
Sustaining Livelihoods in Southern Africa

Issue: 2 July 2001
Theme: Community-based-planning

Contents of this issue:
SL Documents Lessons from Experience
SL Activities Upcoming Events
Reader's Contributions About PLAAS

Editor's notes

This month's theme is community-based planning. We start with some more information on key principles and issues in relation to sustainable livelihoods. This provides a basis for seeing why community-based planning is important if sustainable livelihoods approaches are to be achieved. We then have summaries of relevant documents and publications on the subject and we draw from two country workshops on community-based planning that took place in Uganda and Zimbabwe. We have also added a paragraph that explains what PLAAS, a partner in this newsletter, is all about.

Some more background to sustainable livelihoods – some basic principles

Sustainable livelihoods approaches build on existing best practice in how to promote sustainable pro-poor development. A set of principles have been suggested, that development interventions:

- are **people-focused**, and so puts clients/citizens at the centre
- are **participatory** and **responsive**
- are **holistic**, recognising the holistic nature of people's lives, their use of multiple livelihood strategies, and so the need for holistic responses, rather than organisation-driven sectoral approaches
- build on **strengths** – a respectful approach to poor people (and organisations) as people with strengths and opportunities and not just needs
- recognise the need for **micro-macro links** to link micro - level participatory work with meso-level work on institutions and macro-level work on the enabling environment
- use a **partnership** approach between state, community and private sector
- see **sustainability** as core to any interventions (economic, environmental, social and institutional)
- are **dynamic**, recognising the changes occurring in poor people's lives as well as the policies, institutions and processes which impact on them, and so are
- **flexible**, using learning and process approaches

In order to operationalise this at the community (micro), organisational (meso) and policy (macro) levels, a set of key questions have been derived as to what is required if sustainable livelihoods are to be achieved. This reflects the fact that action is needed at all these levels, to make poverty reduction a reality. We need to ensure that:

- poor people are active and involved in managing their own development (micro)
- there is an active and dispersed network of local service providers (community based, private sector or government) (micro)
- at local government level, services are managed and coordinated effectively and responsively, and held accountable (lower meso)
- at the level above, there is the capacity to provide support and supervision (upper meso)
- the centre is providing holistic and strategic direction around poverty, redistribution, and oversight of development (macro)
- the international level is strengthening capacity in-country to address poverty
- and that the linkages are working effectively in both directions

So why is community-based planning important

If we are to address the first of these questions, we need to address the planning system, where decisions about resources are made, if people are to get more power over their lives. Currently most planning systems concentrate on the municipal level, and the link with the community is weak. South Africa has recognised the need for participatory planning in its Integrated Development Planning process, but how this is to be achieved effectively is not known. The response in projects is often to do PRAs, but these are very resource intensive and not a basis for a sustainable system. Some system is needed of widespread participatory planning, linked to the municipal planning system.

This edition draws from a project that has just started on action-research in relation to community-based planning, which involves Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. In each country, there is a team of senior policy makers, a local government, and an NGO working with participatory planning, who form the core team. Initial workshops have been held in Uganda, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and some of the papers can be viewed on www.khanya-mrc.co.za we draw on some of these for the following.

Types of community-based planning

Conyers in the paper shown below suggests ways that approaches to community-based planning can be differentiated, by the:

- nature or scope of activities involved or problems (project plan, sector plan etc)
- linkages (or not) with higher level planning processes, eg district
- stage of the planning cycle in which the community is involved
- degree of community involvement at each stage
- type of external organisation (if any) which initiates and supports the planning activity (NGO, local government, etc)

The purpose for which community-based planning is conducted could be:

- to make plans more relevant to local needs and conditions
- to increase community involvement in provision of public services, due to lack of capacity of government agencies
- to increase people's control over their own lives and livelihoods.

Depending on which of these is the purpose, there are important implications for the type of planning process that is used. In this particular project it is assumed it must be all three.

Key SL documents/articles

Decentralisation and Community Based Planning in Zimbabwe: A Critical Review. By: Diana Conyers. Ministry of Local Government Public Works and National Housing. (Intermediate Technology Development Group). (2001). This paper was delivered at a workshop on community based planning that was held in Harare, Zimbabwe 6-7

June 2001. The paper introduces the concept of community based planning, the relationship between community based planning and decentralisation and the prerequisites for CBP, and reviews experience in Zimbabwe. This article is available at www.khanya-mrc.co.za. Diana can be contacted at PO Box 71, Binga, Zimbabwe.

