, forests, wells, schools, health centres, clubs, temples, and so on. The clusters of huts, buildings and residential places are also to be noted and marked on the map.
- Labels and symbols are to be used to identify different facilities, features and infrastructure.
- Allow the participants to select the symbols.
- Any additional information that the facilitator wants to be included in the map should be introduced only at the end, after the group has finished preparing the map, and after consultation with the group.
- Once the map is ready, you may ask questions about the findings as required.



5.2 Transect Walks

A transect is a structured walk through the locality identified by you. This walk is best carried out with a group of people who live there and know the area well. These local people should act as guide in the walk showing and discussing all the features that exist within the area. Transect walk will be very effective if the social map of the area has already been prepared. This will help verification of the social map. It also helps the facilitator to focus on some key areas or issues.

Focus Points

- Once the features such as hats (market place) or the schools or club are identified the facilitator may visit these places for maximum interaction with different segments of the population.
- During the transect walk the facilitator is directly exposed to the physical and topographical features which may open up discussion on various subjects for development intervention, such as water conservation, change in land use or crop rotation pattern.
- It may help in locating the settlements of socially and economically deprived/background people. Direct interaction with them would help him/her to identify their special problems calling for attention.



5.3 Census Mapping

Census means collecting information about all units - be it about individual or household. Census mapping is used to put together easily quantifiable information received from the participants. The household information like – number of adults (men and women), number of children (boys and girls), education, literacy, employment, resource ownership health problems etc. can be recorded using this method. For such a census either the social map or cards may be used.

Steps:

- Start with a discussion on the need to put together some quantitative information about the locality (e.g. determination of number of children in the age group 5 to 13 for whom education needs to be arranged)
- Decide whether the census will be carried out using cards or the social map.

- Ask the group to first prepare the household list. The number or the name of one representative for each household should be written on the card or on the household depicted on the map. This makes it easy to identify the household for reference.
- The group decides which variables to select. You as facilitator can give an example of human population to start with, but for each indicator (that is subject), quantified information is recorded on the card or in the house on the map.
- At the end, ask the group to aggregate the information for all the variables preferable in tables. Some simple analysis can also be carried out with the same group.
- Allow the participants to select the other variables. In case you have any specific issue in mind, which has not been included by the group, it can be introduced at the end, after the group has finished its work.

Venn Diagrams

Venn Diagrams help in understanding the roles the different institutions play in a community, their mutual relationships, and the relative importance they play in people's lives. These are also known as Chapati Diagrams because of the circular paper cut-outs used in this analysis. The whole exercise is directed to understand how the people perceive these institutions vis-à-vis their own lives. This method is best effective when the respondents interact within a group. It is expected that a lot of discussion and debate may follow. The facilitator without trying to stop the debate should try to help them to come to a conclusion.

Steps:

- First you can prepare a large circular paper, which represents the community. Smaller circles of various sizes should also be kept handy. These small circles would represent different institutions.
- The size of the circle represents the importance of an institution to the community. (The bigger the shape the more important is the institution).

- The proximity to or distance of an institution from the community is denoted by the closeness or distance of the circle representing the institution from the centre of the main circle (representing the community).
- Institutions placed inside the main circle are institutions the people feel close to.
- The circles touching or overlapping each other show a close link between them.
- Similarly distance between circles represents absence of links between them.



6 Ranking Exercises

There are two types of ranking techniques commonly used in participatory appraisal: *problem and preference ranking (which are also separately indicated sometimes) and wealth ranking.*

6.1 Problem and preference ranking

You can use several different techniques to elicit local people's perceptions of the most important problems they face. One simple method is to ask participants to list five or so main problems. This could be a general question, or one focused on a particular problem area. Then ask them to rank these problems in order of importance.

