

Participatory Impact Assessment

Final Report on a Two-year Pilot Programme in South Asia and the Pacific

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Acronyms

ADP	Area Development Programme
CWS	Christian World Service
ECREA	Ecumenical Centre for Research Education and Advocacy
IWDP	Integrated Women's Development Programme
KPA	Knowledge, Practice, Attitudes
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NZ	New Zealand
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Assistance
ONZ	Oxfam New Zealand
ONZBP	Oxfam New Zealand Bougainville Programme
PIA	Participatory Impact Assessment
PRIA	Society for Participatory Research in Asia
PSC	Project Selection Committee
SCF	Save the Children Fiji
SCNZ	Save the Children New Zealand
SEEP	Social Empowerment and Education Programme of ECREA
TBF	The Bridge Foundation
TEAR Fund	The Evangelical Alliance and Relief Fund
VASS	Voluntary Agencies Support Scheme
WAC	Women's Action for Change
WDRC	Women's Development Resource Centre
WSB	Wan Smolbag Theatre

1 Introduction

This report summarises the findings and lessons from the two-year Participatory Impact Assessment (PIA) pilot programme in South Asia and the Pacific initiated and supported by the Voluntary Agencies Support Scheme (VASS) of the NZ Agency for International Development (NZAID). The programme involved six New Zealand NGOs and eight of their partners in South Asia or the Pacific. Full reports on each phase of the pilot programme including summaries of each of the case studies are available from NZAID. The PIA pilot programme aimed to build capacity of all those involved through developing an understanding of the philosophical and methodological approaches to PIA and learning lessons from undertaking a PIA.

The impetus for the PIA pilot programme arose out of the 1998 evaluation of the VASS which identified the need for NGOs to focus more on the long-term impacts of their development programmes and projects rather than on short term activities and outputs. In 2000 the VASS Project Selection Committee (PSC) commissioned a PIA pilot programme design to review international experience on PIA and design a process for NZ NGOs and partners to undertake a PIA and learn lessons from this. It was expected that the PIA pilot programme would inform the VASS PSC on ways in which they might further support NGOs to focus on the wider impacts of their development interventions and the importance of participatory methodologies. After the decision to undertake a pilot programme was approved, a workshop was held in Wellington for NZ NGOs to discuss PIA and how they could participate in it. This was facilitated by Dr Rajesh Tandon, Director of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA). PRIA has been actively involved in the planning and facilitation of the VASS PIA pilot programme and made a valuable contribution to it based on their long history of research and action on participatory development in Asia,

In addition to summarising the main lessons from the two-year PIA pilot programme, this report includes quotes from participants on the impact of the PIA experience on their organisations and their work with partners and communities. These are taken from comprehensive feedback received in a questionnaire to those involved in the South Asia phase one year after the pilot programme was completed, together with some preliminary feedback from participants in the Pacific phase.

2 Background on PIA

A literature review on PIA undertaken during the design of the pilot programme provided strong arguments for encouraging participatory impact assessment and identified a number of benefits for donor agencies, partner organisations and communities¹. In summary the primary rationale of PIA is greater sustainability of programme or project outcomes and benefits for intended beneficiaries through improved development practice.

Some important aspects of PIA are detailed below. In particular PIA should:

¹ Further details on the background to the PIA pilot programme is included in the reports on the South Asia and Pacific phases.

be undertaken at all stages of the project cycle including planning where the establishment of clear objectives and baseline data and indicators is important
be gender sensitive and involve all stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries at all stages of the process
analyse and understand change in the particular context and the way in which the project affects its environment and vice versa
include qualitative methods for assessing impacts
be an integral part of project management systems for NGOs undertaking development assistance programmes
include capacity building so that all stakeholders develop or extend their capacity to manage and monitor development initiatives on an on-going basis
enhance partnership.

There are four key characteristics that should underpin participatory impact assessment. These are that it should:

be educational - all involved should learn from participation in the impact assessment including community members, implementing agencies and donors
be developmental - it should contribute to revitalising the development initiative being studied and inspire, motivate and energise those involved
be empowering - it should be undertaken in such a way as to enhance the confidence of those involved rather than undermine them and contribute to a greater sense of purpose and commitment as well as faith in their ability to achieve results
attempt to clarify objectives and future strategies – it should not be limited to an explanation of historical events but also aim to clarify future directions, recognising the dynamic and continuous nature of development efforts. (based on Rajesh Tandon, 1990)

3 The PIA Pilot Programme - What Happened and Who was Involved?

3.1 Stages in the process

The basic stages in both the South Asia and Pacific phases of the PIA pilot programme were the same and involved the following steps:

- Identification of NZ NGOs and their partners in South Asia (phase 1) and the Pacific (phase 2), each with a strong interest and commitment to undertaking a PIA with communities involved in one of their programmes or projects.