Community Participation and Development at the Local Level: The Mobilisation and Transfer of Resources in Support of Community Action Plan. By: Martin Onyacha-Olaa. Co-ordinator, Programme Management Unit, Decentralisation Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government. 2000. This paper was presented at the Pan-African Workshop on Community Participation and HIV/AIDS, June 2000 in Tanzania and at a workshop on Community Based Planning, June 2001 in Kampala. The paper examines the legislative reform process in Uganda that spearheaded decentralisation, which in turn facilitated community participation in development/planning. The paper argues that these reforms that began in 1992 had far-reaching effects, including: transfer of political, administrative, financial and planning authority from the centre to local councils; making local governments increasingly responsible for the delivery of the bulk of services and accountable to their constituents; and the promotion of popular participation and empowerment of the local people to make decisions. Martin Onyacha-Olaa can be contacted at: Decentralisation Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government, PO Box 7723, Kampala, Uganda. E-mail: peri@imul.com. The paper can also be downloaded from www.khanya-mrc.co.za/Mwanza.

Community Based Rural Development: Reducing Rural Poverty from the Ground Up. By: Coirolo, L.; McLean, K. Mokoli, M.; Ryan, A.; Shah, P.; Williams, M. Produced by: Rural Development Strategy (World Bank) (2001). This article investigates Community Based Rural Development (CBRD), which is an approach to reducing rural poverty that promotes collective action by communities and puts them in control of development interventions by making community based organisations (CBOs) driving forces in the process. This paper concludes that CBRD has the potential to make the allocation of resources more responsive to the needs of the poor, to lead to more sustainable outcomes, and to empower poor communities to negotiate with government, the private sector, and civil society. Furthermore, this article argues that the CBRD approach can be used to support local activities that inject resources directly into the local economy, increase local level opportunity in rural areas, enhance revenues available for local development and diversify rural household income - thus enhance the quality of life in rural areas. This paper can be obtained from www.ids.ac.uk/cgi-bin/dbtcgi.exe.

Public Participation in Local Government: Workbook. Evan Meyer and Francois Theron. School of Public Management and Planning: University of Stellenbosch. 2000. The workbook is aimed at local government practitioners, intending to provide them with a "toolkit" to develop their own public participation framework, which can be used for training, strategic planning and policy-making. It is regarded as a participatory learning framework for action and not a blueprint for public participation. The workbook provides a clear guide of how to use it. It also attempts to familiarise development practitioners with the South African framework for public participation in local government and the municipal institutional framework for public participation. Other topics covered include areas for public participation, technical assistance for public participation, public participation meetings, and monitoring and evaluating public participation. Authors could be contacted at School of Public Management and Planning, University of Stellenbosch, PO Box 610, Bellville 7535.

Rural Planning for Sustainable Livelihoods in South Africa. Khanya - Managing Rural Change. 1999. The study is one of three other case studies of rural planning in Africa undertaken for the International Institute for Environment and Development. The South African case study provides a detailed review and critical analysis of rural planning in South Africa, covering past and current systems and practices, methodological approaches and institutional frameworks. The Free State province was selected as a focal point of study, looking at provincial and local government. The sustainable livelihood approach has been used as a framework of analysis. The report looks at the institutional and legal framework for development planning, spatial planning and sectoral planning. Eleven cross-cutting issues

regarding planning have been identified and discussed. Recommendations for sustainable livelihoods planning have also been provided. The report can be obtained at www.khanya-mrc.co.za or www.ids.ac.uk or www.livelihoods.org.uk

Lessons From Experience

'Lessons' is a new area on Livelihoods Connect seeking to provide the key to unlock some of the questions such as: Is there a substantive body of experience of people using sustainable livelihoods approaches? What are the lessons emerging and who is involved in the projects? It highlights 34 new project summaries of DFID supported initiatives and brings attention to previously published case studies of five innovative projects that used livelihoods approaches. The project summaries provide interesting examples from eleven different sectors including: agriculture; communications; community development; fisheries; forestry; livelihood approaches; monitoring and evaluation; natural resources; sanitation; support to practitioners; tourism; transport; urban development; and water. The summaries are based on work carried out by Hugh Gibbon and David Ridder Smith at NRI, and can be viewed at www.livelihood.org/lessons/lessons.