A more systematic technique called pair-wise ranking uses cards to represent the different problems. The facilitator shows the "problem cards" two at a time, each time asking, "Which is the bigger problem?" As the participants make the comparisons, the results are recorded in a matrix. Matrix is basically a table in which different values may be put against different criteria. Counting the number of times that each problem "won" over the others and arranging them in appropriate order obtain the final result.

Similar to problem ranking, preference ranking involves participants assessing different items or options, using criteria that they themselves identify. A common form of preference ranking uses a matrix with items/options along the horizontal axis and the elicited criteria along the vertical axis. This technique works well as an introductory exercise in a group discussion as it can reveal interesting differences among group members. You can explore these discrepancies later during the discussion or subsequent interviews with individuals. Gender differences are particularly worth exploring, as men and women often have quite different preferences and criteria for those preferences.

6.2 *Ranking and Scoring*

This technique is most useful in analysing people's preferences in the decision-making process. You may use ranking and scoring in any situation where different choices are to be weighed against different options. The method brings out the criteria on the basis of which a particular group of respondents evaluate the options available and how their choices and preferences are made.

STEPS

- Start with a discussion of the problem or issue or event.
- Once the participants have mentioned some of the options available, ask them to prepare a list of all the possible options. This list can be prepared on the ground using chalk, by using symbols or by writing on slips of paper, which are placed on the ground. It is also possible to use large sheets of paper for preparing the visual, which can only be used by the literate- respondents.

Once the list is ready, ask the participants to select the most preferred option. This can be ranked one. The next most preferred option could be ranked two, and so on till the list is exhausted. Your role as facilitator is important here in initiating the discussion and in explaining the technique. Once the participants start doing the analysis, it is best for the facilitator to be an observer and not to interfere with the analysis.

Once the ranking is complete, ask the participants to explain the reasons for their preferences.

6.3 *Matrix ranking and scoring*

Often it is necessary to analyse the options on the basis of multiple criteria. In such situations you may use the matrix scoring or ranking method as a most effective tool.

Steps

- A matrix can be prepared on the ground or on a sheet of paper
- In the cells along the top, (that is the horizontal or x-axis), place the different criteria (one in each cell). Along the vertical or y-axis on the left-hand side place each option - one in each cell.
- Each option on the list is evaluated against all the criteria in the matrix. This can be done by using scoring or ranking methods. Counters with pre-identified or given values may be used to fill up each of the cells in the matrix.
- It is important to remember that the scores for the options should not be added in order to arrive at the overall preference. This may be misleading as it assumes that all the criteria have equal weight.
- Even then, the matrix provides an overall view about the scale of preference of the people.

6.4 *Pair-wise ranking*

You can use this method in analysing different options and choices available under one topic by evaluating them, two at a time.

Steps

- The participants prepare a list of the different options they have under the selected topic.
- These are written on slips of paper and placed on the ground. Alternatively, a grid can be prepared on the ground using chalk or on a large sheet of paper.

- The participants are asked to consider the options two at a time and select the one that is more prevalent or more common. Similarly, they may be compared in terms of the difficulty in their use. Again there may be other factors to be considered. Each option is directly compared with all the other options, one by one and so on till all the combinations are exhausted.
- The number of times an option is selected is the score that it gets. The higher the score the more preferred is the option.

6.5 Wealth ranking

Wealth ranking involves community members identifying and analysing the different wealth groups in a community. It enables evaluators to learn about the socio-economic stratification of project beneficiaries and local people's definitions and indicators of wealth.

The most common version of this technique involves a series of individuals or a focus group of community members, ranking the entire community. This may also be done for a particular section of the community if there are too many households to rank say more than 100 or if the participants are familiar with only their own neighbourhood. You can introduce the technique using local terms for wealth and poverty and encourage participants to first discuss how they define these terms and how they would describe a poor household or a rich household.

Wealth ranking has sometimes proved problematic in urban areas, where people tend to be less familiar with their neighbours than in rural settings. Furthermore, in some communities, relative wealth or poverty ranking is a very sensitive topic, and this technique may need to be conducted in a private setting to allow participants to talk freely. In some cases, you may have to avoid this technique altogether.