- Identification of facilitators - four facilitators from each of the regions involved in the PIA with experience in participatory development were identified to work with the NGO teams (both NZ NGOs and their partners) in planning the PIA, to provide support for each of the South Asia/Pacific NGOs during implementation of the PIA and assist in facilitating analysis of findings. The basic criteria for the selection of facilitators were a good understanding of participatory development, ability to communicate with the local NGO and communities and an understanding of the local context.
- Planning Workshop - a three-day workshop was held for the South Asia phase in Delhi in January 2001 and for the Pacific phase in Auckland in August 2002. These workshops aimed to:
 - develop a common understanding of PIA including rationale, concepts, principles, methodologies
 - develop a framework for undertaking the PIA case studies including initial identification of the objectives and scope of the exercises, the data to be collected and appropriate methodologies to obtain it
 - organise field visits (involving both the South Asia/Pacific NGO and the NZ partner) to initiate and plan the PIA in detail with relevant stakeholders
- Detailed planning of the PIA with NGO staff and the community - following the planning workshops each of the South Asia/Pacific and NZ NGO teams and their local facilitator visited the relevant project sites to plan the PIA with the NGO staff and the communities involved. This step took place in South Asia immediately after the planning workshop, in the Pacific it was held 1-5 months after the workshop. It involved building understanding of PIA with the NGO staff and the communities, further developing the objectives of the PIA, agreeing indicators and identifying appropriate participatory methods to collect and analyse data.
- Implementation of the PIA - this took place over a four-nine month period. The South Asia/Pacific NGO staff and communities were involved in data collection and analysis with support provided by the local facilitator, particularly during the analysis stage. The South Asia/Pacific NGOs prepared a written report on their PIA case study.
- Final Workshop - a three-day final workshop took place in New Zealand for those involved in the South Asia phase and in Fiji for those involved in the Pacific phase at which participants shared their experience and identified lessons. On the last day of the workshop after the South Asia phase, a one-day seminar was held at which the participants in the pilot programme presented findings and lessons to a wider group of NZ NGOs and the four Pacific NGOs and their New Zealand partners who were commencing planning for the second phase of the PIA pilot programme. A wider workshop in the Pacific on participatory development at which the Pacific PIA participants will share their experience is planned for June 2003 involving over 20 Pacific NGOs from seven countries and their New Zealand partners.

3.2 Organisations involved in the PIA and their Case Studies

The following NZ NGOs and their partners in South Asia and the Pacific were involved in the pilot programme.

Phase 1 - South Asia

Christian World Service and Women's Development Resource Centre (Madurai, India) - PIA of an on-going women's rights and empowerment project with dalit and tribal women

Tear Fund and The Bridge Foundation (Bangalore, South India) - PIA of an on-going micro-enterprise development programme

Caritas NZ and Caritas Bangladesh - PIA of an on-going integrated women's development programme

World Vision NZ and World Vision Banswara (Rajasthan, India) - PIA of an on-going integrated Area Development Programme

Phase 2 - Pacific

Oxfam NZ and Wan Smolbag Theatre (Vanuatu) - PIA of an on-going radio drama on reproductive health issues

Oxfam NZ and Oxfam Bougainville - PIA of a completed women's poultry project

Save the Children NZ and Save the Children Fiji - PIA of a Peace and Reconciliation Project involving the use of Playback Theatre

Christian World Service and Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (Fiji) - PIA of a training programme for community facilitators prior to project implementation

4 Key Themes Emerging from the PIA Pilots

4.1 Partnership

The PIA pilot programme involved relationships at a number of different levels. These included relationships between the NZ Government through the VASS Project Selection Committee, PRIA (particularly in the South Asia phase), the PIA facilitators, the NZ

NGOs, the South Asia and Pacific NGOs and a number of communities (men and women and children) in the areas selected for the impact assessments. To a greater or lesser degree in all case studies secondary stakeholders such as government officials, village leaders, landowners, other NGOs or community groups were also involved.

