



“We too can speak!” A Case Story from PfR programme Bihar, India



“Rome was not built in a day” a remark that the villagers of Rampurwa Mahanwa Panchayat (local village committee) in North Bihar (at the bordering district of India-Nepal) uttered when they decided to take their demands to the government through an organised and unified struggle forgetting the past. It so happened when the project repeatedly conducted meetings at panchayat level with Mukhiya (village head), PRI (Panchayati Raj Institution) members and village elders, which initiated a discussion on the DRR needs that cannot be met through panchayat level resources. That is how people realised and recognised

the importance of the theme and led to the birth of a “People’s Institution” which was first given the name as “Awaaj- Ek Peהל Dusri Ajadi Ki Or”- *“Voice: first step towards second freedom”*.

After the formation, several meetings were conducted and the members have themselves decided to get some of the immediate DRR demands approved by the Gram Sabha (meeting at village level), such as a boat, sanitation and drinking water, which were approved. With this initial step of success the members fixed a date to visit the Circle Officer (CO) and Block Development Officer (BDO) with the “Charter of Demands” written in their letterhead along with the copy of the demand approved by the Gram Sabha. With this decision the members gathered along with representatives of media and entered into the office of the BDO of block *Majhauria* who then referred them to the Circle Officer. Meeting the Circle Officer with Media personnel, the “People’s Institutions” handed over the “Charter of demands” and received assurance that their demands will be forwarded to the DM (district magistrate) as the Block does not have sufficient resources to fulfil these demands. With this the members returned home and received appreciation of the villagers and the media.

Although this step was not taken for the first time, the initiative was supported by a strong organizational process. The support of fellow beings and the media has helped villagers to grow their confidence. Now, they strongly believe that though the path is difficult, they can stand up and speak.

A Micro River Basin Management Plan in Nuahalá, Guatemala

In Nuahalá, Guatemala, a Micro River Basin Management Plan has been developed for the river Tzozoma with support from local CARE partner Vivamos Mejor. The micro river basin of the river Masa has a land area of 50.71 km², tributary of the greater river basin Nahualate in the Pacific slope in Guatemala. For the elaboration of the management plan a specific process has started, consisting

of awareness meetings with 35 rural communities living in the watershed (23.662 inhabitants) followed by a survey of information through community workshops in two regions of the micro river



basin: Upstream of the Masa (Tierra Fría) and the low stream of the Masa (Bocacosta). This survey served as the foundation for the strategy of the proposed model of adaptation and mitigation to climate risk and promote community resilience to extreme events, mainly landslides and floods. Subsequently, biophysical and socioeconomic information was generated and integrated in a document. Furthermore, thematic maps were elaborated with digital information systems. At the same time, a baseline survey was carried out to know the current status of the communities. This baseline survey considered indicators relating to health, education, environmental,

land use, food security, livelihoods and natural resource use, among others. Based on this information and the collection of data at field level a diagnosis with indicators was obtained to formulate a management plan for the watershed.

Global Learning from Participatory Rural Appraisals



The assessment phase of the PfR program included Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) done by the many partners. The innovative approach of PfR encouraged partners to innovate and move beyond business-as-usual when carrying out these PRAs, particularly in trying to integrate ecosystems, climate, and disaster risk reduction. To generate a better understanding of the process of integrating climate and ecosystems into Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools the partners will now start a small assessment looking at how this “integration” captured the level of

risks at the community level, and the relative strengths and challenges of this process. Might this integration be leading to a “new and more comprehensive approach” that would require PRA tools to be further amended and developed in the near future?

This synthesis of information about the PRA process within PfR will allow for each team to learn from the experiences of others around the world. Case studies of how DRR and CCA have been incorporated into appraisals trends of “best practices” will be useful for future programming design, both within and beyond PfR. This is not intended as a critical review of the Partners’ work, but rather a global comparison to highlight methods and results of integrating climate risk and ecosystem considerations into assessments. Lessons learned can be used to improve design and implementation of future assessments led by PfR partners and external practitioners.

If you want to share particular experiences to be captured in this work or if you want to know more about the approach of this assessment, please feel free to send further information or questions to Coughlan@climatecentre.org. *(Please bear in mind that this analysis is not intended to spot for holes in the documents nor to provide feedback; instead, it will highlight global best practices and global innovations during this first assessment phase of PfR)*

Lights, Camera, Action: Games on video in Nicaragua.

Last May, the upstream and downstream communities of El Castillito and Moropoto in Nicaragua experienced the power of games as a fun and effective way to promote learning about climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and sound ecosystem management. Encircled by neighbors, friends, and PfR partners, twelve community members took their places around a board and played a game in which players representing upstream and downstream communities made decisions about growing crops, protecting their assets, and feeding their families all while managing the risk of floods and drought, represented by dice. The game is a simplified version of a reality they live day to day. The dialogue that followed the game play was rich with observations about the players' risk management strategies during the game and the decisions and consequences they make in the much more complex context of real life.



Adding excitement to this innovative approach, local PfR partners, with support from the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, teamed up with a professional local video production company. They captured on film the process of game play, the ensuing discussion, and the enthusiasm and fun that this form of learning fostered in all participants. A second video was made for training future game facilitators on the game's rules.

South South Citizenry Based Development Academy in Kupang, Indonesia.