6.6 Well-being ranking

This exercise tries to capture how a community identifies social divisions among its members. It identifies different categories of households within the community and their relative standard of living.

Steps

There are two ways to approach this task. You can first start by asking the group to discuss the criteria on the basis of which they differentiate the households. It may be social. It may be economic. It may be both social and economic. You list them. Then you ask the group to use these criteria to decide in how many categories they would like to divide the households. Then ask them to describe each of these categories. They can then proceed with the ranking of all the households. In this approach you may ask them to rank straightway. Once this is completed you can ask the group to describe the criteria on the basis of which they differentiate the categories.

The social ranking may be used to classify the households on the map. Separate sheets may be used and the information recorded in tabular forms, with additional explanatory notes, if necessary.

7 Trend Analysis

Some of the visual-based techniques used to conduct community trend analysis are: seasonal calendars, trend analysis and daily activity charts.

7.1 *Seasonal calendars*

Seasonal calendars drawn by the local people are very useful means of generating information about seasonal trends within the community and identifying periods of stress and vulnerability. Best undertaken in the form of a group discussion (to help verify the information obtained), seasonal calendars are often drawn on the ground with the relative trends depicted using stones or seeds, as in a preference-ranking matrix. In other instances, simple line graphs can be drawn to show seasonal increases or decreases. A whole series of seasonal variables can be included in one calendar to give an overview of the situation throughout the year. These variables can include: rainfall, crop sequences, labour demand, availability of paid employment, out-migration, incidence of human diseases, expenditure levels, and so on. Important periods, such as festivals, can also be shown.

7.2 *Seasonality Analysis*

- This method is used to analyze the seasonal patterns of some aspects of life or activities, events or problems. There are some problems, which are cyclical in nature. Problems which have a cyclical pattern can be analyzed using this method, including

availability of food, prevalence of diseases, indebtedness, relative prosperity, stress in livelihoods etc. as also rainfall, availability of water and so on.

- Ask the participants to decide how they would like to divide the year (months, seasons, quarters, etc.) in relation to their lives. Do not impose your calendar – there can be different forms of local calendars, which the people may be more familiar with.
- Develop the calendar on the ground using chalk, sticks, stones, or any other locally available material. This can also be prepared on large sheets of paper.
- Identify the items or problems with the help of the participants.
- The seasonal variations of the different items are depicted on the calendar, and then the results are compared.
- Once the visual is ready you can ask questions regarding the relationships between different variables and whether there are any other aspects of life that affect or are affected by this seasonality.
- This visual is then used to discuss problems and opportunities.

7.3 *Trend Analysis*

You may use trend analysis as a separate technique to understand people's perceptions and patterns of change regarding selected indicators and topics that are of concern to them. This is a useful tool to initiate the discussion with older people. But ensure that other sections of the people also enter into the discussion. To analyze their perception of changes taking place in their community and in their own lives the following steps may be taken.

Steps

- Start with a discussion on major changes that have taken place in the locality as perceived or identified by them.

- The group is to decide how far back in time they would like to go for this analysis. They should identify the year(s) or period when significant changes were witnessed.
- Ask the group to identify the areas in which they have witnessed these changes. Then draw a diagram showing these changes of over the years. This can be shown by line drawings (like graphs).
- Discuss what prompted these changes. Which ones are considered positive and which are negative and why? Ask whether any of the negative changes can be reversed, and how?
- There is every possibility that there would be difference of opinion and debate. Do not interfere. But you may provide necessary information and draw attention to issues, which have not been discussed at the end, so that fresh discussion may be initiated.

7.4 Daily activity charts

Daily activity charts are useful as a way for community members to show graphically how they spend their day. The diagrams also make it easy to compare the daily activities of different groups of people, such as women versus men, employed versus unemployed, married women versus widows.

