

Community Based Adaptation

The experience of Practical
Action

www.practicalaction.org.uk

Implementing CBA

- Our experience is at community level
- We have been working in areas affected by increasing climate variability, in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan and Peru
- Until around 8 years ago, we focused on increasing livelihood security of people living in marginal agro-ecological zones, at risk of climate-related hazards, such as drought, floods, landslides
- Around 1998-9 it became clear that 'normal' patterns of drought frequency and rainy seasons were being disrupted
- The issue was no longer about helping people cope with a challenging but static situation – the climate situation was changing and the future was uncertain

Brief outline of climatic challenges in Practical Action's project areas

- Semi arid central Kenya: increasingly dry conditions make maize cultivation and cattle-raising less productive
- Bangladesh: heavier monsoons increase flooding levels and period of floods beyond normal coping strategies
- Nepal: more frequent flash flooding in hillside areas, and longer dry seasons mean land is often eroded, and maize does not fruit well
- Peru: severe cold spells in the high Andes causing death to alpacas and killing potato crops

Our approach to community based adaptation – so far

- First – helping local communities understand what is happening to the climate and why
- Second, communities discuss their ways of coping with weather-related disasters
- Practical Action works to strengthen coping strategies, and diversify livelihoods, bringing external knowledge to link with local knowledge

Kenya adaptation strategies



PRACTICAL ACTION
Technology challenging poverty



Bangladesh adaptation strategies



Nepal adaptation strategies



Peru – adaptation activities



Improved pasture



Animal health training and shelters for livestock



Conserving potato diversity



Coordination and linking at district level

- Links with local government and other stakeholders are made, to improve access to information and resources, and ensure continuity of support after project ends
- Raising awareness on climate change and its local impacts is important – local government knowledge is often limited
- There is interest and willingness to work with us and with communities

Incentives ensuring coordination between stakeholders

- Pre-requisite is trust and belief in the organising body
- Workshops at local level, providing transport and meals
- Providing information and guidance that is relevant to people's regular work
- Establishing district- and national-level networks for sharing experiences – very active in Nepal, Bangladesh and Peru

Scaling up: A case study of Bangladesh

- Practical Action is about to begin implementing a new 5 year strategy
- Adaptation to climate change, climate proofing all our programme work, and advocacy for funding for the least developed countries are principles at the core of the strategy
- At country level, more detailed programme strategies have been drafted
- Part of the strategy for Bangladesh is presented – an ambitious 5 year plan to scale up community level adaptation based on sustainable agriculture through the work of other institutions

Scaling up: A case study of Bangladesh – Changing policy

- Community based extension system, supported by the government line departments to update technical skills and other private agricultural service providers through channelling technical inputs
- Local government listens to the voices of the small farmer producers' groups, and facilitate implementation of CBOs plans
- Linking NGOs with the government line departments research institutes and private service providers
- Establishing Rural Technology Centres as a local source of traditional and scientific knowledge and skills
- National and international NGOs and donors critically examine the Rural Community Extensionist model

Scaling up: A case study of Bangladesh – Changing practice

- National Research Institutes take up the research needs of smallholders on food production, processing and marketing
- IRRI-Bangladesh take up farming systems - going beyond rice and adopting livelihoods approach
- Government and NGOs allocate resource to promote exchange visits and farmer to farmer extension.
- Local NGOs and CBOs work in direct partnership in project design and implementation, involving the target beneficiaries in decision making process
- Research institutes provide update training courses for local NGOs
- Local government supports agricultural information resource centres
- Donors finance projects following this model

Feeding lessons learnt into the NWP

- Practical Action always aims to produce 'knowledge products' for our target audiences
- Communities, partners, local government, line departments, international development agencies – our main targets
- We produce local language material, web material, videos
- Format of the NWP submission – not very demanding, but back up material is needed, and not always available
- In return – NWP needs to be more accessible, and needs to be able to reformat submitted material

The role of regional and international organisations and networks

- There are active networks and regional fora is impressive
- Electronic networks – run by IDS and IIED
- Regional meetings - key agents include IIED and IDRC
- There is emerging a small but expanding group of development professionals and scientists working to expand knowledge, share information and discuss the issues
 - IDRC-led workshops to encourage research ideas
 - Regional workshops set up by IIED for 2008 (under CLACC programme)
 - Regional workshop on CBA run by BCAS and IIED in Dhaka
 - UK workshop led by Practical Action – to be an annual event
- These networks are easily accessible

Addressing the gaps

- Key areas of challenge
 - Raising awareness on the nature of CBA and communicating good practice at all levels
 - Raising adequate funding within the international community
 - Working out delivery mechanisms for adaptation programmes
- Roles for Parties:
 - Identifying vulnerabilities and types of adaptation measures appropriate in each location – draw on NGOs and CBOs
 - Integrating adaptation into all policies and programmes
 - Commitment to decentralise funding to local level
- Roles for NWP
 - Working to make relevant technological information available/accessible to local level
 - Through UN bodies, working to support parties to change policy and practice to support resource-poor communities