

International Course on Participatory Action Research (PAR) for  
Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)  
December 8-19, 2003  
IRR, Silang, Cavite, Philippines

**Final Evaluation: Course Participant's Feedback**

**A. Course Objectives**

At the end of the course, participants would have:

- 1. Examined the concept of PAR**
- 2. Explored practical challenges to CBNRM**
- 3. Critically evaluated the applicability of PAR for CBNRM**

To what extent did the course achieve its objectives? Please check and comment or explain briefly.

Course Objectives	Completely Successful	Generally Successful	Limited Success	Not Successful
1.	[ 6 ]	[ 5 ]	[ ]	[ ]
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This module needs more additional concepts on PAR.</li> <li>• Since this is my first time studying PAR I need a more clear vision about the concept.</li> <li>• Excellent.</li> <li>• The diverse training methodologies skillfully handled provided good learning opportunities for us to learn some new concepts as well as training method also. At times it was also nice to refresh our ideas.</li> <li>• Course objectives are clear.</li> <li>• Coconut bridge: It was absorbing. It made the trainee look for the key to the question.</li> </ul>			
2.	[ 7 ]	[ 3 ]	[ ]	[ ]
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the barriers were not explored.</li> <li>• Excellent.</li> <li>• The exercises were relevant and very insightful.</li> <li>• The 'magic' experiential learning spiral: It concisely lays out the content of the course into four stages, make trainee understand the PAR easily.</li> </ul>			

3.	[ 6 ]	[ 3 ]	[ ]	[ ]
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general this was the most successful part of the course.</li> <li>• More time maybe needed to critically evaluate PAR application for CBNRM.</li> <li>• No comments.</li> <li>• ‘Fishbowl’ debate: It can enable fluent PAR understanding.</li> </ul>			

## B. Course Content

What are the most important experiences/learnings that you gained from this course and why are these important to you? Please state the reasons for each experience/learning that you listed. If no significant experience or learning gained, please check here [ ].

Most important experiences/ learnings gained	Reasons why important
• The ‘magic’ experiential learning spiral:	It concisely lays out the content of the course into four stages, which enables the trainee to understand PAR easily.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint learning of all stakeholders important.</li> <li>• Need to consider multiple perspectives.</li> </ul>	•
• Clear understanding about concept of participatory research and action research.	• To get more basic/root of science with regard to implementing PAR.
• Field program – visit to the community.	• Gained additional knowledge on local situations.
• ‘Coconut bridge’ exercise.	• Fate of blue print planning becomes evident.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of PAR for CBNRM.</li> <li>• Different approach of CBNRM in Asia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can try to apply in our own context.</li> <li>• Learning process and the experience can be replicated.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Magic’ experiential learning spiral</li> <li>• Sharing experiences from different countries.</li> </ul>	• Helps improve the understanding of all aspects.
• ‘Coconut bridge’ exercise	• Learning by doing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of different training methodologies like group work, case studies, role playing, fishbowl, etc.</li> </ul>	• Provides an opportunity to involve all as well as to assess the interests of different participants.
• Applicability of PAR for CBNRM (magic spiral: conceptualization; experimentation; reflection and planning).	• So far, there hasn’t been any analysis on challenges and opportunities of CBNRM in Mongolia. PAR application can improve the analysis

<b>Most important experiences/ learnings gained</b>	<b>Reasons why important</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning form failure.</li> </ul>	<p>and help to make new approaches for development of CBNRM in country specific context.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get good idea.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple perspective observe the world.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course structure, game (for example: coconut bridge, fishbowl).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good structure of the course made the content understood more easily, and good games enhance the trainees memory of the content.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The complexity and dynamic of stakeholders/institutions when using PAR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To capture multiple perspectives from multi stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises/case studies/workshops.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of theory.</li> <li>• Trained to analyze situations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRA exercises with communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reality.</li> <li>• Test of applicability of PAR.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Exercises” to reflect on ‘the theory and practice’ (coconut bridge).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help visualize and imagine the complexity of the reality (field readily</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn how to communicate with people of different backgrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No communication. No gain.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It enabled reflection on the key stakeholders in and their impact on the development of CBNRM.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plenary and group discussion (combinations).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It avoids domination of some participants.</li> <li>• It is an important way to involve all participants in discussion.</li> </ul>

