

What Works, What Doesn't

**COMMUNITY-BASED  
RESEARCH  
AND  
STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE**

**1999**

Community Research Network Annual Conference Report

Amherst, Massachusetts

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## FOREWORD

The second annual Community Research Network conference, “*What Works, What Doesn’t: Community-Based Research and Strategies for Change*,” was held June 11-13, 1999, in Amherst, Massachusetts. This exciting and groundbreaking conference brought together 200 participants and facilitators from the United States, Canada, Ireland and the Netherlands. Farmers, scientists, high school and Ph.D. students, grassroots organizers and tenured professors came together to explore alternative and equitable ways of undertaking research with marginalized communities of which we are members and allies.

Such a broad gathering of committed citizens involved in community-based research (CBR) represents the hopes of Loka staff and the fledgling Community Research Network to provide a space in which to create a truly representative network – one in which we, the participants, can take up both ownership and stewardship. Slowly, surely, as we reach out via listserv participation, action alerts, telephone and e-mail to the friends and contacts made throughout the conference, as we individually act on our commitments to ensure full representation of people of color and those from poor communities in future Community Research Network endeavors, the Network is building strength and identity through diversity.

The conference would not have been possible had it not been for the unceasing enthusiasm and dedication of Loka and CRN staff: Jill Chopyak, Madeleine Scammell, Rose Ryan, Mary-Lou Laurenza, Richard Sclove and Douglas Taylor.

A wide array of generous funders (see Appendix A) helped to support the Community Research Network conference. Thanks to their contributions, fifty conference scholarships were provided to recipients who could not otherwise afford to attend and whose participation made the conference immeasurably richer.

This conference owes its dynamism to the 200 conference participants who shared successful, arduous and unfolding community-based research stories, who pointed out where we collectively succeeded and where we fell down, and who celebrated and danced at these, our first small steps together.

Deserving of special mention are the conference notetakers whose vivid workshop summaries form the basis of this report. A special thanks goes to John Gerber, James Coles, Joan Roelofs, Jennifer Bashant, Lea Zeldin, Annalisa Raymer, Laura Suazo-Gallardo, Marcela Mendoza, Michael Meuser, Antanacio Gonzalez, Lucy Arboleda, Alexandre Mas, Phillip Gibson, Beverly Glen, Marilyn Metzler, Karry Gillespie and Arianna McMahon, Karen-Lee Miller (editor).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1999 Community Research Network (CRN) conference, *What Works, What Doesn't: Community-Based Research and Strategies for Change*, was the first conference to bring together a large number of Network members since the launching of the CRN in 1995. (See Appendix B for an overview of the CRN.) Community-based research is a growing movement across the world; the 1999 conference aimed to capture the opportunity embedded within the movement's energy and begin examining challenges and opportunities inherent to CBR, and to collaboratively—as a Network—develop strategies to address the challenges.

The conference had more than 200 participants (and 50 ultimately disappointed hopefuls on a waiting list), 33 percent community activists, and 17 percent people of color. Financial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Managing Information with Rural America (MIRA) Initiative, the C.S. Mott Foundation, the Community Research Project funded by the Corporation for National Service, and several other conference co-sponsors enabled the Loka Institute to provide partial or full scholarships to 40 percent of the conference participants.

The conference format was developed to encourage participants to use and adapt the agenda to their needs. In addition to the 24 scheduled workshops, participants spontaneously initiated a number of workshops on topics such as CBR delivery systems, alternative research paradigms and issues concerning people of color. The last morning of the conference was designed to be a time for participants to think together about next steps for moving the CRN forward as a nationwide research infrastructure for social change. Participants brought many of their ideas and experiences to the discussion, giving Loka staff essential feedback and input in how to leverage the resources that were present during the conference's three days. It became clear throughout the weekend that any conference is ultimately only a forum for discussion. The real network is what sustains and what is useful to participants between conferences: the good that comes out of our talking.

Participants were encouraged to actively participate in shaping the CRN, through involvement in conferences, by connecting with each other via the CRN's Web-based database and listserv, and by strengthening the links among activists, academics and community members forged over shared stories, workshops, jazz music and dancing long into the night.

## **THURSDAY, JUNE 10**

In developing the conference agenda, organizers wanted to provide participants with the opportunity to explore a variety of different topics on community-based research, and to give co-sponsors the opportunity to organize a session that was of particular interest to their work. It was decided that Thursday – the day before the official beginning of the conference – would be a time for participants to attend workshops on particular topics of interest, and let those who were new to community-based research learn more about this methodology before the beginning of the conference itself.

### **THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORK, OR “WITH FINGERS CROSSED”**

As participants began arriving for pre-conference workshops on Thursday, June 10th, a small team of facilitators and Loka staff met to discuss the next four days. The team was excited and a little awed at the task that lay before them: how to draw out and tap into the energy of a group that was slowly taking shape. Organizers wanted to structure the conference so that common goals could be addressed yet ensure ample opportunity for spontaneous, participant-initiated workshops. To do this, facilitators were encouraged to listen for concerns and issues, to make known the existence of “free space rooms” for participants to claim as their own, and to help staff adapt the structure of the conference to make it a more participatory process.

Loka staff had their own goals in mind: to use this conference as a starting point in transforming the CRN into a more effective body for using community-based research as a tool for social change, to explore the development of an advisory structure for the CRN itself, and to help participants feel that coming together as a network is a way to enhance the work they are doing in their communities.

Organizers had deliberately left Sunday’s agenda loose in order to allow participants to explore the content and process of the preceding days. This was understandably causing last-minute anxiety: What kind(s) of discussion(s) would take place? Was leaving the morning open the best way to make our final hours together democratic, or was it inviting unscheduled chaos? In the end, thoughtful words from John Gerber (UMass Extension) on the wisdom of group process prevailed. He said, “It will all be obvious at that time. We can’t predict now what will happen by Sunday. Let’s trust our own and the participants’ best judgments that it will all work out.” John was right. By Sunday’s closing, a scant four days later, participants had filled the free space rooms with workshops and meetings of their own choosing, exchanged roles as teachers and learners with one another and with Loka staff, and had identified and begun work on serious concerns of power and representation. Our final hours together were filled with

an incredible energy and a commitment to work together for the benefit of a broad and inclusive network.

**But, we get ahead of ourselves here. This is how it all began ...**

## **P R E - C O N F E R E N C E W O R K S H O P S**

### **INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Madeleine Scammell and Maureen Hellwig, Facilitators

*(The following are summaries of pre-conference workshops. Full notes can be found in Appendix C.)*

The Introduction to CBR workshop was designed with the objective of introducing the concept and process of community-based research to novice, engaged and future CBR researchers. Workshop participants came from rich and varied backgrounds: an action researcher working with U.S. women of color and African women, a Sci-Shop scientist (and punk rocker) from the Netherlands, a nurse-practitioner, a literacy worker, a Canadian graduate student working collaboratively with aboriginal First Nations ... and 30 other enthused and spirited participants of various ages, backgrounds and experiences.

Facilitators used role-playing to assist participants in working through crucial CBR issues such as power, hierarchy, and the selection and appropriateness of research methodologies. Various definitions of CBR were examined for their inherent differences in community engagement, control and ownership throughout the processes of research design and collection.

Tensions between academia and the community were explored, illuminating cultural differences between the European models of the Science Shop and other community-driven models such as participatory action research (PAR). This exploration led participants to distinguish *a continuum of community-based research models*: from research completed by graduate students at the behest of communities, to collaborative researcher-community projects, to research designed and carried out by community members with academics acting as facilitators or trainers. Participants agreed that one model is no more “pure” than another. Workshop participants agreed that *all CBR models are inclusive, transformative, collaborative, responsive and responsible.*

## INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Duane Dale, Facilitator

John Gerber, Notetaker

The Institutional Change workshop was designed to give participants an outline of the “Institutional Change” track of the conference. Duane used *Reshaping the Institutions That Are Reshaping the Planet: A Guide to Change Logic and Systems Perspectives* as the framework for the workshop.

The workshop began by exploring and defining institutions that need to be changed, why we should work to change such institutions, and how institutions move through a process of change.

Duane used small groups and case studies to flesh out some of the issues involved in institutional change. For example, participants discussed how many of the "goals" for change are aimed at ensuring that the institution supports human needs. Also discussed was the relationship between individuals and organizations and how change occurs given particular organizational cultures.

From participants' experiences with institutional change, the following “lessons learned” were shared:

- *Common/shared interests* are needed for change.
- *What works* in one place won't necessarily work in another; change occurs within a specific context/culture.
- *You must identify* sources of power if change is to take place and be sustained.
- *Institutional changes* that are inconsistent with organizational values will not be sustained.
- *It is easier* to hold on to what you know (regardless of whether it works or not) than to try something new.
- *Crisis and fear* may catalyze the early stages of change but are not likely to serve as a source of power for continuous change.
- *It is unlikely* that people will be willing to change to something new if they don't think the “vision” of the new way is possible.
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# **FRIDAY, JUNE 11**

## **MORNING**

The conference agenda designated Friday morning as a time for participants to meet new faces, to think about what they wanted from the conference and to get a feel for what the weekend would be like.

## **WELCOMING REMARKS**

Loka Staff

Before speaking, Madeleine Scammell, Loka's CRN Project Director, took a brief moment to cherish the sight of the smiling and upturned faces of 200 participants. She invited participants to bring their "hearts, heads and feet" into the workshops, to bring forward all of themselves in their interactions with one another. The presence of so many people is a sign of the growing strength and influence of community-based research, she said, adding that overwhelming interest meant organizers had to reluctantly turn away 50 people. Madeleine encouraged participants to look upon the CRN as an infrastructure that they create.

Jill Chopyak, Loka's Executive Director, presented an overview of the Loka Institute, explaining that the Community Research Network is one of the organization's many projects.

Administrative and technical information was provided in the form of a groovy rap debut by "Richard E.," otherwise known as Dick Sclove, Loka's Founder and Research Director. With backup singers, Jill Chopyak and Rose Ryan, Richard E. regaled the crowd with information on bathrooms, buses and conference how-to's. Richard E. has promised not to give up his day job!

## **SURPRISE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

Conference Participants

Knowing that the conference participants embodied important and untold stories that no famous keynote speaker could ever hope to rival, CRN organizers turned the stage over to the conference participants. To surprised gasps, it was announced that participants' names would be drawn randomly from a hat; those who accepted would be invited to tell the stories of their communities and projects.

“WHY AM I HERE? BECAUSE PAR WORKS—COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE IN CHARGE, AND THE CHANGES THAT HAPPEN TO THEM RIPPLE OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY ... AND AS A RESEARCHER, YOU GET TO USE YOUR HEAD, YOUR HEART AND YOUR FEET.” — Leslie Fraser, participant

**Shemya Vaughn** was the first speaker chosen. While many in the crowd breathed a relieved sigh that their own names had not been called and tried hard to still their rapidly beating hearts, the graceful, articulate graduate student took the microphone. Shemya spoke passionately of her work with the Case Management and Environmental Control in Asthma Project, located at Washington University’s School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. The project evaluates the effects of parental support and improved management of children’s asthma care. Shemya’s role is that of Asthma Coach. Over a two-year period with each family, she works to empower both children and parents. Shemya came to the conference alone, hoping to learn more about conducting her own community-based research.

**Lucila Arboleda** was the next speaker. An engaging, experienced grassroots development worker from the Philippines, Lucy now attends the School for International Studies in Vermont. Her opening words drew laughter from the crowd: “*I prayed to God that my name would not be called, but He did not listen!*” Lucy revealed that her first community-based research experience had been a “failure,” but a memorable one, as it showed how participatory action research (PAR) can limit community organizing work when incorrectly used. Lucy came to the CRN conference to learn about the cultural aspects of PAR and its North American examples, and in the hope of making good friends.

**Miguel Guajardo**, an enthused and vibrant speaker, spoke of growing up along the Texas/Mexico border and his current capacity-building work there with a community strong in indigenous values. “*It’s about decolonizing,*” he said. “*We have a rich history but things aren’t named after us.*” Miguel is involved in examining what Latino children need to learn to survive in the future, based on an understanding that the current educational model is spawning underemployment and undereducation. Popular education and community education models are seen as ways of developing relational knowledge. His project employs children and youths as researchers to interview unilingual Spanish-speaking seniors and uses the reclaimed cultural knowledge to inform curriculum.

**Leslie Fraser** looked at Lucy Arboleda and joked that while she had felt sorry when her friend’s name had been called, it was obvious that her own prayers hadn’t been answered either! Leslie’s background and interests mirror those of Dick Sclove, Loka’s

founder, who friends had been encouraging her to meet since she had arrived in Massachusetts. As past editor of *Science for the People* magazine, Leslie has facilitated Science Shops and internships for science and technology education in South and Central America. Her current work deals with worker empowerment and is based on Freirean methodology and popular education. Leslie explained that more information on this approach would be available during her workshop *Immigration Reform, Welfare Reform and Changing Workplaces in Culturally Diverse Communities*.

## **“WHO ARE WE?”**

Small-Group Break-Out Sessions

“POVERTY IS AN ACT OF VIOLENCE.” — Poverty Issues Group

For the conference’s first session, participants joined one of four large groups, based on their interests. These were sustainable agriculture, science and technology policy, poverty, and miscellaneous. The poverty group divided into two due to size, and the miscellaneous group was formed for participants who wanted to meet others of diverse interests and those opposed to segmenting the issues. Each group looked at the ability of CBR and the broader CRN network to assist in dealing with the pressing social concerns of each area.