In the same way as a seasonal calendar shows the busiest times of the year, a daily activity chart can show the busiest times of the day and can, therefore, be useful in monitoring changes during the course of the of project.

8 Problems relating to PRA

PRA is now a widely acknowledged and practiced method for participative, people - centric development. It is, however, not a solution to all the problems of development. Apart from that in introducing PRA you may face quite a few problems. Here we mention some of these problems.

- The problem of not reaching everyone, especially women, the landless, children.
- A non-literate person can prepare a map on the ground with no names or writing. He/she can transfer the map on the wall for presentation but then someone else can

add the names etc, and during presentation the non-literate may be sidelined or squeezed out. The rich and the influential may take over and the poor may be left out.

- You should always keep in mind that PRA is not an end in itself. It is a process to bring on to the surface the problems of the people by the people themselves. It is not the end. You should use these methods at different stages of development process to make your development programme participatory and effective.
- It gives voice to the voiceless and enables them to articulate their own problem and encourage them to own development as their self managed activity. It will turn them from passive beneficiaries into active development makers. The process creates a lot of enthusiasm. You have to ensure that this enthusiasm does not lead to apathy because of lack of concrete action on the ground.
- As development is complex, and multi-dimensional, before going for conducting PRA you are to ensure convergence of different functionaries for the development of the area.
- While conducting PRA your aim should always be to prepare an action plan based on PRA. If you fail to develop and follow it up, people will withdraw from the development process.

9 Practical personal tips

We have so far discussed mapping techniques, ranking exercises and trend analysis in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).

Now we will provide some practical tips so that you can use the PRA techniques in a proper manner.

PRACTICAL PERSONAL TIPS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">•LOOK, LISTEN AND LEARN•FACILITATE•DO NOT DOMINATE•BE PATIENT DO NOT INTERRUPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WHEN PEOPLE ARE MAPPING, MODELLING OR DIAGRAMMING, LET THEM GET ON WITH IT• WHEN PEOPLE ARE THINKING OR DISCUSSING BEFORE REPLYING, GIVE THEM TIME TO THINK OR DISCUSS
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<p>EMBRACE ERROR.</p> <p>WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES AND DO THINGS BADLY SOMETIMES.</p> <p>NEVER MIND. DON'T HIDE IT. SHARE IT.</p> <p>WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, IT IS A CHANCE TO LEARN</p>	<p>ASK YOURSELF – WHO IS BEING MET AND HEARD, AND WHAT IS BEING SEEN, AND WHERE AND WHY; AND WHO IS <i>NOT</i> BEING MET AND HEARD, AND WHAT IS <i>NOT</i> BEING SEEN, AND WHERE AND WHY?</p>
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<p>RELAX</p> <p>DON'T RUSH</p> <p>ALLOW UNPLANNED TIME TO WALK AND WANDER AROUND</p>	<p>MEET PEOPLE WHEN IT SUITS THEM, AND WHEN THEY CAN BE AT EASE, NOT WHEN IT SUITS YOU. THIS APPLIES EVEN MORE STRONGLY FOR WOMEN THAN FOR MEN</p>
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<p>PROBE, INTERVIEW ON THE BASIS OF THE MAP OR THE DIAGRAM. ASK ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE. NOTICE, INVESTIGATE DIVERSITY, DIFFERENCE, THE UNEXPECTED. ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS</p>	<p>USE THE SIX HELPERS</p> <p>WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY AND HOW?</p>
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<p>SHOW INTEREST AND ENTHUSIAM IN LEARNING FROM PEOPLE</p> <p>ALLOW MORE TIME THAN EXPECTED FOR TEAM INTERACTION AND FOR CHANGING THE AGENDA</p> <p>ENJOY IT!</p> <p>IT IS OFTEN INTERESTING, AND OFTEN FUN</p> <p>BE NICE TO PEOPLE</p>
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Learning from the Field

Whenever an extension worker or some development official visits rural areas, in most cases the question that is asked is whether the official concerned has come with some schemes which involve grants or loans. Farmers do not care much for schemes that do not

provide direct or indirect financial assistance. To change such a mind-set is difficult but not impossible. We give below an illustration which proves the point.