**C. Please rate the facilitator/resource persons, the methodologies and materials for each session of the module using the following rating scale:**

- A) Excellent**
- B) Good**
- C) Fair**
- D) Poor**

Sessions/activities	Facilitator/resource person				Methodologies used				Materials			
	How effective was the facilitator/resource person in facilitating your learning and sharing of experiences?				How helpful were the methodologies used to attain the session objectives and to encourage sharing and synthesis of experiences?				How helpful were the training materials used (e.g., audio visuals, learning aids, hand-outs) to achieve the session objectives?			
Setting the scene	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
1. Opening program (Monette Pacia)	6	4			5	4			8	3		
2. Administrative concerns (Ning Reyes)	5	3	1	1	3	3		1	5	1		
3. Course overview/ participants' expectations for the course (Peter O'Hara)	8	3			8	3			7	2		
4. Exercise: 'What is my vision of good CBNRM?' (Peter O'Hara)	9	2			8	3			7	2		
5. Participant presentations: Sharing of experiences highlighting challenges to CBNRM in their context (participant control of session)	6	5			3	5	2		6	2	2	
6. Ice breaking, team building –experiential learning exercise. (Ronnakorn Triraganon)	9	2			7	3			8	2		

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<b>Module 1.</b> <b>CONCEPTULIZATION</b>												
7. PAR resource identification, visit to learning resource centre and highlight PAR/CBNRM resources on Internet. (Peter O'Hara)	<b>A</b> <b>7</b>	<b>B</b> <b>4</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>6</b>	<b>B</b> <b>5</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>6</b>	<b>B</b> <b>4</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
8. Exploration of the evolution of PAR. (Peter O'Hara)	<b>A</b> <b>5</b>	<b>B</b> <b>8</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>6</b>	<b>B</b> <b>6</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>8</b>	<b>B</b> <b>4</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
9. Key principles of action research (Peter O'Hara)	<b>A</b> <b>6</b>	<b>B</b> <b>5</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>5</b>	<b>B</b> <b>5</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>7</b>	<b>B</b> <b>4</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
10. Key principles of participation. (Ronnakorn Triraganon)	<b>A</b> <b>5</b>	<b>B</b> <b>5</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>5</b>	<b>B</b> <b>6</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>7</b>	<b>B</b> <b>4</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
11. From theory to practice.  -A planning-action-reflection exercise 'role play' to explore multiple perspectives regarding a participatory PLA methods session. (Peter O'Hara)	<b>A</b> <b>8</b>	<b>B</b> <b>3</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>7</b>	<b>B</b> <b>4</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>8</b>	<b>B</b> <b>3</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Module 2.</b> <b>EXPERIMENTATION</b>												
12. Introduction to the field program and guidelines for teamwork. (Peter O'Hara and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	<b>A</b> <b>8</b>	<b>B</b> <b>3</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>8</b>	<b>B</b> <b>3</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b> <b>8</b>	<b>B</b> <b>3</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>

**13. The ‘Field program’. Resource persons were arranged but participants were asked to take the initiative and facilitate the sessions.**

	Evaluate resource persons as sources of information	How did you find the pro-active training approach where you were required to take the initiative?	How was the variety of exposures?
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good.</li> <li>• Excellent.</li> <li>• I think very right person was selected. The best resource person.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were not very much pro-active here.</li> <li>• The pro-active approach is challenging and required discussion among team members before the session</li> <li>• Pro-active training approach was very useful, but participants need to be well agreed before hand on questions and organization of discussions in advance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good exposure but government official ‘clean’.</li> <li>• No variety in government part.</li> <li>• Limited variety in government part</li> <li>• Well thought out variety of exposures and diverse enough for such a short period.</li> <li>• The variety of exposure was sufficient to analyze the situation with regards to CBNRM.</li> </ul>
Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good.</li> <li>• Excellent.</li> <li>• Very, very good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were not very successful in taking the initiative.</li> <li>• We should have optimized more.</li> <li>• The pro-active approach was challenging and required discussion among team members before hand</li> <li>• This approach needs more careful planning from the participants’ side.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good variety.</li> <li>• Okay.</li> <li>• Good variety.</li> <li>• Not very good variety regarding the NGO part.</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent.</li> <li>• Okay, but need more ‘ordinary’ people(not leaders)</li> <li>• Good, but wanted to see very “ordinary” villages not presidents of people’s organisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very positive experience of being pro-active</li> <li>• Challenging and again required before hand discussion among team members</li> </ul>	

NGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were not very successful in taking the initiative</li> <li>• We were Okay, but we should be divided into groups to maximize.</li> <li>• Again challenging and required before hand discussion among team members.</li> </ul>	
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Sessions/activities	Facilitator/resource person How effective was the facilitator/resource person in facilitating your learning and sharing of experiences?				Methodologies used How helpful were the methodologies used to attain the session objectives and to encourage sharing and synthesis of experiences?				Materials How helpful were the training materials used (e.g., audio visuals, learning aids, hand-outs) to achieve the session objectives?			
<b>Module 3 REFLECTION</b>												
14. Team presentations of field program findings for review. (Peter O’Hara and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 9	B 2	C	D	A 7	B 4	C	D	A 10	B 1	C	D
15. Synthesis of challenges to CBNRM in the Philippines. (Peter O’Hara)	A 7	B 3	C 1	D	A 6	B 4	C 1	D	A 8	B 2	C 1	D
16. Reflection upon entire planning-action-reflection process of field program matching PAR principles to practice. (Peter O’Hara and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 9	B 2	C	D	A 7	B 4	C	D	A 9	B 1	C	D
17. Exploration and critique of the strengths and weaknesses of PAR as an approach to match challenges facing CBNRM (Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 6	B 5	C	D	A 3	B 8	C	D	A 7	B 4	C	D
18. Through case study analysis, reflection on the applicability of PAR to CBNRM in different contexts. (Peter O’Hara and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 11	B	C	D	A 11	B	C	D	A 9	B 1	C 1	D

19. Presentation of analysis from case studies. (Peter O’Hara and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 7	B 4	C	D	A 8	B 3	C	D	A 7	B 3	C 1	D
20. Wrap up of the “reflection fish bowl” debate to critically reflect upon PAR applicability to CBNRM. (Peter O’Hara Ronnakorn Triraganon and Scott Killough)	A 8	B 3	C	D	A 9	B 2	C	D	A 8	B 3	C	D
<b>Module 4 PLANNING</b>												
21. Preparations for abstract formulation – guidelines etc. (Peter O’Hara, and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 8	B 3	C	D	A 8	B 3	C	D	A 8	B 3	C	D
22. Presentation of abstracts for review by panel.	A 5	B 4	C	D	A 5	B 4	C	D	A 5	B 4	C	D
23. Next steps in paper development- set timetable and steps (Peter O’Hara and Ronnakorn Triraganon)	A 6	B 3	C	D	A 6	B 3	C	D	A 6	B 3	C	D
<b>Course wrap up</b>												
24. Revisit course expectations, structure and contents (Peter O’Hara)	A 8	B 2	C	D	A 8	B 1	C 1	D	A 7	B 2	C 1	D
25. Exercise: ‘What is my vision of good CBNRM?’ (Peter O’Hara)	A 9	B 1	C	D	A 10	B	C	D	A 9	B 1	C	D
26. Course evaluation (Shayamal Saha)	A 5	B 3	C	D	A 4	B 3	C	D	A 4	B 3	C	D
27. Closing program	A 3	B 1	C	D	A 2	B 1	C	D	A 2	B 1	C	D



## **D Comments on facilitator/resource persons, course team, methodologies and materials**

- Everything is fine, no comments.
- Well-managed training with a good support of relevant materials and services.
- Facilitators were very good.
- Very professional.
- The methodologies used were appropriate.
- Please do not try to structure more in terms of participants' role in group work etc. – let them float more freely and independently as a group – let them divide who is going to do what?
- Do not make your 'scientific' selection to select the participant working groups on behalf of group. This sort of group is mature enough to take care of the dynamics of dividing into groups. Apart from that the rest is excellent!
- Everybody was fine, but maybe we could have more diversity of facilitators, having the same person all day may not be so good.