For some NGOs the building of closer relationships between the NZ and South Asia/Pacific NGOs was an explicit objective of the PIA identified at the initial planning workshop and the achievement of this was seen as assisting the NGOs to work together in the future.

One dimension of the PIA process was that NZ NGOs and their South Asia/Pacific partners were engaged in a learning process together. This meant that there was joint involvement in the process, initially at the planning workshops (in Delhi and Auckland) and then in in-country planning before the PIA was implemented. Some NZ NGOs were involved in aspects of the community level discussions/data gathering and in analysis of data. All were involved in sharing of lessons at the final workshops. For some participants the initial planning workshop was the first time they had met their partners.

Because PIA was a new concept to many of those involved (although some had used participatory planning methodologies before), all organisations took some time to work out what they were going to do, how they were going to do it and how the two NGOs and the facilitator would each contribute to the process. In each case study the process worked slightly differently but all eventually worked through the issues that arose and completed the exercise. At the final workshop for the Pacific phase the importance of clarity of roles and responsibilities of each of the partners and of the facilitator in the PIA process was highlighted.

Participants in the PIA process appreciated the opportunity to work in a different way with partners. For NZ and South Asia/Pacific NGO partners the experience broke down the donor/recipient framework and enabled both parties to learn together in the workshops, in planning the PIA together with communities and in analysis of the PIA findings. This learning, action, reflection process involved a deeper level of engagement than had previously occurred for all those involved. For the NZ NGOs it enabled a better understanding of the contexts in which implementing partners work and constraints on achieving programme objectives. A number indicated that this experience had significantly changed the nature of their relationship with their partner and deepened their commitment to working together in future. The workshops at the beginning and end of the process enabled the NZ and South Asia/Pacific NGOs who do not normally work together so closely to learn from one another and share experiences. For the New Zealand NGOs involved the PIA pilot programme also provided an unusual opportunity to work with other NZ NGOs in a cooperative and non-competitive way.

The PIA process also enabled the partnership between in-country implementing agencies and communities to be strengthened with the NGOs gaining a better understanding of the communities they are working with and of their views and aspirations. They saw this as having a positive affect on their ability to develop programme directions that better

reflect and respond to local needs. For some, particularly in South Asia, the process involved a greater realisation that through the use of a variety of participatory tools and methodologies illiterate people were able to be actively involved in planning and undertaking the PIA and in analysing their own situations and the impacts of programme interventions on their lives.

For a number of NGO staff the process of undertaking the PIA helped them see their role in a new light as facilitators of development rather than doers. They were able to experience and see the benefits and impact of “handing over the stick” and allowing communities more power in the relationship. This was an energising process and NGO staff could see benefits for their future work.

PIA Participants on Partnership ...

The impact assessment had a significant effect on our relationship with our partner which was already strong but it has strengthened the dialogue.

Relative to our approach to our relationships with our partner NGOs this evolution in thinking has impacted in varying ways. We are seeking to bring a focus on building an equitable partnership, one in which power is balanced and within which we can mutually add value. We are also facilitating ongoing discussion (and where appropriate mutual learning exercises) focussed on bringing a mutual understanding and mutually accepted practice relative to genuine participatory community development.

PIA has facilitated transparency in sharing information, analysis and findings and future directions. The process is developing into collective learning. The indicators are more appropriate because they are identified together by the partners in consultation with the communities. The communities are actively involved in deciding indicators and implementation, finally when the findings are shared with the field level staff and community representatives very good contributions emerge from them. Due to collective ownership of PIA some of the findings have been sharpened into future implementation strategies and it is moving towards becoming part of on going project cycle. It is a great learning process of facilitation, adaptation and developing appropriate participatory tools.

I really valued the cooperative spirit in which the four NZ agencies worked when so often our work sets us up as competitors. We have done some preliminary talking about this in our organisation and intend to have further discussion with the staff and Board on ways in which we could work more cooperatively within the whole sector in NZ.

Probably the PIA has encouraged an openness to being more engaged in the field than has been the case in the agency. However PIA was only one factor in this. Historically time spent in the field tended to be more oriented to sharing analysis of the macro-economic or justice issues, learning directly from grassroots communities, and then using this to raise issues at home – a more “exposure” based involvement. This also

continues, but PIA involvement has been part of a movement to taking on a new and more engaged vision of partnership within the agency.