“AGRICULTURAL CBR AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE SHARE SIMILAR VALUES: DEMOCRACY, MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS, EQUITY, AND A COMMITMENT TO BUILDING NEW, INNOVATIVE AND EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ‘RESEARCHERS’ AND THOSE WHO HAVE A STAKE IN RESEARCH OUTCOMES.”

The sustainable agriculture group looked at how community-based research can assist the sustainable agriculture movement to achieve social action and change. The science and technology policy group looked at the relationship between science and technology policy and community-based research, and how CBR – as a process – allows for adaptation and a diversity of voices, which can be useful in making science and technology policy more responsive to community issues. Both poverty groups discussed the complexity of the issue, and came up with some common themes, such as the need for individual and community empowerment – which can be done through CBR – and the need to be actively working to end poverty, not just develop a “Band-aid” for the poverty that currently exists. Finally, the miscellaneous group concentrated on “thinking outside the box” and posed critical questions for community-based research. They suggested that CBR involves praxis, the link between theory and practice, and it should invite a diversity of input.

## **AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS**

The two sessions of afternoon workshops covered several topic areas – from funding strategy, to community-based research and racism, to a how-to for starting a community research center. Workshop titles included:

- Ethical Guidelines for Community-Based Research
- Community-Based Research in the Classroom Curriculum
- Using Computers and On-Line Resources for CBR
- Bridging the Gap Between Cultures and Histories Through Research and Art
- Addressing Racism in Schools Through CBR
- Community-Based Research: Strategy Session to Increase Opportunity
- Basic How-To's for Starting a Campus-Based Community Research Center
- Community Technology Centers and Community Research Centers
- Health Research, Environmental Risk Assessment, and Qualitative and Quantitative Data
- Community Empowerment Through Informed Decision-Making

## **ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Bookda Gheisar and Marianne Sullivan, Facilitators

John Gerber, Notetaker

The purpose of this workshop was to begin the development of ethical guidelines for community-based research. Bookda Gheisar from the Cross Cultural Health Care Program of Seattle introduced the workshop. Marianne Sullivan from the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health described a community-based research project from which a set of ethical guidelines was developed. These guidelines were used as a framework for thinking of what a comprehensive set of guidelines would look like.

Some of the challenges and solutions in conducting CBR projects were presented, and these were then worked into a set of 21 suggested guidelines (see Appendix C for list).

## **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM CURRICULUM**

John David Smith, Judy Booth, Monica Akers, Facilitators

Alexandre Mas, Notetaker

Using their work as a model, students and faculty from Concord College discussed how they use community-based research in their curriculum. Currently, CBR curriculum is integrated in four of the College's departments: Political Science, Sociology, Social Work and Education. Requests for research are submitted by the community and prioritized by John David. There are usually more community needs than there are students to meet them. Fourteen projects have been undertaken, involving one to four students per project.

The degree of community involvement varies from a classic consultative model, in which students do all of the work, to a more collaborative one, in which the community is actively involved. For example, in one project, the staff of a homeless shelter and students jointly collected data on sexual abuse among residents. Students completed the analysis and staff then planned the next steps.

A challenge both students and faculty have faced is that the timing required to address both the needs and involvement of community members and the rigid structure of undergraduate courses can prove problematic. It is necessary from the outset to understand the mentality and expectation of partnership between the school and the community. Another challenge the college has faced is a lack of faculty interest in incorporating CBR into the curriculum.

## **USING COMPUTERS AND ON-LINE RESOURCES FOR CBR**

Carla Shafer, Facilitator

Joan Roelofs, Notetaker

This workshop examined the different ways computers and the Internet can be used as a resource for researchers and communities.

Carla Shafer is coordinator of the Cornell Participatory Action Research Network (PARnet, <http://www.PARnet.org>). She opened the presentation of her work with an example of how computers and the Internet can be a resource for CBR. The Network currently has 2,000 cyber-members in 70 countries. PARnet is a content-free Web site, an empty technological space filled with content by the people who use it. Users find the interactive calendar and the bibliographic database useful and participatory.

Participants discussed how computers can be helpful in working with disadvantaged people who live in spread-out communities for whom meetings are difficult to get to; you can create "virtual communities" that meet only by computer. Also discussed were

issues of access and training, privacy and potential isolation that can come from creating communities on-line.

## **BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CULTURES AND HISTORIES THROUGH RESEARCH AND ART**

Nayo Watkins, Facilitator

Karen-Lee Miller, Notetaker

This workshop was an exciting exploration of the connections between social justice, social change and the arts. Nayo Watkins, a black activist-playwright, began by inviting participants to share the centrality of arts in their own CBR and community-organizing work. For example, one participant used aerosol art as a means to promote the positive aspects of hip-hop music, another has combined community gardens and photojournalism.

Nayo discussed the four components of action-through-art: community participation, research, art and action. All components must be present before we can talk about community and individual transformation. To illustrate, Nayo took us through three theater projects in which she has been involved. She stressed that in all community art and social justice work, the artists helping in the process must learn to “let go.” The story *must* belong to the community or it will not lead to action. Issues of truth-telling are also critical: *how much truth do you want to tell?*

## **ADDRESSING RACISM IN SCHOOLS THROUGH CBR**

Terry Kelcher, Facilitator

Jennifer Bashant, Notetaker

“INSTITUTIONAL RACISM IS OFTEN THE LAST FORM OF RACISM TO BE ADDRESSED. WE NEED TO LOOK AT POLICIES SO THAT WE CAN CHANGE THE SYSTEM.”

Terry Kelcher from the Applied Research Center (<http://www.ARC.org>) led this exploration of antiracist action education. Participants expressed a desire to work on internalized racism, understand how to do racial justice work in communities without racial diversity, examine ways to involve the community in looking at racism in schools and acquire strategic, creative and radical antiracism tools.

Participants were encouraged to pay attention to the *political developments of racism* — how are people thinking around the world?

Major initiatives such as affirmative action, bilingual education and cultural reflection are under attack. Such efforts are often unconnected; there is no equity, so policies actually work to aggravate existing inequities. In terms of action education, it was suggested that participants develop our own curriculum and be the trainers; we are the experts and know what is needed.

## FUNDING COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH: STRATEGY SESSION TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITY

Irene Luckey, Facilitator

Karen-Lee Miller, Notetaker

Dr. Irene Luckey of the Institute for Families in Society conducted an enormously helpful workshop on funding strategies: how to find it, get it and keep on getting it. Specific strategies to increase the likelihood of being funded to do CBR were based on four basic ideas:

- (1) **Courting Funders:** Ensure a compatible mission between you and the funding source, do your homework (what are they about?) *before* you ask for money, and get to know them (not by name or via one person but as an organization; find out how one project will flow into another)
- (2) **Know Thyself:** Know where to draw the line, and ground yourself. If you are chasing dollars, then the funders define your mission. Be realistic – start-up, recruitment and capacity building takes time. Look at the bigger picture.
- (3) **Become Partners with Your Funder:** If time is taken to develop a partnership, the funders see their mandate extended and you get a greater return than just a research grant for one project. Take and give – you may need to give some freebies (i.e. training, presentations to their board). Find out how willing your funder is to speak with other funders.
- (4) **Deliver What You Promised:** Produce excellent, usable, timely and applied work – if research takes a long time to come to fruition, then it's past the point of usefulness to funders. Produce work that can be evaluated, replicated and has implications down the road.

“THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CULTIVATING A FUNDING SOURCE  
VERSUS DIVERSIFYING FUNDERS: GO INTO THE FUNDING RELATIONSHIP  
WITH A BIGGER PICTURE IN MIND (I.E., A LONG-TERM, MULTIPROJECT  
RELATIONSHIP, NOT SIMPLY ONE GRANT). DON'T HAVE JUST ONE SOURCE OF  
MONEY.”

## BASIC HOW-TO'S FOR STARTING A CAMPUS-BASED COMMUNITY RESEARCH CENTER

Hasan Crockett, Facilitator

Michael Meuser, Notetaker

Hasan Crockett of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, who is also a member of

Project South, discussed how establishing a community research center is a battle and we must strategize carefully if we are to be successful. The facilitators discussed how we are competing with established programs for territory and resources, and that we are a threat to the status quo's highly protected turf.

If you see the issue as a battle, there is preparation that needs to be done. For example, those involved need to assess how important the project really is to them. They need to realize that many sacrifices must be made and that forming such a center means giving up the "pastoral professor's life." It's important to get students *and* the community on your side. Find out how the university "stands" in the community. Finally, *know your enemies*. Often those at the midlevel of administrative power are the most difficult to work with.

During the establishment of the center, many issues need to be evaluated. For example,

- The cohesion of the group – is it still hanging together?
- Who are potential funders?
- Be humble — ask how the community might teach you.
- Strategize on how best to gain publicity.
- Provide a place for progressive community leaders and politicians to "hang their hat."

Equally important is how to cultivate allies and be an ally to other progressive organizations in the area. A new community research center can do this by remembering whose project it is, engaging the community as equals, asking the community "What is it that you want us to do for you?", and not overselling and promising what you cannot provide.

## **COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTERS & COMMUNITY RESEARCH CENTERS**

Holly Carter and Peter Miller, Facilitators

Karry Gillespie, Notetaker

Holly Carter and Peter Miller work for Community Technology Centers Network (CTCNet), and they began by explaining the background of Community Computing Centers (CTCs), which started in the 1980s. The term "CTC" is generic; CTCs vary in terms of lab facilities, net access and technological wizardry. CTCs are usually offered in low-income communities where people cannot afford in-home computers and where people often do not have much experience in the computer field. CTCs offer community training and support in computer technology.

CTCs can be used to bring people together around social issues and to help achieve social change – the technology facilitates by its presence. For example, CTCs can host a special night for NGOs to learn e-mail, networking, or database spread sheets.

## HEALTH RESEARCH, ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT, AND QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Carolyn Raffensperger and Dianne Quigley, Facilitators

Lea Zeldin, Notetaker

Participants came to this workshop for a number of reasons: interest in the “precautionary principle”; concern that there has been a downgrading of “health” to “environmental issues,” resulting in less money for cleanup; uncertainty about when to use epidemiology and when to choose political action; and a desire to assist communities in assessing and demonstrating harm. Larry Wilson (Yellow Creek Concerned Citizens) commented emphatically, “*Poor folks can’t afford science! Poor folks can’t afford justice.*”

Diane Quigley of the Childhood Cancer Research Institute assists communities affected by nuclear contamination. Findings of statistical significance are often dismissed by the authorities, who claim “the sample is too small to be meaningful.” Use of qualitative data such as community interviews, oral histories, local knowledge about the environment and holistic impacts are important to define the extent of the damage. Inductive research can influence policy and regulation.

Carolyn Raffensperger of the Science and Environmental Health Network explained that we should be looking at public health significance rather than statistics. Companies have a duty to prevent harm; the burden of proof lies with the technology, not the public.

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INFORMED DECISION MAKING

Josh Slingerland, Facilitator

James Coles, Notetaker

The workshop provided an overview of the Youth Policy Institute’s tree planning program designed to empower communities. For the purposes of the workshop, empowerment was defined as “the provision of tools to make decisions based on the ‘best’ information available”; this definition was deeply troubling to some participants.

Tree planning is used to empower communities in accessing and disseminating information, deciding on action, implementing action through direct service, and evaluating effectiveness. Tree planning ensures that communities are aware of the best-practice solutions for different problems. Oftentimes, many effective solutions exist but communities cannot always discover or implement them. Tree planning is accessible to all citizens regardless of professional background.

Concerns were raised about the structured, geometric and inflexible nature of tree planning and its subsequent nontransferability to cultures outside the Western tradition. Does the format used to plan trees *discourage* local solutions to local problems? Not necessarily.

Experience has shown that community efforts can adapt tree planning to different environments.

## **FRIDAY NIGHT FESTIVITIES**

A professional story-teller, Tim Van Egmond, used folklore from various traditions to entertain and illustrate issues of social change. He tried valiantly to coax us into telling our own stories but tired from a loaded day, we balked. Instead, we laughed uproariously at a skit performed by Nayo Watkins, Josh Slingerland, Carla Shafer and Carlos Diaz-Cobo. Brilliantly written by the actors, the spoken-word theater drew on statements uttered by participants during the conference.

As the night went on, participants could be heard earnestly sharing our own work, sweetly harmonizing a cappella, trading jokes, innocently flirting and processing the day's events. From strangers to politely interested colleagues, many of us were warmly becoming friends.

## **SATURDAY, JUNE 12**

### MORNING

#### THE REINS CHANGE HANDS

Having worked with Loka for four very intense and enriching years, Madeleine Scammell passed the torch (literally: it was five feet tall and smoking!) to her successor, Douglas Taylor. In his first activity as CRN Director, Douglas turned the group's attention to the Identity Cohort meetings that would occur late Saturday afternoon. He asked that the participants separate into identity groups such as grassroots organizers, farmers, academics and students. Once grouped, they were to identify common goals, examine individual and local obstacles, and look to strategies for the future. Participants were then to apply the same lens to the CRN network.