The experience described here relates to an Action Research project on the integrated development of selected villages in Ramgarh development block in Nainital district of Uttar Pradesh. As soon as this project was taken up, the *Gram Pradhan* (village head) and other influential groups in the villages tried to find out the financial incentives guaranteed in the project. Coming close to the multi-disciplinary project team, however, they soon realized that there were no such direct benefits but indirect ones like mutual sharing of problems, knowledge and underlying potentials. Besides, there was the scope for wider exposure through visit to agri-research and development organizations. Even events like *kisan melas* (farmers' fair) held in the villages during the four years of action research, seemed to them empty and not of much significance in comparison to the traditional loan or construction based development activities. This initial negative response from the influential in the villages discouraged many.

But let us not forget that in the T & V system it was these people who were given a significant role in rural development. Our experience showed that the so called progressive and relatively affluent influential farmers are unable to truly represent the poor. Unfortunately, in most cases only their voice are heard.

PRA on the other hand does not ignore the poorest of poor in the social system. PRA type enquiry was, therefore, chosen to find out the benchmark information on the villages selected for action research. It required a lot of efforts on the part of the project team to make poor people, particularly women, share their views on the problems of the villages. This was a challenging yet interesting task which brought out many facts which otherwise would never have been known to the workers involved in the project. For example, the farmers did not sow the improved grass seeds distributed among them by the government agencies as well as by the NGOs. This was because, first they were reluctant to grow grasses in the small land holding they had; secondly, they knew it for sure that the native grasses growing naturally along the crop fields, on the bunds etc. would suppress the unadapted exotic grasses. The Government of Uttar Pradesh as also the several NGOs had been spending millions of rupees for introduction of grasses and improved forages in this region, but the outcome was

frustrating at the ground level. The PRA enquiry revealed very clearly the limitations of the “improved” forage production strategies involving non-local grasses and forages.

Buffaloes are growing in sizable number in the hills of Uttar Pradesh though experts consider hills as unfavourable locale for buffaloes. The PRA enquiry in relevant the villages revealed that buffalo was a better alternative to the local cow or even cross-bred cattle because of the higher fat content in buffalo milk, greater manure production capability, ease in disposing off male calf for slaughter, and more milk production with locally available inputs. The restricted grazing areas (forests for example) are also the reasons for the farmers’ preference for buffaloes vis-à-vis cows as buffaloes are essentially stall fed in hills. But the government agencies still consider buffalo as unsuitable for hills. Hence, there is no significant intervention for the promotion of buffaloes in this region. Yet the buffaloes are growing in number over cattle. The growing number of village dairy cooperatives in hills is yet another reason for the encouragement to buffalo rearing since dairy cooperatives pay for milk on the basis of fat content. The hill farmers are interested in replacing the large number of cows with them for one or two buffaloes given the constraints faced by them in maintaining the cows. The farmers still maintain one or two cows for religious purposes and bulls for draught power required in hill agriculture because buffalo bulls are not as efficient in this. These were the learning’s when farmer’s active participation could be ensured through PRA type of enquiry. These learning should be transformed into action to win the confidence of farmers and to make farmer participatory development a continuous process.

11 Let us sum up

In this unit we have discussed the PLA method in detail. You must have noted that the method has given rise to quite a few techniques of data collection and analysis. We have also pointed out that you need not use all the tools every time. The technique or techniques that are useful and manageable should be used. We have also warned you that PLA should not be used for its own sake or for collection of data and information only. It should always lead to action in the field. In other words PLA should lead to planning or development of a programme, its implementation as well as its monitoring.