The involvement of various stakeholders – women, men and in some cases children – in the process helped the NGOs and communities think in new ways about how they worked with different stakeholders and the possibilities of seeing some stakeholders in a different light. The realisation for WDRC members that they might be able to work with some landowners was a new insight. For some the PIA provided an opportunity to focus on the role of women as key stakeholders in the project. By ensuring women's full participation in the process their contribution was recognised and their status in their communities enhanced.

4.2 An Empowering Approach

Feedback from those involved in the PIA pilot programme in both South Asia and the Pacific indicated that the process was empowering for those involved, particularly the primary stakeholders. In South Asia the use of participatory approaches and participatory tools enabled often illiterate women and men to be involved in the planning, implementation and analysis of information collected, to tell their stories in their own ways and to interpret what was discovered. This recognised and gave validity to their realities, struggles and achievements. It gave them confidence in their capability to address issues that affect their lives and to take greater control of them. This was particularly so for women whose views and perspectives were heard and acknowledged by men and those in powerful positions. It created positive energy for the programmes and a wider understanding among some community members about how the various components of the project related to them.

In the Pacific the Save the Children case study in Fiji engaged all sectors of a community that had been involved in ethnic conflict (Fijian men and women, Indo-Fijian men and women and boys and girls from both ethnic groups) and provided training for representatives from each group to carry out the PIA. They established a PIA committee that could provide the basis for future involvement of all sectors of the community in addressing ethnic tensions and community issues. This empowered the community to feel it had some control over a tense and difficult situation. The use of participatory tools also enabled children (the primary target group for Save the Children) to be actively involved in the PIA process. The experience of the PIA was that children were able to use drama, art and many participatory tools with ease and that these were effective methods of encouraging participation, particularly in a cultural climate that may not encourage children to express their views.

In Vanuatu Wan Smolbag Theatre also involved young people selected from each of the communities involved in the PIA to receive training in PIA methods and to become key links in the community and data collectors. They were able to engage other young people in the communities in talking about sensitive reproductive health issues.

The PIA was also empowering for the NGOs involved. It gave them a new way of looking at their work with one another and with communities, strengthened relationships and provided some skills and practice at using different tools and techniques. An important lesson was that PIA requires the NGO to negotiate the process rather than direct it. For the NGOs involved there was a realisation that through the use of participatory tools project beneficiaries, even if they are illiterate are able to reflect on and analyse the impacts of the programme. The active involvement of the primary stakeholders in the process served to increase their ownership of the programmes and their commitment to determining future directions relevant to their needs and aspirations. This gave the NGOs confidence that their efforts would be sustainable as primary stakeholders would ensure the programmes addressed their needs.

It was also encouraging for the NGOs to find positive benefits for communities as a result of their programmes and to become aware of unintended consequences that needed addressing to enhance programme effectiveness.

For all involved the process developed new knowledge and skills that will influence how the NGOs and their staff work, what they do and the depth of relationships they have with partners in development. It was concluded that incorporating impact assessment with the active participation of primary stakeholders and beneficiaries throughout the project cycle would improve the effectiveness and impact of their work

PIA Participants on Empowerment through PIA ...

The approach that the PIA has in ensuring participation from all stakeholders from the design stage to the evaluating and reporting stage is new. The strategies used to approach communities has strengthened the working relationship between [our organisation] and the communities involved in the PIA. This can be seen in the communities' eagerness to continue working with us. The communities involved in the PIA have become more aware of issues like HIV/AIDS and condom use, teenage pregnancy and family planning. There is a high interest in the community every time we visit and the young people come to the meetings. Reports from the data collectors based in the communities show that the young people are congregating to listen to Famili Blong Sarah.

The process creates a sense of ownership and enhances the sustainability as well as effectiveness of the project.

The findings especially the empowerment aspect of men and women have impacted positively on the village communities. Their participation has increased in project activities. Some unintended impacts of the programmes that were identified during the PIA exercise are being dealt with by the community groups. Also gender issues are widely discussed in the communities and men are taking increased role in doing household chores side by side with women.