While many participants welcomed the opportunity to engage exclusively with those from similar social milieus, others reacted strongly to "being separated into the silos" they strive so consciously to overcome in their day-to-day work. Facilitators' attempts to explain the reasoning behind the structure of the exercise (recognition of the unique and individual concerns of specific groups, a belief that those with similar 'insider knowledge' should have the opportunity to meet independently, and a view that identity networking would be beneficial for the CRN) was met with obvious exasperation: "They're talking like a bunch of academics!"

Rather than being a moment of mutiny, the passionate and articulate concerns of participants meant that they were taking ownership and control of the conference, making the agenda responsive to their needs. As community-based researchers, we all strive to "move over" for disenfranchised groups, celebrate when our roles as leaders are challenged by emerging group consciousness and politicization, and resist becoming

defensive when our own limitations and blind spots are pointed out. For conference and network organizers, the internal struggles and challenges are the same, and so the organizers moved over. In addition to the identity cohorts suggested, participants spontaneously arranged groups such as Alternative Research Paradigms: Community Members as Researchers, Designing A Delivery System for CBR, People of Color and Welfare Reform.

In her response, Diana Baird N'Diaye summarized many of the differences between the European science shop model and community-based research in the U.S. For example, science shops are seen as fundamental to the university structure in Europe; the same cannot be said of community research in the United States. Major roadblocks to CBR in the U.S. include the tenure system that rewards “research for the sake of research” and a lack of connection between public scholarship and students’ work in real life.

She felt that we need to work towards a network of American CBR, European science shops and Canadian research alliances.

## PARTICIPANTS’ COMMENTS

Following the plenary presentation, some participants felt the panelists had not fully examined the implications of “where the [research] money resides.” Dan Allman (University of Toronto) noted that it was one thing to provide resources so that universities could engage in community-based research, but it was an entirely different matter to fund communities directly. This met with different responses from the panelists.

European panelists struggled to grasp the connection between funding and community control, given that communities overseas are seen as having a legitimate voice in initiating and controlling research within well-funded university science shops.

The Canadian panelist suggested that it mattered less which organization received the grant than that collaborative efforts were being funded. The American panelist commented that it was not so much a concern about the university partner controlling the money, but rather about the kinds of priorities and advocacy roles the university has adopted.

Some participants were distinctly dissatisfied with these answers. They spoke of an analysis of class and power that is deeply critical of a hierarchy in which universities are the partners who “own and administer” the research funds. Anne Stratham (University of Wisconsin Parkside) stated emphatically, “Where the money comes from, and who administers it, is a power relationship we’re not always aware of. It would make a terrific difference if the money was not coming through the universities but if the communities had it, and we had to sit there while they came to us.”

Anne asked if anyone knew of examples of funders who had directly funded community organizations and allowed them to contract with institutions for the research they required. Panelists did not – but other participants did. Tirso Moreno (Farmworkers

Association of Florida) spoke of community control over research funds in a local community.

THE VALUE OF THE PLENARY WAS IN HEARING PANELISTS' AND PARTICIPANTS' DIFFERENT VIEWS ABOUT WAYS IN WHICH CBR IS, AND MIGHT BE, ORGANIZED. IT IS IN HAVING A FORUM TO CHALLENGE EACH OTHER, AND THROUGH SHARING EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL AND MULTIPLE MODELS OF CBR, THAT THE BENEFITS OF A NETWORK BECOME REAL.

## **WORKSHOPS**

Workshops offered on Saturday continued some of the themes opened up Friday afternoon. Workshop titles were:

- Overcoming Institutional Barriers to Conducting CBR
- How Do We Get Our Work Covered by the Media So People Take Notice?
- Immigration Reform, Welfare Reform and Changing Workplaces in Culturally Diverse Communities
  
- Community-Based Research in Rural Areas and Success Stories of Participatory Rural Appraisal
- Evaluation of Community-Based Research
- Reclaiming Land Grant Universities and the Role of Extension
- Proposal Writing I and II
- Increasing Community Self-Sufficiency Through Transnational Collaboration
- Involving Kids in Community-Based Research
- Community-Based Research as a Tool for Organizing

### **OVERCOMING INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO CONDUCTING CBR**

Carolyn Raffensperger and Elizabeth Bird, Facilitators

Notetaker: John Gerber

The workshop aimed at examining the issues related to institutional barriers – particularly within universities – to conducting CBR. Facilitators began by examining the results of a research project conducted by the Consortium for Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (CSARE) and the Science and Environmental Health Network that looked at institutional barriers to conducting CBR projects. The research reported difficulties in accessing funds for CBR as well as in publishing the results, despite the growth in funding and new structural mechanisms within institutions to encourage public interest research.

Some other issues arise when public institutions make the shift to "publicly assisted institutions" after accepting significant financial support from private interests.

*Is public science not being undertaken in greater degree because of the power of corporate interests? Why are scientists not supporting their own colleagues when they are challenged by political or business interests?*

Discussion also focused on how activist groups need to be more measured in their use and understanding of scientific results. There is a difference between bias and conflict of interest. Conflict of interest is a financial interest while bias is simply the experience and background of an individual.

One participant shared a personal story of corporate pressure regarding his right to share his research objectives. Another suggested that there is already a high degree of self-censorship among scientists today due to peer pressure and corporate "slap suits". A third shared his thinking on how the land grant universities used to be balanced about the Jeffersonian ideal of democracy and community well-being. People who want to push new technologies or practices often try to exclude "emotions" from debates around controversial issues. A solution to this would be a conversation about the nature of science.

## **HOW DO WE GET OUR WORK COVERED BY THE MEDIA?**

Marilyn Metzler, Facilitator

This workshop focused on how to get community-based research projects covered by the media. Participants discussed the role of the media and how to take advantage of opportunities for documenting and publicizing CBR. Also included were practical tips for contacting and dealing effectively with the media.

## **IMMIGRATION REFORM, WELFARE REFORM AND CHANGING WORKPLACES IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES**

The Changes Project, Facilitators

Marcela Mendoza, Notetaker

Facilitators discussed their work with the Changes Project, a federally funded two-year participatory project examining the impact of immigration, welfare reform and the changing workplace of adult learners. Using community-based research, the study was designed to evaluate the impact of welfare reform on the learning and achievement of adult students.

Facilitators outlined the research process, discussing many of the issues that arose. For example, staff raised several questions, such as: How do we define "community"? What "causes" community action? Does our research methodology actually respond to participants' needs? How can a community-based research approach infuse the field of Adult Basic Education? What kinds of tools can Participatory Action Research offer to

adult students involved in this project? Facilitators explained that team members had worked hard to create an environment in which participants felt safe to challenge them on critical issues of power-sharing and community benefit.

The presentation from the Changes Project generated much discussion among workshop participants. One commented, "We already know what we are going to find when we conduct community-based research on the impact of welfare reform (much as researchers investigating the effects of sleep deprivation on American workers already know what they are going to find, although they keep doing it). What we really need is to start organizing the community itself to change welfare reform." Another pointed out, "Many community institutions, such as churches and neighborhood associations whose members have been affected by the reform, can be vehicles of change. They could achieve goals that the staff at a research center would not be able to achieve."

Changes Project team members explained that their research was initiated by staff members of different institutions who faced the challenge of finding a common language and common procedures to address issues of their own concern. Adult education can be an effective way to address social problems and can be an instrument to promote changes in the community.

## **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH IN RURAL AREAS AND SUCCESS STORIES OF PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL**

Becky Williams, George Loveland and Thomas Plant, Facilitators

Annalisa Lewis Raymer, Notetaker

Facilitators outlined their individual work in conducting Participatory Rural Appraisal(PRA). Becky Williams has been working with Delta Women Achieving Goals (DWAG), a group that is committed to participatory rural appraisal in two poor communities in Arkansas. DWAG members range in age from 18 to 80 years. DWAG brings together two activities: community organizing, and information gathering and analysis. PRA is a means for community organizing, not an end unto itself.

George Loveland discussed his work with the People's Information Network of the Appalachian Colleges Association, where he has created a database to link resource people with folks with information need. The database serves a "brokering" purpose, connecting people rather than being an Internet resource in itself, since most people in the target audience do not have access to the Internet.

Thomas Plant runs a research center that has undertaken community listening sessions and multiple evaluation studies.

Workshop discussion focused on the different elements of PRA, such as community readiness, the role of the Resource Person, and the need for rewards and recognition, tool kits (markers and tape), lots of breaks, and intergenerational participation.

## **EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Bobby Milstein and Irene Luckey, Facilitators

Karen-Lee Miller, Notetaker

The purpose of the workshop was to review standards of “good” evaluation and outline the necessary steps to program evaluation as devised by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### **STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Standards are considered “guiding principles, not mechanical rules,” and are grouped into four categories:

1. *Utility*: Serve the information needs of intended users.
2. *Feasibility*: Be realistic, prudent, diplomatic and frugal.
3. *Propriety*: Behave legally, ethically, and with due regard for those involved and affected by the evaluation outcome.
4. *Accuracy*: Reveal and convey technically accurate information.

These standards guide evaluation practitioners to adopt procedures that do not penalize program staff. Program evaluation is intended to be helpful, not adversarial. Facilitators discussed the six steps in program evaluation:

1. Engage stakeholders.
2. Describe the program.
3. Focus the evaluation design.
4. Gather credible evidence.
5. Justify conclusions.
6. Ensure use and justify lessons learned.

Evaluators require flexibility and sensitivity as they accomplish the six steps in a way that accommodates the program being evaluated *and* meets or exceeds all relevant standards.

## **RECLAIMING LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES AND THE ROLE OF EXTENSION**

Scott Marlow and Scott Peters, Facilitators

Notetaker: Phillip Gibson

*Is Extension interested in making the best corn possible or in the people producing it?*  
This workshop focused on the role of university extension services and how to reclaim the original mission of the land grant university.

Discussion began by focusing on the original mission of the extension service – to serve the public and to meet the research needs of those of the agricultural community – and some early extension service work.

The discussion then moved on to the extension service’s current role and how to make that more useful:

- the perception that land grant institutions have a promise of democracy
- placing control in the hands of the people; opening up access
- expanding the curriculum  
elevating the character, knowledge and political standing of the common people— *Is this one being stripped out?*
- expanding opportunities for social and economic mobility
- addressing public problems through applied research and public service
- developing an active democratic citizenship

Finally, participants discussed some concerns, such as competing goals between producing cheap food vs. building a rich, vital democratic culture, and a lack of fiscal support, which is forcing the extension service to be grant-driven, thus destroying the traditional contract between the service and the land grant university.

## **PROPOSAL WRITING I AND II**

Margaret Krome, Cris Carusi and Teresa Maurer, Facilitators

Laura Suazo-Gallardo, Notetaker

This two-part workshop was aimed at providing participants with tools needed to understand the proposal-writing process and to improve their proposal-writing techniques.

The workshop began with a discussion of how writing proposals can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience. Two questions to ask yourself before beginning are, “Why are we doing this?” and “How should it be done?”

Some suggestions for successful proposal writing are:

- Keep it short and simple: don’t write like an academic!
- Have the funder’s evaluation/criteria in front of you.
- Follow all format rules set out in the RFP.
- Make administration and overhead expenses clear.
- Include volunteer work with your “in-kind” section.
- Provide a detailed budget—if you have a multi-objective project, it is a good idea to itemize the budget according to each objective; that way, if the funder does not like all of them, it might fund the ones it does like.
- Have other people proofread and edit for you.

## **INCREASING COMMUNITY SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATION**

Kathy Addelson and Frederique Marglin, Facilitators

This workshop discussed the possibilities of transnational collaboration for community-based research, using the Center for Mutual Learning's Whole Communities Project as a springboard for discussion.

Issues addressed included:

- How can CBR be facilitated across national boundaries to increase community and regional self-sufficiency?

What are the economic, cultural, political and spiritual issues that fragment a community and make it difficult to achieve a sustainable environment?

## **INVOLVING KIDS IN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Sandra Sydlo and Cecil Corbin, Facilitators

Notetaker: Arianna McMahon

Sandra Sydlo described the National Teen Action Research Center (NTARC), an after-school training and employment program that is youth driven and adult guided. NTARC is comprised of youth ages 14 to 19 years at various academic levels.

A recent education and advocacy project dealt with teens who drop out of school. NTARC developed a parent/teacher guide following interviews with youth who had left school as well as those who chose to stay. Other projects include action research with grade-school students at neighboring schools; developing a causal model of early sexual activity and putting information regarding condoms on the Internet; the creation of key chains and pamphlets to further an anti-sexual harassment message; and mapping of drug use and type.

Cecil Corbin described the environmental justice work that West Harlem Environmental Action (WHEACT) undertook with the community. The Earth Crew (20 youths ages 14-18) fought with the EPA over air monitoring tests, disagreed strenuously with the expert-chosen location, and engaged in research of their own. The EPA listened to youth concerns and provided the necessary equipment. The results of the youth research demonstrated levels of pollution far above those proposed.

## **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AS A TOOL FOR ORGANIZING**

Lucila Arboleda, Facilitator

This workshop was aimed at looking at how good research can be used to improve organizing, and how good organizing can improve research.

Discussion began with each person presenting his or her experience with CBR and organizing, and explaining why they came to this workshop. Many expressed a desire to know how to more effectively use their research as an organizing tool.

Lucy presented some of her work, focusing on the fact that she is first and foremost an organizer, and that she uses research as a way to help the cause.

Discussion centered on some of the issues involved in combining research and organizing, such as what happens when the research results don't necessarily support the position the organization is advocating, and how to balance the dynamic between researchers and organizers.

