Study day programme for the DREAM project: "Having recourse to participatory process in rural areas"

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Period of the course: 4th of December 2017 (half day)

Public: **Students from the DREAM project** (Reinforcement of Agricultural and Environmental RESEARCH in TFCAs (Transfrontier Conservation Areas) – Partners: Biohub Trust, Bindura University of Science Education, Cirad, CNRS, Ministry of Agriculture Mechanization Irrigation Development (MAMID), National University of Sciences and Technology in Bulawayo, University of Zimbabwe.
Overall objective of the project: To contribute to the reduction of rural poverty and the sustainable use of natural resources **by reinforcing and capacitating agricultural and environmental research** in Zimbabwe.

Course content: The biggest challenge of the DREAM project is to develop demand-driven research and produce knowledge and innovation **responding to local needs.** The proper implementation of the project depends, to a great extent, on a successful involvement of all stakeholders and a good communication between them, which allows an open and constructive dialogue. Within this framework, you may need, as researchers, to develop participatory methods on your different study sites. In the development sector, it is often expected to master those participatory packages. Thereby, the best conditions possible in building confidence with the stakeholders are crucial and required to be thought ahead in specific detail. This training day aims at presenting participatory methods that can be applied in rural societies. The purpose of it is also to show what measures to take in account to implement well the participation of stakeholders and understand and neutralize/minimize power relations at work throughout the setting-up of those approaches (**Cleaver, 1999**). A focus will be done on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), participatory mapping and focus group models. A critical and retrospective perspective will be provided on the student's data set and their own field experience.

Session 1 (2h): 1. **Introduction to participatory approaches in development and conservation**

The participatory approaches are multiple. This first session resides in a general presentation of participatory approaches and the diversity of the models that can be conducted in rural areas (**Cornwall *et al.*, 1995**). The context of appearance of the methods in the development and conservations contexts as well as their main critics will be presented.

2. A useful support to identify farmer's issues

One of the expected results of the DREAM project is to involve agricultural and environmental stakeholders in the processes of **innovation** and **production of knowledge** for small-scale farmers in the targeted regions. The second session will be allocated to present the following participatory methods.

***The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method*: T**he PRA method is of particular interested to identify local needs of local communities (**Chambers, 1994a; Chambers, 1994c**). Used by non-governmental organization and development agencies, the PRA is a learning tool that can be mobilized to access to local knowledge on agriculture and environment.

***The Participatory mapping method*:** Participatory mapping (or community-based mapping) can be used to locate practices and to describe the agro-pastoralist territories in which people are progressing and inform the issues they meet. It can be helpful to understand the spatial systems in which the stakeholders are taking decisions in their daily life by representing the organisations of their production systems and the places where they work such as the fields and the grazing areas. Successful experiences will be presented such as the participatory mapping implemented for local management of natural resources in villages of the Rufiji District in Tanzania that will be discussed (**Duvail *et al.*, 2005; Duvail *et al.*, 2006).**

***The focus group discussion method*:** Researchers and development workers often deploy the method of focus group discussion. However, precautions are needed to implement it and we will come back on the key components required for the implementation.

3. Bias and limits of those approaches and the case of innovation

We will come back on the bias and limits of participatory approaches. For instance, power relations among participants involved in a PRA approach will be expressed, on the implications for gendered perspectives for instance (**Goebel, 1998**). A case study from Kenya will show that participatory mapping is not always fruitful **and can also raise local conflicts (Duvail, 2017**).

A productive mapping participatory exercise of participatory mapping, conducted within the frame of a project led by the Soft Foot Alliance in several wards of the Hwange district will be presented. This case study will show ways to open discussions on conflicted topics.

Session 2 (2h):

4. Lessons learned: How to look critically at its own data?

This second session will permit to come back on the field experiences of the students. The exercise will permit to categorize the issues faced and to identify the power relations that have likely taken place during the participatory approaches.

Literature review:

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Cleaver, F. (1999). Paradoxes of participation: questioning participatory approaches to development. *Journal of international development*, *11*(4), 597.

Cornwall, A., & Jewkes, R. (1995). What is participatory research?. *Social science & medicine*, *41*(12), 1667-1676.

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Duvail, S. (2017). Cartographies participatives et conflits territoriaux. Inadéquation de l'outil à représenter l'espace disputé du delta du Tana au Kenya. *Revue d'ethnoécologie*, (11).

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Hagmann, J., & Murwirwa, K. (1996). Indigenous SWC in southern Zimbabwe: a case study of techniques, historical changes and recent developments under participatory research and extension. *Sustaining the soil–Indigenous soil and water conservation in Africa*, 97-106.

Janssen, O., Van de Vliert, E., & West, M. (2004). The bright and dark sides of individual and group innovation: A special issue introduction. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *25*(2), 129-145.

Pretty, J. N. (1995). Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture. *World development*, *23*(8), 1247-1263.

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Murwira, K., Hagmann, J., & Chuma, E. (2001). Mainstreaming participatory approaches to SWC in Zimbabwe. *Farmer innovation in Africa. A source of inspiration for agricultural development, London: Earthscan*, 300-09.