On May 21-23, the 5th South South Citizenry Based Development Sub-Academy (SSCBDA) was held in Kupang, NTT, Indonesia. This event was organized by the PfR Alliance members in Indonesia led by Ms. Guineviene de Jesus, PfR coordinator for Indonesia and Philippines. The 5th SSCBDA aimed to explore how communities are strengthening their resilience in a changing world and to provide a venue for experience and learning exchange. The event was made possible through the support of the Special Unit of

South-South Cooperation in UNDP Asia Pacific Regional Center in Bangkok. Ms. Zenaída Willison, the DRR Advisor of the Unit and member of the International Advisory Board of PfR introduced the concept of the SSCBDA. 160 people from communities, civil society organizations, research institutes, knowledge centres as well as Indonesian government representatives came together to participate in this meaningful event. The participants had in-depth discussions on five thematic areas: (1) Water management (2) Sustainable livelihoods / Bio rights (3) Disaster Risk Reduction (4) Climate adaptive capacity, and (5) Bio fuels. The discussions resulted in concrete recommendations to communities, practitioners and government, which will be developed into a policy brief to be presented in the Asean Ministerial Conference on DRR in October. The SSCBDA demonstrated commitment and value on local innovation and local capacity. It also provided a venue for dialogue between various stakeholders and how scientific and indigenous knowledge can be brought together to address the challenges of the changing world.

Planting mangroves, inspiration from the story of Baba Akong.



A joint visit by PWG members as well as country team members from the Philippines and Indonesia to the project sites of the PfR program in Indonesia was an inspiring event. Both Pieter van Eijk (Wetlands International) and Elle Fernandez (Philippine Red Cross) visited –together with other PfR partners- the PfR site in Flores, Indonesia and share with us their story on the efforts of local resident Victor Immanuel (locally known as Baba Akong), who dedicated his life to plant mangroves to protect lives, livelihoods and the environment. Please find Elle Fernandez' full story in the

attachment of the accompanied mail and Pieter van Eijk's blog [here](#).

IRI/Climate Centre seasonal forecast for July is out

Please find attached the latest seasonal forecast from the Climate Centre, in both Spanish and English.

A participatory video training experience in the Philippines.



In the Philippines, two PfR partners were trained in Participatory Video (PV); a technique in which a group of people is involved in creating a film, from script to screen. The films created addressed the causes, effects and potential mitigation measures of devastating floods. Patrick Mongaya, working for the Philippine Red Cross, tells his experience.

“Usually, people in a community, either rural or urban, are the ones that are always shown and featured in films or documentaries, but what if they’ve been given a chance to make their own? The PV Training helped me discover another concept in filming. It is about providing a community with the idea and knowledge to make their own film which allows them to show everyone what they feel or want. This will also uplift their self-esteem and motivate them to strive and achieve more in life.”

“Connecting with the people in this film is very important. In this way, you can establish a good relation between you and the people in it. It will help them feel comfortable with each other, make them understand and conceptualize what they are aiming for and thus help them achieve what they really want to see exposed in their film. The PV training shows that filming can be taught in a simple way and understood by anyone who is willing. Our whole life is a film; it will only end when our life ends. So make great scenes and capture it.”

PfR launch event in Isiolo, Kenya.

Last May, Implementing PfR partners in Kenya, the Kenya Red Cross Society and Mid-P (Merti integrated development project), local Cordaid partners launched the PfR program in Isiolo county. 120 guests, among them line government agencies, NGO's, the business community and community

elders attended the day-long event. The aim of the launching was to bring all stakeholders together and inform them what PfR is implementing in the communities, welcome them aboard in the implementation phases/ process and assist in identifying areas to chip in to avoid duplication.

Different speakers presented their views on the program, amongst other the District commissioner from Isiolo, a representative from ENNDA (Ewaso Nyiro Northern Development Authority) and the District commissioner of Merti district. Drought is one of the major problems in the county which has caused loss of human live, loss of livestock, destruction of vegetation, lack of education, poor livestock market, food shortage, diseases (diarrhea), conflict and water shortage. This has created challenges for the community trying to adapt by relocation and more dependency on relief food. The District commissioner (Merti) urged partners to put up early warning system in the community so as to conserve the trees and community to do timely destocking which eventually will conserve the environment and reduce community dependency on relief. After the speakers, participants were invited to join in an interactive open forum to ask questions and share experiences and inputs by the guests. Community members in the event thanked the KRCS and MID-P for good work that they are implementing. The community shared that is better to find other ways of improving their lives without depending on relief.

A story of change in Burat, Kenya.

Burat, a cosmopolitan community with a population of about 5000 people now enjoys the sweet prize of collective bargain which has been elusive for the past several years. What used to be a deserted settlement as a result of orchestrated inter-tribal conflicts that cost the lives and livelihood of this once proud agro-pastoralist community is now abuzz with luscious fields of maize, beans and



vegetables. Men and women of diverse ages clad in their farming gears could be seen busy tilling farm lands. Mzee Huka, chairman of Burat Farmers group comments on their progress: *"I couldn't imagine that for once we could collectively achieve this amidst all the prevailing circumstances. The VCA assessment that we did with KRCS-Isiolo helped us appreciate the power of collective bargain. This has made us reach far and wide in terms of planning and networking with all the relevant stakeholders and demand for improved services. It has motivated us to come up with a community organization that will sustain the project."*

Conflict and food insecurity were identified as the main hazards afflicting the livelihoods of the community. The community undertook a stakeholder analysis which helped them link and network with other relevant development actors, to fill up the gaps in their capacities. Together with actors like Action Aid-Kenya and the Ministry of water, KRCS provided water pipes for irrigation of the farmlands. The community dug approximately 1,5 km of water canals leading to their farms, enabling about 400 households to farm in previously dry and bare land. This has attracted a diverse group of people to come and try their hands in farming to make ends meet.

Apuru, a 27 year old street urchin attested to this fact: *"Life in town has been miserable for me and after a lot of soul searching I decided to join this group of farmers at least to get my daily bread. I was given a portion of the farm by the committees on which I now grow different food crops which I hope to take to the market soon. I foresee a bright future a head of me."*