## **LATE AFTERNOON**

Workshop participants divided themselves into identity and issue-based groups to discuss common concerns, resources and strategies that each group can use to move community-based research – and the CRN – forward. Guiding questions for the discussion included:

- What unique circumstances does our group share?
- What nuts-and-bolts obstacles to our goals have not been identified?
- What strategies (experimental and otherwise) will we develop to address them?
- What resources would enable us to be more effective?
- Who are our partners/collaborators and what other groups should we reach out to?
- How will we continue to support each other as allies?

## **LATE-NIGHT PLANNING AND PARTYING**

While most conference participants were dancing to the sounds of live blues and sharing celebratory libations beneath a starry Massachusetts night sky, a dedicated group of 14 participants and organizers met to discuss the format of the final morning. In keeping with staff's commitment to let participants have the final say, it was decided that Sunday morning should be dedicated to hearing reports from the identity and issue groups.

Loka organizers felt that "common visioning" was the best way to ensure that future CRN endeavors were as participatory and inclusive as possible. Echoing Madeleine Scammell's response earlier that day to a participant who had shared suggestions on the Network's next steps, organizers "were ready to learn what needed to be done" in order to further the CRN's transformation into a collaborative, participant-run organization.

## **SUNDAY, JUNE 13**

Enoch Page, a Loka board member and conference participant, introduced the working groups that had taken place on Saturday afternoon: Shifting Research Paradigms, CBR

Delivery Systems, People of Color, Grassroots Organizers and Academics. Speakers from each group provided highlights of their meetings.

## **GROUP 1: SHIFTING RESEARCH PARADIGMS: COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS RESEARCHERS**

Beginning with themes, concerns and questions, this group aimed at moving forward a paradigm shift in how the CRN is conceptualizing research. The first question the group raised is What is research? Responses included:

- inquiry into problem-solving
- many forms of knowledge
- knowing—embedded in relationships, located
- democratic art, how can we change institutions and whole systems?
- discerning systematic patterns of relationship
- joining scientific and experiential knowledge (shift in “experts”) in context of
- comprehensive community vitality—one step

The group also discussed their concerns about the diversity of conference participants. There was a general feeling that the conference was too white, middle-class and academic. What is missing is rank and file, natural historians, community project members and labor. There is a strong desire to identify, describe and learn from different (diverse) approaches and types of CBR, and to learn how to change relationships and use diverse forms for connecting and access the knowledge embedded in relationships. It was suggested that everybody must reach out to another group or individual who was not here.

Strategy recommendations from the group included different forms of outreach and connections, the establishment of a library, and developing different ways of working within the CRN.

## **GROUP 2: CBR DELIVERY SYSTEMS GROUP**

THIS GROUP FOCUSED ON HOW TO MOVE CBR INTO ACTION. IT DEVELOPED SOME CORE PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH:

- Partner roles (political fallout): need to be clearly and continually defined, changed across situations, mutually beneficial
- Flexible/responsive: need to meet specific community issues
- Ownership (community): of process and results
- Knowledge exists in many places (complementary): need to always act on this, using all resources available
- Consider context: who brings issue, where they are in thinking, need, capacity
- Diverse group of partners: need to cultivate this
- Building community research capacity: community grows in: a) designing b) doing project and c) using results
- Range of involvement (facilitation, advisor, study, etc): roles of center/institute
- Learning process for all
- State of readiness: assessing capacity

- Clarity of outcomes: need this in starting all projects
- Mediating role: center/institute does this
- Advisory board
- Community feedback: periodic, on results *and* needs

### **GROUP 3: PEOPLE OF COLOR GROUP**

The People of Color Working Group (POC) was composed of Latinos, African-Americans and Pacific persons. People of color were underrepresented at the conference.

On behalf of the POC, Kenny Foster thanked and commended conference organizers. All participants benefited from bringing together those committed to social justice; all will leave here with new partnerships.

The POC Working Group has prepared a three-page document outlining ways in which the Network can implement and benefit from an antiracist, inclusive approach. The Network needs to look at potential relationships and the inclusiveness (or lack of it) among the models offered. The Network needs to tap into multiple and diverse groups of people and enhance outreach efforts.

### **GROUP 4: GRASSROOTS ORGANIZERS GROUP**

Kim Leval and Tirso Moreno presented the comments from this group. Grassroots organizations were seen as valuing different ways of knowing. NGOs need a role in the research process, in its evaluation and ownership. Researchers often do not want to share the resources; NGOs need to know the budget.

Tactics to increase NGO equality and participation:

- Pay attention to who takes notes at stakeholders' meetings.
- Reframe the question: use model adopted by Highlander Folk Schools.
- Training is important.
- Use language that is not isolating.

At this point in the presentation, the facilitator signaled firmly that the presentation time was up. Raucous democratic process among audience members overruled the minute limits. To applause and cheers, Michael Jorgenson "donated" half of the Academics group's time so that the Grassroots Organizers' Group could continue.

Kim and Tirso ended with clear calls for assistance from fellow participants in two specific areas: Bell County, Kentucky, and farmworker health research.

### **GROUP 5: ACADEMICS GROUP**

Michael Jorgenson spoke on behalf of the Academics group. He began by commenting on what academics aren't particularly good at:

- writing in lay terms
- sharing power
- mobilizing students, - although they have the access

- developing a civic base to their work

What academics *are* good at:

- intentions
- grant writing
- problem solving
- theorizing
- networking
- publications

## **WRAP-UP DISCUSSION: CAPACITY, LIMITATIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE CRN**

Loka staff members were excited by the work that the individual working groups had undertaken in envisioning next steps and in articulating what is required to build a strong, vibrant and inclusive network. Constructive criticism and compliments are crucial for the CRN's continued growth and existence.

While the Loka Institute sponsored this conference, it is but a small part of what the Network is. As Madeleine Scammell explained, "The CRN is everyone in this room."

In order to evaluate what was needed to move forward, discussion included the CRN's current capacity, limitations and the future direction for the Network.

In speaking of the future, Loka's CRN Project Director Douglas Taylor stated, "What we're going to be doing will be determined by you." Participants offered suggestions to improve the structure of the CRN—for example, having regional conferences to augment the annual one—developing action alternatives, and the necessity of a diverse planning committee. Suggestions also included needs of Network members, such as mapping individual and collective skills, resources and connections of the Network, creating a declaration of CRN principles so that we can have shared values to refer to, and creating "jump teams" to provide quick responses to communities that request assistance.

### **COMING FULL CIRCLE**

Larry Wilson took the stage after the group finished discussing ways in which to shape and improve the CRN. Using folk wisdom and gentle Kentucky humor, Larry reminded us that social change often begins with cherishing opportunities where, and how, we find them. He noted, "We have accessed researchers, community members, professionals and academics here. We're going to fix it so that the voices who aren't here, will be – and we all need to do our share to make it diverse. But our coming together is one world of opportunity. Let's use it to make a dynamic, cooperative and revolutionary effort for social change."

With those words, Larry reunited the group after what had been a rather difficult discussion focused on CRN shortcomings and an overwhelming sense of needs in the face of limited resources. Larry returned to us the sense of community, strength and real possibility that had been building over the past four days.

His words reminded us that by working together we *can* realize our commitments to marginalized communities and transform our social justice goals into reality.

## **FINAL WORDS**

As with all writing, one of the difficulties in writing a conference report is that we often lose the personal, subjective experiences of participants as we strive to deliver the details and the big(ger) picture in order to inform an audience. But much of CBR is about capturing the subjective, of acknowledging and validating the intense, often painful process of reflection and growth. And so, with the author's permission, we have included an e-mail sent to us. As you will read, this conference was more than a successive collection of workshops: it was about learning about each other, ourselves and the ways in which sharing our day-to-day struggles and CBR work can profoundly affect change.

*...The workshop included a case described by Carolyn Raffensperger of the Hog Farmers'*

*Association putting a "slap" lawsuit on a researcher who had some documentation of illnesses near hog farms. Bill Leibhardt was there and also gave some history of corporate and university repression. Charlene LaVoie noted that there were laws in some states against slap lawsuits, but correctly labeled the basic problem as the "corporatization of America." This is a theme that I mention in my social change class, but the examples in this session illustrated how much it has occurred in academia, which I regard as the last bastion of "free inquiry" IF there is one.*

*As for tears, they did flow at Larry's final comments. I had heard his community's story in an earlier session and expected to be outraged again, but instead I saw a modest man of passionate feelings, who was able to be both humorous and optimistic. I asked him later how he could do it. His response almost brought more tears. He noted that what his community had regained from the experience was their strong sense of community. That was what kept him going. It's something that we academics probably fail to appreciate as we are always on the move, but I'm starting to think I miss it more than I know.*

*Maybe the best community-based research is to find what will unite us around common, POSITIVE goals—as we did in our first workshop on Thursday.*

*Sorry for such a long post. I got a lot out of this conference and I hope it continues to have an impact as the weeks and months pass.*

*Yours, "Jay"*

# **APPENDIXES**

A ~ Conference Funders and Co-Sponsors

B ~ The Community Research Network  
Overview

C ~ Full Workshop Notes

**APPENDIX A**  
**CONFERENCE FUNDERS AND CO-SPONSORS**

C.S. Mott Foundation\*  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Managing Information with Rural  
America (MIRA) Initiative\*  
The Bonner Foundation\*  
Consortium for Sustainable Agriculture Research Education\*  
Project South: Institute for the Elimination of Poverty and Genocide  
Childhood Cancer Research Institute  
Science and Environmental Health Network  
Youth Policy Institute  
Applied Research Center\*  
CTCNet  
Institute for Science and Interdisciplinary Studies  
Center for Mutual Learning\*  
Institute for Community Research  
Highlander Research & Education Center in Partnership with the  
Folk and People's Education Association of America

\* Indicates Scholarship Sponsor

## **APPENDIX B**

# **THE COMMUNITY RESEARCH NETWORK OVERVIEW**

Most research and development in the United States is conducted on behalf of business, the military, the federal government, or in pursuit of the scientific and academic communities' intellectual interests. The Community Research Network (CRN) seeks to complement this mainstream research system with a new nationwide and worldwide research infrastructure that will make empowerment through mutual learning and other research benefits accessible to all citizens and communities, regardless of ability to pay.

Launched by the Loka Institute in 1995, the CRN supports participatory, community-based research efforts worldwide. The CRN is enabling civic, grassroots and worker organizations, historically disenfranchised groups and local governments to have systematic access to knowledge that is responsive to their needs and that helps them to effect constructive social change.

Currently funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Managing Information in Rural America Initiative (MIRA), the CRN is focused on four primary goals:

- Nurturing the establishment of new community research centers and enhancing the efficacy of current centers;
- Developing and supporting mechanisms that link grassroots organizations with community-based research centers;
- Enhancing the legitimacy and visibility of community-based research; and
- Developing a documentation, evaluation, archive, and retrieval system for community-based research.

As an international network the CRN provides members with the opportunity to interact with communities and researchers worldwide. Some of our activities include:

- A Web-based database of more than 100 community research centers that links communities in need of assistance with researchers responsive to their needs and concerns.
- The CRN listserv (with more than 800 subscribers and still growing) and its annual conference allow community-based researchers and grassroots organizers to share ideas, stories, problems and successes.
- We work to increase the visibility – and thus accessibility – of community-based research centers around the country. For example, the CRN and community research centers have been featured in media stories in the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Science Magazine*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Science News*, and *Tune Reader*.
- We work to increase the legitimacy of community-based research among a variety of audiences – from universities to federal agencies. For example, recent CRN activities have led to requests for further information about community-based research from several federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences and the National Institute for Disability Rehabilitation and Research.

- We conduct research on and compile information about community-based research. For example, we compiled a set of articles on community-based research and published *Doing Community-Based Research: A Reader*, which is being used in classrooms around the country.

# **APPENDIX C ~ FULL WORKSHOP NOTES**

## **PRE CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS**

### **INTRODUCTION TO CBR**

This workshop brought together novice, engaged and future CBR researchers. Participants came from rich and varied backgrounds: an action researcher working with U.S. women of color and African women, a Sci-Shop scientist (and punk rocker) from the Netherlands committed to providing accessible and useful science at the request of communities, a nurse-practitioner, a literacy worker, a Canadian graduate student working collaboratively with aboriginal First Nations... and 30 other enthused and spirited participants of various ages, backgrounds and experiences.

Facilitators Madeleine Scammell and Maureen Hellwig used role-playing to assist participants in working through crucial CBR issues such as power, hierarchy, and the selection and appropriateness of research methodologies. Various definitions of CBR were examined for their inherent differences in community engagement, control and ownership throughout the processes of research design and collection.

Tensions between academia and the community were explored, illuminating cultural differences between the European models of the Science Shop and other community-driven models such as participatory action research. This exploration led participants to distinguish a *continuum of community-based research models*: from research that is an integral part of the university curriculum and completed by graduate students at the behest of communities, to collaborative researcher-community projects undertaken by socially conscious academics and those immersed in social justice work, to research designed and carried out by community members, with academics acting as facilitators or trainers (if requested) until community members have the capacity to undertake the work themselves. Participants agreed that one model is no purer than another. Similar philosophical underpinnings are shared among all CBR models.

### **All CBR models are:**

- inclusive
- transformative
- collaborative
- responsive and responsible

The theme of multiple visions or versions of “what CBR really is” shadowed much of the debate throughout the conference. It is in the articulation of our own visions of CBR that we find a rightness-of-fit between our roles as activists, researchers and community members and the research models offered as tools to help us achieve our social justice goals. There is no one right model for everyone.