SL activities/programmes

1. Khanya is managing the 4-country action-research on community-based planning. Partners include:

South Africa

- Decentralised Development Planning (DPLG), contact Yusuf Patel Yusuf@ds0.pwv.gov.za;
- The LOGOSUL project in DPLG, contact Sithole Mbanga sithole@ds0.pwv.gov.za;
- CARESA, contact Penny Ward pjward@netactive.co.za;
- Mangaung Municipality, contact JJ Matlole ceo@civic.bfnccouncil.co.za; and Khanya;

Zimbabwe

- Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, Intermediate Technology Southern Africa, contact Absolom Masendeke absolomm@itdg.org.zw;
- Development in Practice, contact Andrew Mlalazi diphre@ecoweb.co.zw;

Uganda

- Local Government Development Programme, contact Martin Onyach-Olaa peri@imul.com;
- CARE Uganda, contact Tom Blomley blomley.carehq@imul.com;
- Programme for Modernisation of Agriculture, contact Willie Odwongo wodwongo@yahoo.com;

Ghana

- Ministry of Local Government, ISODEC, contact Tay Awash isodec@ncs.com.gh

The project is funded by DFID. Details of the project and papers are available at www.khanya-mrc.co.za. Please contact any of these partners or the Project Manager, James Carnegie at james@khanya-mrc.co.za or +27 83 555 5053. If you know of good case studies of community-based planning, please send details to Tsiliso at tsiliso@khanya-mrc.co.za.

Upcoming events

1. The first community-based planning workshop in South Africa was held on 19/20 June 2001. It is hoped to have a follow up event around October 2001. If you are interested in participating in this please contact Tsiliso Tamasane to express your interest. A four-country meeting will be held from 30 July to 1 August in Bloemfontein. Results from this meeting will be posted on the CBP page on the Khanya website.
2. PLAAS in conjunction with CASS is presenting a course in governance aspects of Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM). The course will run on 10-14 September 2001 in Cape Town. The course is intended for professionals involved with CBNRM policy formulation, implementation and monitoring from various agencies. For information contact

Webster Whande on wwhande@uwc.ac.za or Ursula Arendse on ufarendse@uwc.ac.za. Tel: 021 959 3961

Useful Internet resources on community-based planning (CBP)

Khanya is starting a section on its website with details of the community-based planning project. See www.khanya-mrc.co.za. South African participants at the community-based planning workshop agreed to start an informal network on CBP. Initially Khanya will provide an email newsletter. If you wish to receive this please contact Tsiliso Tamasane at tsiliso@khanya-mrc.co.za.

IIED has a section on strategies, planning and assessment, which could be helpful to development practitioner's www.iied.org/spa

Feedback

Some responses to the first edition included:

"Thank you for sending me the SL first Issue - I think it is a wonderful idea and an invaluable resource. I really enjoyed reading through it. Thank you again and I look forward to receiving the future issues". (Gwendolyn Wellman)

"Many thanks for the Newsletter. Congratulations on a very professional output. There has been a demand for the text in this office.... We look forward to working with you in the future." (Brian Kerr)

"Many thanks for this information. It is very useful." (David Gibbon)

Future topics

We welcome feedback, ideas and contributions for upcoming topics. The topic for August will be on local economic development and for September on Corporate Citizenship and Sustainable Livelihoods (in partnership with the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship).

About PLAAS

The Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) is a constituent unit of the University of the Western Cape's School of Government, and was initiated in 1995 with a core grant from the Ford Foundation. Ben Cousins was seconded from the Department of Anthropology and Sociology to establish a programme to build capacity amongst black applied social scientists in the land and agrarian reform sector, and to engage in policy-relevant research in support of the post-apartheid government's new land reform programme. Soon after its establishment PLAAS began to provide short course training to government and NGO staff, in collaboration with the Land Tenure Centre at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. PLAAS is housed within the School of Government, which includes the Centre for Southern African Studies, the departments of Political Studies and Public Administration, Fairshare, and the Community Peace Programme. The School runs a large post-graduate teaching programme in Governance. For more information on PLAAS and contact details, visit the University of Western Cape's website address: www.uwc.ac.za Tel: 021 959 3961

Sustaining Livelihoods in Southern Africa is an initiative of Khanya-managing rural change, PLAAS of the University of the Western CAPE, and CARE. The editor is Tsiliso Tamasane and he can be contacted at tsiliso@khanya-mrc.co.za, tel 082 499 5497. Previous newsletters are available at the Khanya website, www.khanya-mrc.co.za. We welcome contributions, of events, relevant documents, comments etc.