## **E. General**

1. How did you find out about this program?

Alumnus: IIRR [ ] RECOFTIC [ ] IDRC [ ]

Web site: IIRR [ 1 ] RECOFTIC [ ] IDRC [ ]

Course brochure sent to you organization by IIRR [ 3 ] RECOFTIC [ 1 ] IDRC [ ]

Email announcements to you/your organization [ 1 ]

Colleagues/peers [ 1 ]

Supervisor/boss [ 3 ]

Publications please specify [ ]

Other organizations [ 1 ]

Other sources please specify. [ ]

2. Who recommended/suggested that you attend this course?

[ 3 ] No one in particular, I decided on my own.

[ 8 ] My supervisor, please specify name and address.

- Mrs. Oyundar, Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Nature and Environment.

- [ 1 ] My colleague/s, please specify name and address.
- Mr. Dominique Reeb, FAO
3. How much did the course duplicate what you had learned somewhere else?
- [ 2 ] Very much duplication [ 6 ] Some duplication [ 4 ] Very little duplication
4. How do you rate the balance of the theoretical and practical inputs in the course?
- [ ] Too theoretical [ 9 ] Good balance [ 2 ] Too practical
5. As you see it now, how valuable was this course for your work with CBNRM ?
- [ 7 ] Very valuable [ 4 ] Valuable [ ] Some value [ ] No value

Please explain why?

- A novel approach to CBNRM.
- Learned to place things in their proper places – the ‘magic’ spiral.
- The project I work with uses PAR. Lessons gained from this course will add value to the project.
- Because we work also with PAR, but from this course we got some differences.
- I learnt how to use PAR in the training program of extension people.
- Get good idea and the PAR process become clear.

6. Would you recommend this course to others?

[ 10 ] Yes [ 1 ] Uncertain [ ] No

Please explain why?

- It’s an excellent course for CBNRM professionals.
- Useful.
- Still have to reflect to give a comment (to be certain)
- Useful and interesting and challenging to my work with PAR and CBNRM
- May be useful for CBNRM practitioners .
- Yes, to all but especially for those working in areas related to CBNRM, since it provides a lot of insights how we should see a good CBNRM.
- But money is a problem(for people who want to attend)

## **F. Other comments**

1. What improvements would you recommend regarding the course?
  - Time – increase it.
  - Include emphasis on different natural resources.
  - Time constraint, allocation (of more time)
  - Okay.
  - Make more flexible time forum so that participants can learn more freely.
  - Give more time for fieldwork.
  - Get more government resource persons in the process.
  - Private stakeholders may be included (in the field program)
  - Use additional resource person if available.
  - No comment.
  - Regarding the logistics: source reader materials could have been sent earlier.
  
2. Describe your over-all experience during the course in not more than 5 sentences.
  - Excellent! I learnt a lot.
  - It was exciting and challenging to understand and to reflect about what has to be done in implementing PAR. After the course, I feel more inspired to apply PAR in CBNRM.
  - Innovative.
  - Stimulating.
  - Participatory.
  - It was a good learning experience.
  - Good interaction with different disciplines.
  - Good instructors, kept the momentum up always.
  - I find this course very useful/ and it will enhance my confidence in the application of the approach my project has been using.
  - Great.
  - It was an eye-opening experience for once in terms of getting theoretical knowledge on PAR as well as practical skills. Sharing and learning from different countries - experiences on CBNRM was an excellent opportunity.
  - Exciting experience.
  - Home feeling.
  - Beautiful environment.
  - Knowledge increase.

3. Apart from contacts about the ‘paper’ that you plan to submit, do you think that in future we should remain connected with each other to continue sharing of our experiences of PAR practices?

[ **11** ] Yes                      [   ] No

If yes then what are the strategies you suggest?

- E-mails.
- Organizing an e-group mailing list.
- Web networks.
- Through e-mail, maybe forming yahoo group or something similar.
- To develop a website for interaction.
- Establishing network group of alumni.

4. Would you allow us to use the statements or part of the statements you wrote above in any of our publications?

[ **11** ] Yes                      [   ] No

Thank you very much!