## **INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE WORKSHOP**

Duane Dale, Facilitator

By John Gerber

The purpose of the Institutional Change workshop track was to help us succeed at the level of institutional change. Duane provided participants with a workbook titled “*Reshaping the Institutions that are Reshaping the Planet: A Guide to Change Logic & Systems Perspectives.*”

Participants identified the following:

### **Institutions That Need Change:**

- government agencies
- public universities
- labor unions
- capitalist market structure
- nonprofits serving communities
- family
- human-made structures with “staying power” that affect lives
- philanthropic organizations

### **Goals for Changing Institutions**

- include needs of the seventh generation
- responsiveness to people rather than profit
- healing broken connections between people, groups and agencies
- decision making and participation involve people affected
- efficacy
- sharing power
- ease of access to information
- resources available for those without power and money
- clear and democratically determined ethical framework

Many of the goals for change are ways of moving institutions in a way that support human needs. While there are times when people with bad intentions direct institutions, often institutional culture guides good people to do bad things.

The workshop broke into small groups to tell personal stories of institutional change. The following *Lessons Learned* were shared:

- Common/shared interests are needed for change.
- *What works* in one place won’t necessarily work in another; change occurs within a specific context/culture.
- *You must identify* sources of power if change is to take place and be sustained.
- *Institutional changes* that are inconsistent with organizational values will not be sustained.
- *It is easier* to hold on to what you know (regardless of whether it works or not) than to try something new.
- *Crisis and fear* may catalyze the early stages of change but are not likely to serve as a source of power for continuous change.

*It is unlikely* that people will be willing to change to something new if they don’t think the “vision” of the new way is possible.

### **Change Logics: How Do We Believe Change Occurs?**

The concept of change logics describes lessons learned about change.

One change logics relates to how we believe change occurs. William Bridges explains how “endings” happen first, and then the organization moves into the “neutral zone”

before “new beginnings” can occur.

### **Change Logics: How Do We Help People Through Change?**

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross’ stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance have useful implications for change:

- We must help people through each stage of change.
- We must acknowledge that chaos or confusion or depression is part of the process.
- Sometimes it is necessary to encourage chaos or at least allow the organization to reside in chaos for a while as a stage in the change process.
- a necessary change is the ending of the old which must be grieved.

### **Change Logics: Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture is necessary for organizations to exist and function. At the same time, it exerts a conservative influence, slowing change. Over time, organizational culture may evolve to support organizational survival and maintain the power and privilege of those in management positions.

### **Change Logics: Survive and Thrive**

Long-term successful organizations:

- are attuned to the external world
- have a strong positive identity and a clear sense of purpose
- have an efficient internal operating system
- are fuzzy around the edges (that is, they encourage experimentation)

### **Change Logics: Fixes That Fail**

Land grant universities that accept private funding may sacrifice their clear sense of public purpose as they seek private partnerships. These alliances may benefit the private partner and serve the academic discipline but fail in their primary purpose of serving the public good. While this serves the short-term financial interests of the public university (which may indeed be in financial need), it may be a “fix that fails” if it further disenfranchises the public which funds the university.

### **Organizational Change: Participant Case Study #1**

#### **SCENARIO:**

Increasing funding for graduate students to do public-interest science in the humanities and sciences.

#### ***LESSONS LEARNED:***

- Community-based research begins with community problems.
- Students in the humanities should be engaged in community-based research.
- The lever for change is often not found where you expect to find it.
- Communities often bring prejudices to the table when dealing with universities.
- While much university/community research is done by graduate students, another means of doing this work would be to employ citizen-scholars who will remain in the community after the work is done.

- It may not be possible to change current institutions so that they can do CBR; it may be better to create new institutions.
- There is a need to guard against community- based research that can be used to exclude others from access.
- Mixed or unclear purposes may create unmet expectations among some groups.

### **Organizational Change: Participant Case Study #2**

#### **SCENARIO:**

An institution helped to build a community organization and now needs to wean itself away. *The dilemma?* The organization may not survive without the founding institution.

#### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- Creation of community groups should include capacity building (such as fund raising).
- It is important to begin these types of projects with clear expectations of an ending.
- Make sure the organization “exists” by maintaining a list of members.
- Help the organization find another group to provide an infrastructure.

**Change** occurs when there is...

- **Dissatisfaction** with the present situation,
- **A plausible vision** of a better future,
- A plan of action, and
- **A network** of people who share the same perspective.

### **ISSUE GROUPS**

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Miscellaneous
- Science and Technology Policy
- Poverty Issues
- Workers' Education\*
- Toxic Waste\*

\*There were no notes available for the Workers' Education and Toxic Waste Groups.

### **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

The **Sustainable Agriculture** group looked at the connections between consumers and farmers. A need for shared values and understanding of sustainable agriculture was identified.

The environment, economy and community are not seen as mutually exclusive.

Farmers have lost “control” of their own farms and information; CBR is seen as a means to return control to farmers and to the broader community.

Communities are a source of power and energy, and they “own” their definitions of sustainable agriculture. Changes are needed to address farmer health and safety concerns, sustain local cultures, acknowledge where people are at and help shift values, and to provide a public space for communication when stress or pressure rises.

Community-based research can assist the sustainable agriculture movement to achieve social action and change through:

- returning power to communities;
- tapping into community resources;
- furthering SA's support of systems thinking. CBR is a methodology for this, and there are qualitative lessons that can be learned from it;
- interconnecting public agencies, land types, farms and ownership.

## MISCELLANEOUS

The **Miscellaneous** group had incredible energy. Participants came from areas as diverse as rural development, service learning, resource co-management and aboriginal land claims, small business and health.

This group concentrated on “thinking outside the box” and posed critical questions for community-based research. Participants critiqued existing educational paradigms. They suggested that CBR involves praxis, the link between theory and practice, and it should invite a diversity of input.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The **Science and Technology Policy** folk approached their analysis of science and technology, community-based research and the Community Research Network in three interrelated steps. First, they examined the most pressing issues impacting upon S&T policy and policy making. Second, the needs, barriers and rewards of CBR within S&T policy were examined. Third, they built on their understanding of both S&T and CBR to illuminate the challenges, strategies and goals of the Community Research Network. Integral to CBR is a process of creating principles (not structures) to allow for adaptation, and a critical commitment by researchers to examine their self-assumptions. Diversity and unity are viewed as sources of collective community support.

### **Step One: Identifying Pressing Issues**

Concerns by the group on S&T policy issues fell under three broad categories: soft vs. hard science, substantive issues, and community and power:

#### **A) *Soft vs. Hard Science:***

- how to make qualitative data meaningful
- World Trade Organization policies favoring “science-based answers”
- lack of community participation in telecommunication policy
- how to incorporate hard science into CBR
- the role of hard scientists in CBR

#### **B) *Substantive Issues where a CBR approach to S&T would be useful:***

- health risks to miners
- CBR in AIDS research
- uses of genetic technology; ramifications of genetic research
- balancing science and technology rationally to benefit communities

**C) Community and Power Issues:**

- who defines science and technology policy?
- obliviousness of politicians and policymakers to community problems
- creating more democratic institutions
- working within communities' value systems
- getting around the old boys network
- attempts to fund Science Shops

**Step Two: Needs, Barriers and Results of CBR**

**A) Needs of/for CBR**

- bridging the gap between policymakers and communities
- bridging social and hard sciences
- defining success

**B) Barriers to CBR**

- negotiating different values
- getting people to the same table
- recognizing the values inherent in science
- lack of community mobilization
- convincing funders of the necessity for and benefit of community involvement
- communities accepting empowerment/understanding why it is important
- absence of an overall agenda or general consensus re: CBR
- defining what a community is
- how to foster interactions among people with different values

**C) Results of CBR**

- incremental growth of community involvement as a policy
  - proactive vs. reactive community voices
- capacity building within communities

**Step Three: Challenges and Goals**

**Challenges** to CRN organizing were identified as preaching to the converted. *How do we incorporate our traditional opponents into our network?* This is even more difficult with corporations since most community research is anticorporate. *How do we find a key person in a corporation to sell CBR to the others? Can we talk to people with short-term values?*

**Challenges** also include our own preconceptions of corporations; this is a limitation in our thinking. *What do we do when corporations are part of the community?*

Corporations may mean power inequity but not always; in Canada, some First Nations have formed corporations of their own. Corporations and communities can be at the same table but all have to bring something; you can't deal if you're fearful of corporations. Corporations are transnational entities but they are also made up of human beings.

**Tools for Organizing:** mapping CRN participants in terms of whom each of us already knows; and mapping the CRN network relative to outcome.

**Goals for the CRN Network:** we need to have a substantive vision of sustainability and to build that into the CRN network.

...**and How to Get There:** use the process of defining goals as part of formulating what the network is; bring a corporate buddy to the next meeting; bring in experienced folk from the developing world; and train community folk in how to become community scientists.

## **POVERTY ISSUES**

Due to the sheer number of participants interested in poverty issues, the large group was divided into two smaller groups. Later, one of the groups would itself form a third, smaller group interested in delving deeper into the connections of antipoverty work and the CRN.

Each group took considerable time to introduce themselves and their ongoing work to one another. This allowed participants to see that as farmers, researchers, faith leaders, students, teachers and the unwaged, they were engaged in antipoverty work across a variety of sectors: providing for themselves and their families, health, immigration, community development, income support and education.

The breadth and diversity of participants' antipoverty work and direct poverty experiences underscores the complexity of poverty and its many faces.

### **Poverty Group #1**

- Poor people are children and the elderly.
- Poverty is an act of violence.

Poverty occurs when policies do not address everyone's needs.

- How do we bridge the gap between community groups and policymakers?  
How do we train/educate community members who are recipients of money to be better decision makers?

### ***WHAT CAN WE DO?***

Community-based researchers and workers can

- help the poor overcome barriers
- be equity advocates
- change policy at the government level
- end income discrimination
- conduct research to truly reflect and empower people without resources
- expose affluent students to poor communities and their issues and challenges
- teach about the structures which create poverty (racism, classism) and the connection to gangs and violence
- use CBR to organize
- use CBR to break our isolation from one another and share ideas

### **Poverty Group #2**

*Our goals:*

1. A consortium of schools, communities, organizations sharing resources—network
2. Educate citizens on welfare reform and workable solutions
3. Systemic changes to allow for citizen voices
4. Shared community research projects between institutions and adequately using students
5. Use CBR to understand poverty across cultures and national boundaries

6. Broad agenda to end poverty
7. Interracial dialogue surrounding relevant issues
8. Networking internationally and nationally—what works?
9. Research surrounding environmental issues—particularly housing
10. Real collaboration between community antipoverty efforts and academia
11. Greater community control and agenda-setting based on community expertise
12. Evaluation of antipoverty efforts

*Our Solutions:*

1. Risk-sharing between community residents and academics
2. Remove financial barriers to participation in projects and efforts
3. Training sessions for university staff and faculty
4. Resources need to go to the community, stop using those in power
5. Bottom-up decision making
6. Partner with authentic community organizations
7. Funding to nonexperts and efforts dedicated to community decision making and evolution
8. Reform, up-end accountability structure

## **FRIDAY WORKSHOPS**

### **Ethical Guidelines for Community-Based Research**

Bookda Gheisar and Marianne Sullivan, Facilitators

By John Gerber

The purpose of this workshop was to develop ethical guidelines for community-based research. Bookda Gheisar from the Cross Cultural Health Care Program of Seattle introduced the workshop. Marianne Sullivan from the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health described a community-based research project from which a set of ethical guidelines were developed.

*Findings:*

1. Negative Research Perspective
  - there is money to work on/with community problems
  - focus on community deficits rather than assets
2. Power Imbalances
  - funding goes to institutions
  - race and gender differences and professional status interfere with trust
  - “white men” control the process
  - lack of community benefit or control of project
  - community provides input
3. Disruptive Implementation
  - research is offensive to some cultures and groups

*Suggested Solutions:*

- engage diverse staff of academic faculty
- institutions need to change their own hierarchy to allow those doing the work to be able to make decisions

- communities should hire the researchers, not institutions
- spend more time developing trust
- share power with communities
- open communications (talk about difficult issues)
- communities should be involved from the beginning and throughout
- ensure that communities benefit from the project

### **Ethical Principles for CBR**

Suggestions shared as ethical principles for community-based research were:

1. Involve the community from the beginning of the project
2. Honor and respect community knowledge
3. Equality in sharing economic resources
4. Honesty
5. Dignity for all involved in the project
6. Start with what the community describes as needs.
7. Build safeguards on the project to maintain equity.
8. The RFP should make sure the community is involved.
9. Would this project be done even if we are not funded (are we passionate)?
10. The community benefits
11. An intervention is sustainable
12. The community has veto power to stop the project if it isn't working.
13. Researcher-initiated CBR requires a higher level of scrutiny than community-initiated
14. CBR.
15. Measures of success must include those described by the community.
16. There should be total disclosure of resources and how they are used.
17. The community has control of the results.
18. The researchers must establish a relationship with the community that can be
19. sustained.
20. The research institution should establish a long-term partnership with the community.
21. The work should be done by teams, including participation from researchers and
22. communities.
23. Respect the indigenous knowledge of the community.
24. Include the funders in ethical discussions.

