



Praxis -Institute for Participatory Practices
Annual Report 2002-2003

Study on community perceptions of socially responsive projects for FICCI Corporate Social Responsibility Award 2002 .

An annual award on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is given to companies demonstrating best socially responsible activities. Project areas of three short listed companies were visited to obtain people or community's perception of socially responsive project that the company is undertaking. The component on obtaining community's perception was taken up by Praxis in June 2002.

Strategic Planning consultation for Oxfam, Eritrea

This was conducted in July 2002 to explore perspectives to scale up participatory approaches in Eritrea and to articulate the role of Oxfam to that affect. Praxis helped consulting outcomes of Micro Level Planning conducted throughout the country in order to present them to the government and undertook a skill mapping of Oxfam Eritrea.

Development Audit of District Poverty Initiative Project (DPIP) in Rajasthan.

This was undertaken in November-December 2002. DPIP is a large-scale poverty alleviation project implemented by the Government of Rajasthan with the support of World Bank. The Development Audit was conducted at the end of the second year of the project to enable its findings feed into mid term review recommendations. The primary framework of the development audit entailed a holistic examination of the DPIP as a system, consisting of a core process (i.e. sub-project administration), project outcomes and their alignment with project objectives, inputs to the core process (for example formation of Common Interest Groups (CIGs), placement of Community Facilitators (CFs), selection of implementing NGOs), the support processes (HRD, finance, information systems etc.) and management processes (strategic planning, monitoring and coordination). It was engaged with various stakeholders in four districts of Churu, Dausa, Jhalawar and Rajsamand, as well as at the state level. These stakeholders include members of CIGs and other villagers, CFs, State Project Management Unit, District Project Management Units, implementing NGOs, District Project Coordination Committees, District Training Teams, Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Santhan, relevant line departments of the government, Panchayati Raj Institutions and other related agencies.

SNSF programme evaluation

This project was conducted in December 2002. An NGO, SNSF Foundation supported project at Dharampur village in Gurgaon district of Haryana. The project aimed at addressing gender issues and providing health and education facilities to improve the overall status of women and children in the village. Praxis was contacted by Partners in Change, a mediating NGO, to encourage social responsibility of private firms to carry out a participatory evaluation of the project and to assess the impact of the programme in its three years of operation in the village. The main objectives of evaluation were: Assessing the impact of the programme on the lives of intended beneficiaries in relation to various activities carried out under the programme, assessment of the organisation capacity of SNSF in executing such projects, assessment of the inclusiveness of project approaches and processes, and defining areas of further improvement vis-à-vis organisation capacity and its approach towards development issues.

7th Sandhan - Rural Development Training

This was held between 6th and 25th May 2002 in Rajgir, Bihar. 30 participants from more than 10 organisations from West Bengal, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand attended the training. Sandhan is a self-organised capacity building training programme conducted by PRAXIS for the cluster-level development workers working in voluntary and non-government organisations. The programme is conducted in Hindi, the most commonly spoken language in the heartland of India. The aim of the training is to build a band of capable workers through intensive training and to provide them continuous back up support through an informal network. The methodology is based on participatory processes of awareness generation, knowledge building and imparting skills, considering specific thematic interests of the participants. The 20-day training was phased across general, thematic and fieldwork areas. As part of their fieldwork, the participants were attached with local organisations to understand and practice the various approaches of participatory development.

6th International Thematic PRA Workshop.

This was held in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh from 22nd September to 3rd October 2002. Approximately 100 participants from all parts of the world as well as India learnt about participatory approaches and applied the same in field, and exchanged their experiences in the two-week intensive workshop. Participants were divided into four modules: Basics and Principles of PRA, Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, Micro Level Planning and Training of Trainers, according to their interests. Besides participants' choice of a module, they had an opportunity to attend a wonderful course on Attitudes and Behaviours in PRA from Dr. Robert Chambers of University of Sussex, England.

CARE Bhuj Training

FICCI and Care-India joined hands to rehabilitate the earthquake victims of Gujarat, India. In order to ensure participation of the primary stakeholders in their project, it was felt that there was a need for applying participatory methods in its implementation and that orientation training was imperative for the project staff and the partner organisation. On their request, two of the Praxis personnel facilitated a five-day orientation training, which included one-day field work in Bhuj. Around 25 participants attended the training. Besides the learning of participatory methods, its application in the project context was practised during the training. This was organised in April 2002.

Training of trainers for Development Alternative, Jhansi

Development Alternatives (DA) had invited Praxis for facilitating a course on PRA-Training of Trainers (TOT). This five-day training was undertaken during September 2002 at Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh, India. The senior staff members of DA and staff of PACS project with a total number of 15 learned participatory methods and training skills.

HR Capacity Building for UNICEF, Water, Environment and Sanitation

This was started in July 2002 to strengthen the capacity of the professional staff of the UNICEF WES Section in New Delhi and its ten state offices. Approximately 30 participants attended both foundation course of community management, conducted in September 2002, and the elective course, which was on gender, social marketing and participatory M&E, held in March 2003.

Training of trainers for ActionAid Nigeria and its partners

This was conducted in October 2002 to impart knowledge on basic concepts, principles and methodologies of participatory practices, and to build skills of both ActionAid Nigeria staff and partners. The aims of the training were to enhance their approaches to programme design, implementation, programme monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment to contribute to the enhancement of AA-Nigeria's M&E system/framework and to develop the capacity of trainers to disseminate skills and knowledge to others.

Other Assignments

As part of the basic research for TV documentary series from EMF Films, Netherlands in understanding the underlying causes of poverty, Praxis work was presented to them at Netherlands Embassy in New Delhi in November 2002 to enhance their understanding of the realities of poverty and the poor.

Digital Archiving Training support to CDS was given in February 2003 in Cairo in order to help archive their digital footage.

Programming support, CARE Jharkhand, India aimed to establish a participatory monitoring and evaluation system in the INHP project. After its need assessment, understanding the project, visiting the areas in major districts, and interacting with all levels of staff and other stakeholders, Praxis facilitated two workshops for its staffs and representatives from all stakeholders during February - April 2003 at Ranchi and Jamshedpur. The workshops came up with an innovative system of participatory M&E called GRAVEL. The system was also planned to be adopted in selected areas as a pilot, and then a full-blown system would be launched incorporating the learnings from the experiences of the pilot phase in the project by the end of 2003. Apart from facilitating the workshops, Praxis is also assisting the project in the implementation of the system, documenting the learnings and capacity building of the people involved.

Praxis attended the Resource Centre for Participatory Practice and Action (RCPLA) Network PRA Workshop in Amman as a RCPLA coordinator in June 2002. RCPLA is an international network to promote participatory approaches and Praxis took over the charge of coordinator from IIED, England. The workshop was organised by Centre for Development Services (CDS), one of the RCPLA members. Praxis also had a chance to make a presentation about its activities and to share the animation film 'Whose reality counts'.

Two of the Praxis members were invited to give a presentation on 'Best Practices and Lessons Learnt from Field' based on the study 'Participatory Assessment of Government of Orissa regarding delivery of services that impact at village level' conducted in March 2002, at the participatory development conference on Participation for Global Action and Change: Connecting practitioners, communities, networks, organisations organised by PD Forum at Guelph, Canada from July 29 to August 2, 2002.

Presentations on the Orissa study at the World Bank, meetings with progressive groups, was held in August 2002 at Washington, D.C.

Steering Group meeting of RCPLA network was held in October 2002 in Sri Lanka to review programmes and to chart out new directions of RCPLA.