4.3 Stakeholder Involvement

The process of PIA acknowledges that there are many groups and individuals involved in a project who may see it through different eyes. Each of the PIA case studies involved many primary and secondary stakeholders. These included project participants (men, women and children) in the areas selected for the PIA, other community members (in some cases other community organisations), government officials, the implementing NGO staff at field and central levels, the NZ partner NGO representatives and the NZ Government VASS representatives. Each PIA case study also involved and was assisted by regional facilitators.

Through undertaking the PIA some participants found that even within their organisation different stakeholders did not understand what PIA was about or see the project that was the subject of the case study in the same way. In one case study Board members, the CEO, middle management and field workers had different views about the project as their position in the organisation, roles, experience and interest in the project was different. People within donor organisations also had different perspectives on the projects as they too have different roles to fulfil. At the community level there were also many different interests. Some organisations found that by bringing secondary stakeholders into the PIA process it was possible to identify and understand a wider range of impacts beyond those known to the staff or project beneficiaries. In one case an NGO found that at least some landlords (previously considered “oppressors”) were now supportive of the aims of the organisation and could be considered “allies”. This demonstrated how PIA could engage various stakeholders in an ongoing process, help the organisation to identify future strategies and improve the project’s effectiveness.

The PIA involved hearing the perspectives of as many stakeholders as possible acknowledging different realities, negotiating differences and accepting that not everything was negotiable. Through undertaking this process, ownership of the PIA was widened.

Wide stakeholder involvement in the planning of the PIA case studies was critical to building commitment to the process. Key aspects of this included clarification of the objectives of the PIAs and identification of indicators to measure impacts. The process followed in the pilot was for preliminary discussions to be held between the implementing NGO and their NZ partners about what the objectives and indicators might be. This defined their interest in participation. At the initial planning workshops these indicators were refined with assistance from workshop organisers/resource people and the facilitators. For some agencies there was some initial ambivalence in defining indicators too clearly prior to community consultation and involvement. However a major lesson from the workshops was the recognition that while primary stakeholders have a central role in the PIA process other stakeholders such as the implementing NGO and funding organisation have valid interests and concerns, that acknowledging different perspectives is important and that what happens is determined through discussion and negotiation taking into account the various interests.

So the process of setting objectives and indicators for the PIAs was an iterative one. After the planning workshop other NGO central office staff and field workers were involved in discussion and training and objectives and indicators were further refined. Discussions held with primary stakeholders led to final agreement on objectives and indicators.

The process of setting indicators was carried out in various ways, with some NGOs being more successful than others in fully involving stakeholders and particularly primary stakeholders in selection of indicators for use in the PIA. In most cases participants in the Pacific phase felt that they might have done more to involve primary stakeholders in setting indicators.

Two South Asia case studies provide good examples of involving stakeholders in selection of indicators. The Caritas process described below illustrates how all stakeholders were actively involved in determining the indicators by which project impacts would be measured.

Stakeholder Involvement in Setting Indicators – Caritas Bangladesh Case Study

A session was held with the group members and Apex leaders to identify all the indicators or “areas of change” which they considered relevant to women’s empowerment at the four levels of the Individual, Family/Household, Group/Village, and APEX/Union/Thana. This produced very clearly defined and comprehensive lists for each level.

A similar session was then held with the Caritas field staff of Khansama who, not party to the group members’ list, identified their own full list of key indicators.

The group members, and the field staff, were then asked, separately, to vote for their three most important indicators at each level. Each person had three votes and the tally for each indicator was counted. The three highest scores at each level were then selected. This process involved much debate and consideration, and the voting was thoughtful and decisive. Although some argued that all were important, the voting nevertheless gave rise to some clear choices.

Following this both groups were then brought together and their lists compared together with the indicators proposed by Caritas Bangladesh and Aotearoa representatives at the Delhi meeting.

While there were some duplicates, each group had produced different priorities, so out of a potential 9, each level produced a list of some 6-8 separate indicators. The three lists were then combined, and the whole group asked to vote again, for their three most significant. The voting thus distilled 12 indicators for the study, including three at each level, as follows:

<i>Individual:</i>	Awareness Savings Dignity of Women	<i>Family:</i>	Recognition of women’s work Mobility Decision Making in the Household (Economic and Family Affairs)
<i>Group/Village:</i>	Unity Participation in Social Action Benefit of Loans	<i>APEX/Union:</i>	Leadership of Women Linkages/Access to NGO and Government Services Capacity for Planning, Implementation and Action

Participatory tools were identified to assist in the collection of data for each of these indicators. The field staff of Khansama and Banaripara were trained (including practical field exercises) in each of the methods. This training also included how to plan for and report on the PIA process.