## **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM CURRICULUM**

John David Smith and Students of Concord College, Facilitators

By Alexandre Mas

Community-based research is integrated within the curriculum of Concord College in four departments: Political Science, Sociology, Social Work and Education. Requests for research are submitted by the community and prioritized by John David. There is usually more community need than students to staff projects. Fourteen projects have been undertaken, involving 1 to 4 students per project.

The degree of community involvement varies from a classic consultative model in which students do all the work to a more collaborative one in which the community is actively involved. In one project, the staff of a homeless shelter and students jointly collected data on sexual abuse among residents.

Students completed the analysis and staff then planned the next steps.

The timing required to address both the needs and involvement of community members and the rigid structure of undergraduate courses can prove problematic. John David completes research projects if timing and/or student performance are at issue.

The college is attempting to integrate departments from the humanities. While one participant was skeptical of the value to a community of a discipline such as history, another participant spoke of the tangible results that historical design and geography have afforded Canadian communities currently involved in planning.

Two students from Concord College presented their work. The first was a phone study examining the status of social work in West Virginia hospitals. The second study analyzed the effects of changes in the admission policy of a mental health facility caused by the following variables: admission diagnosis, length of stay and payer mix.

Vital to the success of incorporating CBR within the curriculum is establishing, from the outset, the mentality and expectation of partnership between the school and the community. Thus far, the most serious challenge to integrating CBR within the curriculum is lack of faculty interest.

## **USING COMPUTERS AND ON-LINE RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Carla Shafer, Facilitator

By Joan Roelofs

This workshop opened with a review of information sharing from a provider's point of view, including information bias, soliciting audiences and dealing with problems. The Cornell Participatory Action Research Network (PARnet, <http://www.PARnet.org>) was discussed. The network currently has 2,000 cyber members in 70 countries. PARnet is a content-free Website, an empty technological space filled with content by the people who use it. Users find the interactive calendar and the bibliographic database useful and participatory.

Computers can be helpful in working with disadvantaged people who live in spread-out communities and for whom meetings are difficult to get to; you can create "virtual communities" that will meet only by computer. The Internet can be helpful for organizations that struggle with mail-out costs. However, access and training pose problems: how feasible are computer tools used in farmers' research, where people don't have background or technology? As only 5 to 10% of rural areas have Internet access, ATTRA uses the telephone a great deal. For some rural communities barriers to information access include basic telephone service following violent storms.

Comfort levels around use and privacy are also an issue: one participant described how her site was forced to remove a guest book after people left the site rather than provide the requested information. In contrast, the guest book is not an issue for PARnet; academic people may be less afraid of privacy problems.

Barriers to computer access in rural areas require creative solutions: equipping senior

citizens with portable computers and sending them to senior centers and shopping malls to demonstrate the Internet, furnishing buses with the internet, and using students to assist Non-Governmental organizations to set up Web pages. Urban isolation was also mentioned, and the cultural differences that prevent use. It was decided that not too many computer geeks are into community development!

Participants debated whether computer technology is isolating. Computer usage occurs in a social and political context. As technology progresses, it outstrips what any one individual can do; for small nonprofit organizations, it may be better to invest more money to maintain a site that is high-tech.

## **BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CULTURES AND HISTORIES THROUGH RESEARCH AND ART**

Nayo Watkins, Facilitator

This workshop was an exciting exploration of the connections between social justice, social change and the arts. Nayo Watkins, a black activist-playwright, began by inviting participants to share the centrality of the arts in their own CBR and community-organizing work. As would be the case throughout the conference, the innovation and creativity of participants' own projects was inspiring:

- aerosol art as a means to promote the positive aspects of hip-hop music;
- community gardens and photojournalism;
- an apple grower looking to create an interactive nature trail;
- an intergenerational marching band;
- the use of singing as a strategy to learn public speaking;
- youth art and environmentalism.

The group was hushed as participant Tirso Moreno spoke of his group's work on the "The Last Harvest," an exhibit of black-and-white photographs currently being shown at museums of art around the world. The exhibit documents lake contamination and augments the oral histories of Mexican harvesters from the Second World War.

There are four components to action-through-art: community participation, research, art and action. All components must be present before we can talk about community and individual transformation. To illustrate, Nayo took us through three theater projects she has been involved in.

In all community art and social justice work, the artists helping in the process must learn to "let go." The story must belong to the community or it will not lead to action. Issues of truth-telling are also critical: *how much truth do you want to tell?*

"I'm amazed at the ability of the arts to help people articulate their experiences in ways that we academic folk can't do any other way" – a participant.

Scholarly writing often says more than what you can say on the street: it's one thing to write radical words in an academic paper and leave it at the academy, it's another to put those truths on stage and bring them out into the open. Community organizers and researchers who use art must be conscious of and prepared for backlash.

Art for social action does not simply stop at the art-as-product stage. Plans must be made to capitalize on the political mobilization that will arise following the reading, exhibit or play.

## ADDRESSING RACISM IN SCHOOLS THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

Terry Kelcher, Facilitator

By Jennifer Bashant

Institutional racism is often the last form of racism to be addressed. We need to look at policies so that we can change the system.

Terry Kelcher from the Applied Research Center (<http://www.ARC.org>) led this exploration of antiracist action education. Participants expressed a desire to work on internalized racism, to understand how to do racial justice work in communities without racial diversity, to examine ways to involve the community in looking at racism in schools and to acquire strategic, creative and radical antiracism tools.

Participants were encouraged to pay attention to the *political developments of racism*—how are people thinking around the world?

Major initiatives such as affirmative action, bilingual education and cultural reflection are under attack. Such efforts are often unconnected; there is no equity, so policies actually work to aggravate existing inequities. In terms of action education, it was suggested that participants develop our own curriculum and be the trainers; we are the experts and know what is needed.

### **Antiracism Education Resources:**

- Racial Justice Report Card (see the ARC Web site);
- The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (New Orleans);
- National Coalition of Education Advocates: network of teachers;
- Network of Educators on the Americas: good resources;
- Center for Commercial-Free Education;
- Bradley Foundation: "Bell-curve Study";
- Coleman Advocates – San Francisco

## FUNDING COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH: STRATEGY SESSION TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITY

Irene Luckey, Facilitator

Dr. Irene Luckey of the Institute for Families in Society conducted an enormously helpful workshop on funding strategies: how to find it, get it and keep on getting it. Specific strategies increase the likelihood of being funded to do CBR:

### Courting Funders

- Ensure a compatible mission between you and the funding source.
- Attend to and/or identify your needs and the funder's needs.
- Do your homework (what are they about?) **before** you ask for money.
- Get to know them (not by name or via one person but as an organization; find out how one project will flow into another).
- *The First Date*: ask the funder out to lunch, ask about their mission and where they see themselves going, then interject your thoughts...
- Teach funders, their staffs and boards about CBR.

## **Know Thyself**

- Be careful of “mission creep” – this occurs when the grants you’re soliciting are only slightly different from your organizational goals, but two years later you’re working on something you never intended.
- Know where to draw the line; ground yourself. If you are chasing dollars, then the funders define your mission.
- Be realistic: startup, recruitment and capacity building take time.
- Many funders prefer that the community put up some money; pay attention to in-kind inputs.
- Look at the bigger picture (in order to keep money flowing, CBOs need to build on an initiative).
- Build-in an evaluative component from the beginning.
- Don’t go it alone: find complementary missions among organizations and share resources and skills.

## **Become Partners With Your Funder**

- Develop a partnership, a substantial working relationship, with the funding source.
- If time is taken to develop a partnership, the funders see their mandate extended and you get a greater return than just a research grant for one project.
- The issue of partnerships is the most difficult to work out: there is a pecking order.
- The Principal Investigator (PI) requirement perpetuates the impression that the university is more important than the CBO: educate funders!
- Take and give: you may need to give some freebies (i.e., training, presentations) to the board.
- Help the board understand how to actively incorporate CBR in its funding mandate—bring in speakers.
- Find out how willing your funder is to speak with other funders.

## **Deliver What You Promised**

- Timing is everything.
- Produce excellent, usable, timely and applied work—if research takes a long time to come to fruition, then it’s past the point of usefulness to funders.
- Produce work that:
  - a.) Can be evaluated.
  - b.) Can be replicated.
  - c.) Has implications down the road.
- Generate user-friendly, simple reports so that even a neophyte can understand the outcomes.

*There is a difference between cultivating a funding source vs. diversifying funders: go into the funding relationship with a bigger picture in mind (i.e., a long-term multiproject relationship, not simply one grant), but don’t have just one source of money.*

# BASIC HOW-TO'S FOR STARTING A CAMPUS-BASED COMMUNITY RESEARCH CENTER

Hasan Crockett, Facilitator

By Michael Meuser

This workshop explored the process of starting a campus-based research center. The facilitator was assisted by a member of Project South.

## **The Battle Ahead:**

Establishing such a center is a fight—a battle—and we must strategize carefully if we are to be successful. We are competing with established programs for territory and resources. We are a threat to the status quo's highly protected turf.

## **Preparing for Battle:**

**Assess** how important this really is to you. Would you do it, or do you do it already, without pay? Realize that there are many sacrifices and that forming such a center means giving up the “pastoral professor's life.”

**A people's army**—a secret group of committed soldiers. Keep plans contained until the right time.

**Get students** and the community on our side. Find out how the university stands in the community.

**Find out** who within the university is already doing some sort of community-based research. Try to bring them in but be careful, especially of department heads.

**Know your enemies.** Often those at the midlevel of administrative power are the most difficult to work with.

## **The Engagement:**

- **Assess strengths** and weaknesses. Is the group still hanging together?
- **Make a list** and begin to contact potential funders.
- Put the university's **published service mission** in your publications.
- **Be humble.** Ask how the community might teach you.
- **A strong base** in the community is central to success.
- **Be well prepared** when approaching the university.
- **Strategize** on how best to gain publicity.
- **Provide** a place for progressive community leaders and politicians to hang their hats.

## **As An Ally:**

- **Don't impose** your values on their project. Remember whose project it is.
- **Engage** the community as equals.
- **Ask the community** “What is it that you want us to do for you?” You can help with examples, but it's their decision.
- **Don't oversell** and promise what you cannot provide.

## COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTERS AND COMMUNITY RESEARCH CENTERS

Holly Carter and Peter Miller (CTCNet), Facilitators

By Karry Gillespie

Community Computing Centers (CTCs) started in the 1980s. The term CTC is generic; they vary in terms of lab facilities, Net access and technological wizardry. CTCs are usually offered in low-income communities where people cannot afford to have in-home computers and where people often do not have much experience in the computer field. CTCs offer training and support to the community in computer technology. CTCs can be used to bring people together around social issues. The technology facilitates by its presence. For example, CTCs can host a special night for NGOs on e-mail and networking, or to learn database spread sheets.

## HEALTH RESEARCH, ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT, AND QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Carolyn Raffensperger, Science and Environmental Health Network,  
Dianne Quigley, Childhood Cancer Research Institute, Facilitators

By Lea Zeldin

Participants came to this workshop because of their interest in the “precautionary principle”; concern that there has been a downgrading of “health” to “environmental issues” so there will be less money for cleanup; uncertainty about when to use epidemiology and when to choose political action; and a desire to assist communities in assessing and demonstrating harm. Larry Wilson (Yellow Creek Concerned Citizens) commented emphatically, “*Poor folks can’t afford science! Poor folks can’t afford justice.*”

Diane Quigley assists communities affected by nuclear contamination. Findings of statistical significance are dismissed by the authorities, however, who claim the sample is too small to be meaningful. Use of qualitative data such as community interviews, oral histories, local knowledge about the environment and holistic impacts are important to define the extent of the damage. Inductive research can influence policy and regulation. Carolyn Raffensperger explained that we should be looking at public health significance rather than statistics. Companies have a duty to prevent harm; the burden of proof lies with the technology, not the public.

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INFORMED DECISION MAKING

Josh Slingerland, Youth Policy Institute, Facilitator

By James Coles

The workshop provided an overview of the Youth Policy Institute’s use of planning trees to empower communities. For the purposes of the workshop, empowerment was

defined as “the provision of tools to make decisions based on the ‘best’ information available”; this definition was deeply troubling to some participants. Planning trees are used to empower communities in accessing and disseminating whatever information they require to plan, decide on action, implement action through direct service and evaluate and monitor effectiveness. Planning trees ensure that communities are aware of the best-practice solutions for different problems; many effective solutions exist but communities cannot always discover or implement them. Planning trees are accessible to citizens regardless of professional background. Concerns were raised about planning trees’ structured, geometric and inflexible nature and their subsequent nontransferability to cultures outside the Western tradition. Does the planning tree format discourage local solutions to local problems? Not necessarily; experience has shown that community efforts can adapt planning trees to different environments.

## **SATURDAY**

### **PLENARY PANEL**

- Elizabeth Hendron, Northern Ireland Science Shop (Belfast), Ireland
- Caspar de Bok, Biology Science Shop, Utrecht University, Netherlands
- Henk Mulder, Chemistry Science Shop, University of Groningen, Netherlands
- Michael Jorgensen, Technical University of Denmark, Denmark
- Peter Levesque, Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Canada
- Diana Baird N’Diaye, Smithsonian Institution, Center for Folklife Programs, USA

Moderator: Virginia Seitz, Community Partnership Center, USA

Virginia Seitz convened the Plenary Panel, International Community-Based Research: Expanding Our Partnerships. She welcomed the panelists, noting that the term “science” has a much broader meaning in Europe and encompasses the humanities, social science and natural science.

Virginia took a good-natured poke at Peter Levesque, Program Officer with the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). Noting that SSHRC is pronounced “shirk,” she said she felt it was a great acronym for a government agency!

### **ELIZABETH HENDRON**

#### **Northern Ireland Science Shop (Belfast), Ireland**

Elizabeth Hendron explained that there are two Science Shops in Ireland, in Ulster and Belfast. They are part of an emancipatory movement working towards returning greater control to communities. The Science Shops are closely monitored by an advisory group and are bound by funding requirements.

The Science Shop in Belfast has chosen to work only with individuals, not with political groups. They select their projects based on three considerations: groups’ financial inability to procure the information any other way; the research must be useful to the community; and groups’ willingness to share the research results. They do not actively solicit projects but receive between 20 and 30 requests for assistance each month.

Elizabeth mediates between the community groups and the Science Shop. Under her guidance, undergraduate students have engaged in projects as varied as an examination of the high rates of suicide within the gay community and community traffic flow evaluations. Commenting upon the latter study, Elizabeth cautioned that groups can be disappointed when the research results are not what they had expected; thus, the Northern Ireland Science Shop has follow-up meetings with groups after the results have been released.

### CASPAR DE BOK

#### **Biology Science Shop, Utrecht University, Netherlands**

Caspar de Bok noted that 7 of 14 faculties at Utrecht University have their own individual Science Shops. These seven shops are autonomous and work together under an umbrella network. The shops have dissimilar staffing and funding levels.

The Science Shops were initially student-based but are now professional organizations fully integrated into the university and play an integral role in shaping the curriculum. The Biology Science Shop has undertaken work on animal welfare, public health, environmental health and veterinary medicine. There are specialists within each shop; Caspar works specifically with environmental issues within the Biology Shop.

The Biology Science Shop bases its fees on client finances and whether the client is a community organization or a business. The research must be of community relevance if it is a community-based organization.

The Science Shops in the Netherlands do not have the same funding problems faced by American community research centers since they are an integral part of the university structure.

### HENK MULDER

#### **Chemistry Science Shop, University of Groningen, Netherlands**

Henk Mulder discussed the Science Shop Network in the Netherlands. Thirty-three university-based shops comprise the network: 7 shops are centralized (that is, they are "one-stop shops" and interdisciplinary in nature) and 26 are decentralized (part of an individual faculty and therefore quite specialized). The network maintains bimonthly shop coordinator meetings, an annual conference and constant communication via Web site and e-mail. Science Shops also participate in other networks, including Clients Network, Scientific Network, Institutional Network and on a project-by-project basis.

In keeping with the theme of the conference, Henk provided a detailed examination of what works/what doesn't for the Netherlands network. Some concerns: overhead costs can be problematic for small shops; the network's shared database does not yet work; language differences; and there is no similar Loka-type organization to assist with the actual work involved in networking.

## **MICHAEL JORGENSEN**

**Technical University of Denmark**

Michael addressed the manner in which CBR would benefit from transnational cooperation, and what such cooperation could look like. As technology development and regulation becomes more international (e.g., WTO treaty on international trade), it becomes imperative that CBR reach out too. International CBR can document research, enhance knowledge and change perspectives. There is often much knowledge on a subject in one country but little within another; American organizations such as the Farm Workers of Florida could share information on companies and products with groups in Europe. In contrast, American consumers could benefit by learning from consumer attitudes and advocacy activities in other countries. Environmental concerns of developing countries could be addressed by gathering local and national information and circulating that information in an international summary. One possible project could be a transfer of knowledge and experience between developing and developed countries that would increase the capacity of developing nations to have their products certified as organic.

Language differences may pose a problem in transnational CBR. However, Michael cautions strongly that summaries and reports should not be written in English if that is not the native language of that country.

## **PETER LEVESQUE**

**Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada**

Peter Levesque from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, an arm's-length Canadian government agency with a mandate to fund core and applied research in Canada, spoke of a multimillion-dollar pilot project to fund collaborative community-university research initiatives. The impetus for the Community-University Research Alliances (known as CURA) pilot project was the success of the Science Shop model in the Netherlands and a strong political will in Canada to foster collaborative alliances among university and community partners.

The strength of such alliances is seen in their existence as "virtual institutions," located not physically in one institution but arising from alliances between multiple community elements. The anticipated goal of these alliances is to create a vortex effect in which the sharing of expertise and resources creates maximum dividends for community partners in areas of training, education and problem solving, as well as benefits to universities in research and curriculum development.

The pilot phase consists of two three-year funding cycles of \$200 to \$400,000 per year for each funded program. Twenty-four community-university alliances will be funded in the first competition cycle, with a minimum of eight in the second. This pilot project is providing new avenues for how research is funded in Canada, and is changing the very definition of research itself.

## **DIANA BAIRD N'DIAYE**

**Smithsonian Institution, Center for Folklife Programs, USA**

CBR networking is a powerful tool as it allows us to see the trajectory from the Science Shop model to an interdisciplinary international model.

The models offered here are fundamentally different. In Europe, the Science Shops are university-based and run by students on behalf of the community. Science Shops are seen as fundamental to the university structure in Europe; the same cannot be said of community research in the United States. Major roadblocks to CBR in the U.S. include the tenure system, which rewards research for the sake of research and a lack of connection between public scholarship and students' work in real life.

The mission of land grant universities is very compatible with community-based research. We need to work towards a network of American CBR, European Science Shops and Canadian Research Alliances.

### **Participants' Comments**

Following the plenary presentation, some participants felt that panelists had not fully examined the implications of "where the [research] money resides." Dan Allman (University of Toronto) noted that it was one thing to provide resources so that universities could engage in community-based research, but it was an entirely different matter to fund the communities directly. This met with different responses from the panelists.

European panelists struggled to grasp the connection between funding and community control, given that communities overseas are seen as having a legitimate voice in initiating and controlling research within well-funded university Science Shops. The Canadian panelist suggested that it mattered less which organization received the grant than that collaborative efforts were being funded. The American panelist commented that it was not so much a concern of the money being controlled by the university partner but of the kinds of priorities and advocacy roles the university has adopted.

Some participants were distinctly dissatisfied with these answers. They spoke of an analysis of class and power that is deeply critical of a hierarchy in which universities are the partners who 'own and administer' the research funds. Anne Stratham (University of Wisconsin Parkside) stated emphatically, "Where the money comes from, and who administers it, is a power relationship we're not always aware of. It would make a terrific difference if the money was not coming through the universities but if the communities had it, and we had to sit there while they came to us."

Anne asked if anyone knew of examples of funders who had directly funded community organizations and allowed them to contract with institutions for the research they required. Panelists did not – but other participants did.

Tirso Moreno (Farmworkers Association of Florida) spoke of community control over research funds. Later, Scott Peters (University of Minnesota Extension Service) would

approach Anne. He had been unable to capture the moderator's attention but he, like Tirso, had an example to share.

The Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture is currently undertaking a citizen-driven project in which funds are provided to community groups in three geographical areas. Scott said, "It's an experiment in giving resources to citizens and giving them the power to decide how it's spent ... Our hope is that they will decide to do Participatory Action Research but one of the three partnerships has chosen to do standard research."

## **WORKSHOPS**

### **OVERCOMING INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO CONDUCTING COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Carolyn Raffensperger and Elizabeth Bird, Facilitators

By John Gerber

The workshop began by examining a research project conducted by the Consortium for Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (CSARE) and the Science and Environmental Health Network. Members of both organizations were surveyed for their experiences with incentives and disincentives provided by institutional reward systems toward community-based research and public interest research. Respondents reported difficulties in accessing funds for this type of research as well as in publishing the results. It was noted that there was growth in funding and new structural mechanisms within institutions to encourage public interest research. Survey results are available from CSARE.

Unique issues arise when public institutions make the shift to publicly assisted institution after accepting significant financial support from private interests. Carolyn shared a story from North Carolina about a state and federally funded study that reported people living near an industrial hog operation. The North Carolina Pork Council filed a Freedom of Information Act Request demanding "all documentation" relating to this report, including all e-mail from the principal investigator. University attorneys are defending the university rather than the P.I., who was told not to speak publicly on this issue.

*Is public science not being undertaken to a greater degree because of the power of corporate interests? Why are scientists not supporting their own colleagues when they are challenged by political or business interests?*

A new law has been passed recently stating that any group that has had federal funding must provide all data and other information to anyone who asks. Rules are being written now on how this law will be implemented.

Activist groups need to be more measured in their use and understanding of scientific results. There is a difference between bias and conflict of interest. Conflict of interest is a financial interest while bias is simply the experience and background of an individual.

One participant shared a personal story of corporate pressure on his right to share his research objectives. Another suggested that there is already a high degree of self-

ensorship among scientists today due to peer pressure and corporate “slap suits.” A third shared his thinking on how the land grant universities used to be balanced about the Jeffersonian ideal of democracy and community well-being. People who want to push new technologies or practices often try to exclude "emotions" from debates around controversial issues. A solution to this would be a conversation about the nature of science.

## HOW DO WE GET OUR WORK COVERED BY THE MEDIA?

By Marilyn Metzler

This workshop focused on how to get community-based research projects covered by the media. Participants discussed the role of the media, and how to take advantage of opportunities for documenting and publicizing CBR. Also included were practical tips for contacting and dealing effectively with the media.

## IMMIGRATION REFORM, WELFARE REFORM AND CHANGING WORKPLACES IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

The Changes Project, Facilitators

By Marcela Mendoza

The Changes Project is a federally funded two-year participatory project examining the impact of immigration, welfare reform and the changing workplace of adult learners. The intent was to study the impact of welfare reform on the learning and achievement of adult students. One basic question was, Why do people underuse our services?

At each research site, staff and adult learners worked together to understand what the proposed questions meant to them; further questions were generated. A corpus of data was gathered through focus groups, a survey, interviews, poetry writing, metaphor analysis, photo-stories and so forth. To analyze the data and identify common patterns, project participants drew pictures. For example, a tree representing the effects of immigration to the U.S. illustrated the students' goal to become U.S. citizens. Falling acid rain depicted all the perceived difficulties involved in the process. A garden symbolized the support that adult learners received from other immigrants. As part of the project evaluation, team members designed a plan for future developments. Afterwards, a new research cycle was initiated. Outcomes of the project included letter-writing campaigns, a booklet and participation in conferences, rallies and demonstrations. Some adult students have used what they learned in union negotiations at the University of Massachusetts. Others decided to register to vote and pursue the goal of citizenship. Team members have experienced personal transformation.

Questions raised by staff during the project were: How do we define “community”? What “causes” community action? Does our research methodology actually respond to participants' needs? How can a community-based research approach infuse the field of Adult Basic Education? What kinds of tools can Participatory Action Research offer to adult students involved in this project?

Team members had worked hard to create an environment in which participants felt safe to challenge them on critical issues of power sharing and community benefit. Participants asked: How does the immigrant community actually benefit from the project? Does the project help adult students obtain better jobs? Were students' transportation costs considered in the budget? How were adult students involved in framing the research questions? How is the diversity among adult students reflected in the research project? Were the interviews conducted in different languages? How was direct and cultural translation addressed? A participant commented, "We already know what we are going to find when we conduct community-based research on the impact of welfare reform (much as researchers investigating the effects of sleep deprivation on American workers already know what they are going to find, although they keep doing it). What we really need is to start organizing the community itself to change welfare reform." Another participant pointed out, "Many community institutions such as churches and neighborhood associations, whose members have been affected by the reform, can be vehicles of change. They could achieve goals that the staff at a research center would not be able to achieve." Another indicated that presenters who defined adult learners as a "community" created confusion. A participant queried, "Is it our role to document issues and present those issues in an articulate manner or is it our role to assist subjects to initiate a positive action?"

Changes Project team members explained that their research was initiated by staff members of different institutions who faced the challenge of finding a common language and common procedures to address issues of their own concern. Adult education can be an effective way to address social problems and can be an instrument to promote changes in the community. For example, one adult student from Korea who participated in the Changes Project spoke about the benefits that the project brought to her and how she has been able to help other adult learners through her involvement in the project.

## **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH IN RURAL AREAS AND SUCCESS STORIES OF PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL**

Becky Williams, George Loveland and Thomas Plant, Facilitators

By Annalisa Lewis Raymer

### **BECKY WILLIAMS**

Delta Women Achieving Goals (DWAG) is committed to participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in two poor communities in Arkansas. DWAG members range in age from 18 to 80 years. DWAG brings together two activities: community organizing, and information gathering and analysis. PRA is a means for community organizing, not an end unto itself.

#### **Community Readiness for PRA:**

- time commitment
- resource person/facilitator to help with training and follow up
- two small rural communities interacting with one another
- funders
- oral history training
- mapping activities

- interview preparation

### **Resource People and PRA**

The resource person's role in PRA changes over time. Beginning with training, convening and guiding, the resource person then moves to facilitating and finally to supporting and responding to community needs and direction.

### **Nuts N' Bolts**

Throughout PRA it is important to have rewards and recognition, tool kits (markers and tape), lots of breaks and intergenerational participation.

### **GEORGE LOVELAND**

The People's Information Network of the Appalachian Colleges Association has created a database to link resource people with folks with information needs. The database serves a "brokering" purpose, connecting people rather than acting as an Internet resource in itself. Most people do not have access to the Internet.