For WDRC planning meetings with all participating communities identified nine potential indicators. Women leaders from the groups together with WDRC staff were each given four *bindi* and asked to vote for which of the nine indicators they considered most important. The staff of WDRC were surprised at the outcome as some indicators they considered important did not receive many of votes.

The PIA case studies highlighted the importance of all stakeholders being clear about the purpose of the assessment so that clear objectives for the PIA could be arrived at. The aim of participatory impact assessment is to look at wider impacts and significant longer-term changes resulting from, or intended to be achieved by, the project. The assessment is therefore in relation to the goal of the project. This is an essential difference from much evaluation activity that is focused on the achievement of project outputs and objectives. Generally the PIA case studies aimed to look at wider impacts and significant longer-term changes resulting from the project interventions. However in some case studies some output indicators rather than impact indicators were selected. This had consequences for determining the data that needed to be collected and the methods to be used.

A related issue that emerged from some case studies was the importance of selecting a limited number of critical indicators and being selective about the information that needed to be collected to demonstrate impacts relating to these indicators. In the Wan Smolbag Theatre case study eight indicators were identified that were relevant to attitudes towards reproductive health. The WSB report commented that “the large number of indicators meant that the information sought was very diverse in nature” and as a result data collectors did not keep all of these in mind during the data collection process. The analysis found that while a lot of useful and interesting information was collected that would provide a valuable baseline for future research in the communities, the timeframe for the study as well as the number and nature of the indicators made it difficult to draw conclusions about the impact of the project which was the subject of the PIA (ie of the *Famili Blong Sarah* radio programme).

A significant area of discussion in the final workshops for both phases was the importance of involving communities in the analysis of information not just its collection. This was achieved more successfully in some cases than others where pressure of time and other commitments meant that there was inadequate time for reflection with the community prior to staff preparing the final report. Where communities were involved in analysis of the PIA findings (what changes had occurred and why) a new level of empowerment was evident. Where communities and staff were involved together in analysis of impacts, modifications to the programmes were more readily initiated and agreed.

PIA Participants on Stakeholder Involvement...

There is more emphasis on partners identifying indicators that attempt to assess developmental impact and to involving beneficiary communities in this. Most of this is less a systems change than a more subtle increase in questions pointed in this direction.

The men and women in the target community participated more effectively in identifying potential impacts and also have evolved plans to sustain the potential impact and equip themselves in rectifying weaknesses. The PIA process has brought out an attitudinal change among the men as the secondary stakeholders and the women [who are the focus of the project].

The PIA process empowered the stakeholders and has promoted their ownership and control over the intervention programmes. Government officials also are cooperating with the community in implementing the welfare programmes for the development of the community.

Community leaders were subsequently very involved in a participatory planning exercise which took place partly in reaction to the PIA in other parts of the programme and the request for stakeholder ownership of this process was strong and supported by us and our partner. Other NGOs in our network have requested copies of both our own report and the joint report on the PIA in South Asia and we have debated the methodology followed and the validity of the process.

The process has broadened our focus relative to our understanding of the programmes with which we work and the stakeholders which they impact and are impacted by. It has reinforced the need to ensure the commitment of all the key stakeholders within the community. The process has also taken us a further step to the point where we are focussed alongside our partners on ensuring the understanding and accountability of key actors within the community to a process which is to be led by the most vulnerable.

Women and men are participating in all stages of the project cycle. The PIA process has reiterated the need for all stakeholders to be given a voice and for the need to be aware of power structures within meetings of stakeholders.

The relationships within the organisation (ie between staff) have strengthened... The PIA process created a collaborative effort and responsibility in addressing the issues along with the community people. The Board members are also motivated and commit themselves to the cause of women's development.

There has been a significant change within the particular programme included in the PIA which has led to greater participation by the primary stakeholders in review and

planning of each phase of the programme. The facilitator used in the PIA has been used again in this work.

The PIA has generated much awareness and enthusiasm regarding the impact analysis within the two communities. There has been increased awareness of men and women in the communities in identifying impacts of the programmes. The village development committee members and the women's group members are participating in the discussion of impact analysis.

Both staff and Working Group members have begun to view projects in a somewhat different light with a greater focus on the degree of grassroots participation involved and the roles of a variety of stakeholders.