Subsequent to the conference, George's contribution to building the CRN has been to subscribe participants to the "Friends Electronic Network," an e-publication of the Highlander Research and Education Center. To request subscription, e-mail George at [gloveland@ferrum.ed](mailto:gloveland@ferrum.ed).

### **THOMAS PLANT**

Thomas Plant runs a research center which has undertaken community listening sessions and multiple evaluation studies.

Thomas advised that you can find community pro bono work by also doing fee-for-service evaluation projects with health agencies or schools.

## **EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Bobby Milstein, Donna Higgins and Irene Luckey, Facilitators

The purpose of the workshop was to review standards of "good" evaluation and outline the steps to program evaluation devised by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### **Standards for Program Evaluation**

Standards are considered "guiding principles, not mechanical rules" and are grouped into four categories:

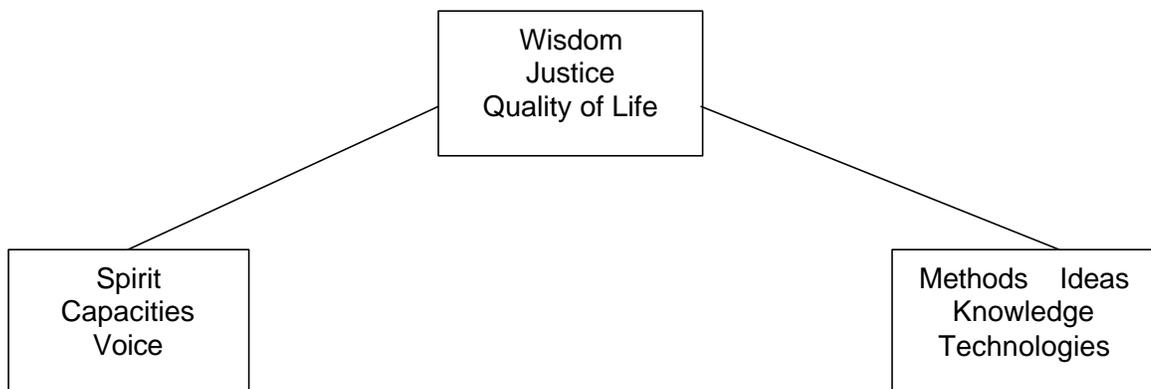
- **Utility:** Serve the information needs of intended users.
- **Feasibility:** Be realistic, prudent, diplomatic and frugal.
- **Propriety:** Behave legally, ethically and with due regard for those involved and affected by the evaluation outcome.
- **Accuracy:** Reveal and convey technically accurate information.

These standards guide evaluation practitioners in adopting procedures that do not penalize program staff. Program evaluation is intended to be helpful, not adversarial.

## Extension's Current Role

- Perception that land grant institutions have a promise of democracy;
- Placing control in hands of the people; opening up access;
- Expanding the curriculum;
- Elevating the character, knowledge, and political standing of the common people.
- *Is this one being stripped out?*
- Expanding opportunities for social and economic mobility;
- Addressing public problems through applied research and public service;
- Developing an active democratic citizenship.

Extension addresses community issues in the following way:



## Current Concerns

- **Competing Goals:** Producing "cheap food" vs. building a rich, vital democratic culture.
- **Funding:** Lack of fiscal support is forcing Extension to be grant-driven, destroying the traditional contract between Extension and land grant institutions.

## PROPOSAL WRITING I AND II

Margaret Krome, Cris Carusi and Teresa Maurer, Facilitators

By Laura Suazo-Gallardo

Writing proposals can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience. Two questions to ask yourself before beginning are, "Why are we doing this?" and "How should it be done?" This workshop demystified proposal writing by presenting clear suggestions for success:

- Keep it short and simple: don't write like an academic!
- Have the funder's evaluation criteria in front of you;
- Follow all format rules set out in the RFP;
- Make administration and overhead expenses clear;

- Include volunteer work in your in-kind section;
- Provide a detailed budget—if you have a multi-objective project, it is a good idea to itemize the budget according to each objective; that way, if the funder does not like all of them, it might fund the ones it does like;
- Have other people proofread and edit for you.

## **INCREASING COMMUNITY SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATION**

This workshop discussed the possibilities of transnational collaboration for community-based research, using the Center for Mutual Learning's Whole Communities Project as a springboard for discussion.

Issues addressed included:

- How can CBR be facilitated across national boundaries to increase community and regional self-sufficiency?
- What are the economic, cultural, political and spiritual issues that fragment community and make it difficult to achieve a sustainable environment?

## **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AS A TOOL FOR ORGANIZING**

This workshop looked at how good research can be used to improve organizing, and how good organizing can improve research.

Discussion began with each person giving his or her experience with CBR and organizing, and explaining why they came to this workshop. Many expressed a desire to learn how to more effectively use their research as an organizing tool.

Facilitators presented some of their work, focusing on the fact that they are first and foremost organizers, and that they use research as a way to help them in their cause.

Discussion centered on some of the issues involved in combining research and organizing, such as what happens when the research results don't necessarily support the position the organization is advocating, and how to balance the dynamic between researchers and organizers.

## **INVOLVING KIDS IN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

Sandra Sydlo and Cecil Corbin, Facilitators

By Arianna McMahon

Sandra Sydlo described the National Teen Action Research Center (NTARC), an after-school training and employment program that is youth driven and adult guided. NTARC is comprised of youth ages 14 to 19 years at various academic levels.

A recent education and advocacy project dealt with teens who drop out of school. NTARC developed a parent/teacher guide following interviews with youth who had left school as well as those who had chosen to stay. Other projects include action research with grade- school students at neighboring schools; developing a causal model of early sexual activity and putting information regarding condoms on the Internet; the creation of key chains and pamphlets to further an anti-sexual harassment message; and drug use and type mapping.

West Harlem Environmental Action undertook environmental justice work with the community. The Earth Crew (20 youths ages 14 to 18) fought with the EPA over air monitoring tests, disagreed strenuously with the expert-chosen location and engaged in research of their own. The EPA listened to youth concerns and provided the necessary equipment. The results of the youth research demonstrated pollution levels far above those proposed. The study served as a model for community and university collaboration and CBR and youth activism.

The youths in both groups were very inspiring.

## **CLOSING PRESENTATIONS**

Enoch Page, a Loka board member and conference participant, introduced the Saturday afternoon working groups: Shifting Research Paradigms: Community Members as Researchers, Designing a Delivery System for CBR, People of Color, Grassroots Organizers and Academics. Speakers from each group provided highlights of their meetings.

### **SHIFTING RESEARCH PARADIGMS: COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS RESEARCHERS GROUP**

#### **Themes, Concerns, Questions:**

**Looking for paradigm shift in how this community conceptualizes research.**

What is “research”?

- inquiry into problem solving
- many forms of knowledge/knowing—embedded in relationships, located
- democratic art, how we can change institutions and the whole system
- discerning systematic patterns of relationship
- joining scientific and experiential knowledge (shift in “experts”)
- in context of comprehensive community vitality—one step

#### **Concerns about the Representativeness of Who’s Here**

- too white, middle-class, academic
- missing: rank and file, natural historians, community project members, labor...

How do we change relationships and use diverse forms for connecting? How do we access the knowledge embedded in relationships? Everybody must reach out to another group or individual who is not here.

**Desire to identify, describe and learn from different (diverse) approaches, types of CBR.**

**Strategy Recommendations: Move from Tinkering to Transformation**

**Different forms of outreach and connections**

- People-to-people at community base
- Conference organized around helping organizing communities solve their problems
- How-To info sharing sheets
- Queries for problem solving from individual groups

**Library**

- Need a common resource repository but not only on Web
- Archive project results
- Identify and describe diverse models, help us build vocabulary around our choice of approach—pros and cons of each for different purposes
- Describe models through experience, case studies
- Learn about similar innovations going on around the world

**Different Ways**

- Funding to create new approaches, “experiment”
- Federal grant requirement for responsibility to communities
- Declaration of Rights of Communities
- Training for new researchers (including community members!) in using different methods

**CBR DELIVERY SYSTEMS GROUP**

**Core Principles:**

1. Partner Roles (Political Fallout)
  - clearly and continually defined, change across situations, mutually beneficial
2. Flexible/Responsive
  - to specific community issues
3. Ownership (Community)
  - of process and results
4. Knowledge Exists in Many Places (Complementary)
  - need to always act on this, using all resources available
5. Consider Context
  - who brings issue, where they are in thinking, need, capacity
6. Diverse Group of Partners
  - need to cultivate this

7. Building Community Research Capacity
  - community grows in: a) designing, b) doing project and c) using results
8. Range of Involvement (Facilitation, Advisor, Study, etc.)
  - roles of center/institute
9. Learning Process for All
10. State of Readiness
  - assessing capacity
11. Project Bases:
  - a) Clarity of Outcomes
    - need this in starting all projects
  - b) Mediating Role
    - center/institute does this
  - c) Advisory Board
12. Community Feedback
  - periodic, on results and needs

## **PEOPLE OF COLOR GROUP**

The People of Color Working Group was composed of Latinos, African-Americans and Pacific persons. People of color were underrepresented at the conference.

On behalf of the POC, Kenny Foster thanked and commended conference organizers. All participants benefited from the bringing together of those committed to social justice; all will leave here with new partnerships.

The POC Working Group has prepared a three-page document outlining ways in which the Network can implement and benefit from an antiracist, inclusive approach. The Network needs to look at potential relationships and the inclusiveness (or lack of it) among the models offered. The Network needs to tap into multiple and diverse groups of people and enhance outreach efforts.

## **GRASSROOTS ORGANIZERS GROUP**

Kim Leval and Tirso Moreno presented the comments from this group. Grassroots organizations were seen as valuing different ways of knowing. Non-governmental organizations need a role in the research process, in its evaluation and ownership. Researchers often do not want to share the resources; NGOs need to know the budget.

Tactics to increase NGO equality and participation:

- 1) Pay attention to who takes notes at stakeholders' meetings.
- 2) Reframe the question: use model adopted by Highlander Folk schools.
- 3) Training is important.
- 4) Use language that is not isolating.

At this point in the presentation, the facilitator signaled firmly that the presentation time was up. Raucous democratic process among audience members overruled the minute limits. To applause and cheers, Michael Jorgensen “donated” half of the Academics’ presenting time so that the Grassroots Organizers Group could continue.

Kim and Tirso ended with clear calls for assistance from fellow participants in the following areas:

- 1) Bell County, Kentucky
  - residents are experiencing serious health insurance issues relating to a tanning factory
  - can the CRN do anything to get the state to help with health monitoring and cleanup?
- 2) Farm Worker Researcher Needed
  - to assist with documenting chronic health problems because of exposure to pesticides

## ACADEMICS GROUP

Michael Jorgensen spoke on behalf of the Academics group. He began by commenting on what academics aren’t particularly good at:

- writing in lay terms
- sharing power
- mobilizing students—although they have the access
- developing a civic base to their work

What academics are good at:

- intentions
- grant writing
- problem solving
- theorizing
- networking
- publications

What academics can do for CBR:

- recognize community capacity to contribute to academic failures
- mobilize people and tenured faculty
- improve value of teaching and community service to curriculum
- reclaim “academic freedom” and “public responsibility”
- tell CBR stories in public and professional venues
- connect with colleagues in intra-institutional partnerships
- support system for nonfaculty staff
- get rid of baggage of traditional roles
- review what “legitimacy” means—peer review or self-regulating mechanism?
- adopt an entirely new paradigm with new roles

## WRAP-UP DISCUSSION:

## CAPACITY, LIMITATIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE CRN

Loka staff were excited by the work that the individual working groups had undertaken in envisioning next steps and in articulating what is required to build a strong, vibrant and inclusive Network. Constructive criticism and compliments are crucial in order for organizers to facilitate the member access and participation necessary for the CRN's continued growth and existence.

While the Loka Institute sponsored this conference, it is but a small part of what the Network is. As Madeleine Scammell explained, "The CRN is everyone in this room."

### CRN CAPACITY

Current *capacity* includes:

- attracting media to CBR projects, which helps legitimate individual projects and CBR as a whole;
- strategic and start-up advice to communities initiating CBR and those creating a community-based research center;
- matching communities with researchers;
- funding advocacy;
- Web site, listserv and database;
- an annual conference.

### CRN LIMITATIONS

Current CRN *limitations* include a very small staff, limited budget and difficulties in being fully accessible to those organizations and communities without Internet access.

### CRN FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Douglas Taylor spoke on the future of the CRN: "What we're going to be doing will be determined by you." Participants offered suggestions to improve the structure of the CRN, including regional conferences to augment the annual one; action alerts; increased transnational presence; more workshops on training, methodology and funding; the necessity of a diverse planning committee; and the creation of policy positions from the CRN on a number of items.

One participant asked frankly, "There are serious basic needs in our communities. Is this the appropriate place to get that assistance?" Douglas replied, "Yes. It should be placed more prominently among our objectives. But it requires a stronger, more clearly defined network. It takes commitment on the part of this group so that those who want assistance get more than nebulous discussions."

Thus, the CRN needs to:

- Map this Network and our individual and collective skills, resources and connections;

- Know who is in the Network and where we can find strategic links;
- Determine the role of Loka within the CRN with the understanding that Loka and the CRN are distinct entities;
- Create a declaration of CRN principles so that we can have shared values to refer to;  
Create “jump teams” to provide quick responses to communities requesting assistance.