4.4 Gender Issues

The practice of participatory development has not always meant that gender issues have been adequately addressed. The VASS PIA pilot programme emphasised from the beginning the importance of consideration of gender issues and the need for all teams to include men and women and for gender considerations to be reflected in PIA objectives and indicators.

Four of the eight case studies undertaken during the two year pilot programme specifically targeted women (ie they were gender-specific projects) and PIA objectives included assessment of the impact of programme interventions on women's empowerment. In the other case studies gender issues were explicitly addressed. Women and men were included in all of the PIA teams (comprising representatives of both the South Asia/Pacific and NZ partners). Women made up most of the primary stakeholders in half of the case studies and were well represented in the other half. Women were also well represented at other levels such as agency staff or as members of teams/core groups undertaking the PIAs.

Some organisations took particular care to ensure that conditions were conducive to enable women to participate fully. For example in the case of WDRC women were consulted and involved in planning convenient times and places to meet. They attended meetings as a group and were able to bring children. Women's views were given importance in the meetings and men's views were accepted only with the concurrence of women.

A variety of participatory tools were used to ensure the impact of programmes on women was assessed. These included time use studies and situational analysis, mobility-mapping, social mapping, Venn diagrams, mood matrix, case studies, role plays, focus group discussions and individual interviews.

The case studies provided some significant findings in relation to gender issues, both in relation to the impact of the programmes themselves and in relation to the PIA process.

For example, for the World Vision Banswara team the PIA enabled staff to see beyond their cultural stereotypes and inhibitions about involving women. In introducing the PIA idea to the communities the World Vision staff stressed the importance of participation of all. A folk song was used to highlight the importance of involving women and through discussion a number of older men endorsed the full participation of women in the process. Women were involved at an early stage in core groups in the communities that planned the PIA and this encouraged the participation of women throughout the process. Programme interventions had encouraged the participation of women and both women themselves and the wider community realised that women could participate in community initiatives and contribute in a variety of roles that previously had not been the case. This has the potential to change relationships between men and women.

The World Vision case study also identified some unintended negative impacts of the project including an increase in women's workload resulting from increased cropping made possible from irrigation. Also the availability of water had had the unintended consequence of making liquor production and consumption more available with resulting impacts on women and children. The women also indicated that they did not want further water facilities built if this increased the production of alcohol. Discussion of these issues through the PIA had some positive impacts including reduced consumption of liquor during the Holi festival.

Caritas found that in their programme women's perception of their own worth, their physical and social mobility and their economic and political status (and men's perceptions of these things) had changed markedly since the programme began and people at all levels of the programme were able to articulate and analyse these changes very effectively.

For WDRC an organisation committed to the empowerment of dalit and tribal women the PIA process identified how the programme interventions had had significant impacts in addressing gender equality. These included women from two divided sub-castes working together and obtaining house titles in women's names. From this action women recognised the power in organising together and through this and the economic power obtained by the creation of assets in women's name, women had gained courage to speak out. Some women had been released from the bonded labour system and from the violence and exploitation of the landowners. They had established income generating activities and organised loans for women, developed various cooperatives and promoted a housing cooperative and a housing rights movement. The mobility of women had increased significantly particularly in relation to attending meetings and meeting with government officials. They had become aware of the importance of education for their children.

TBF assessed the extent to which women had been empowered as a result of the programme through an analysis of women's involvement in decision-making on how to spend income earned by women, the extent to which husbands' assisted with housework, whether girl children were attending school and whether there was any domestic violence.

In the case of Won Smolbag Theatre a young woman and a young man from each of the participating communities were selected to be trained and to undertake data collection among young people in their communities. Focus group discussions around sensitive reproductive health issues were held in separate sex groups and followed up with individual interviews and questionnaires. The questions asked of both male and female groups were the same and information collected was analysed by gender to show different and common knowledge on reproductive health issues.

In establishing community PIA committees SCF ensured that the committees had men, women and youth represented across both ethnic groups. SCF staff and key volunteers involved in the PIA were both female and male, Fijian and Indo-Fijian. The project intervention that was the focus of the PIA case study was a drama produced and performed by the theatre group WAC that has had a long involvement in creating awareness around gender (and other development) issues. Focus group exercises and discussions were (for adults) carried out separately along gender and ethnic lines with the analysis reflecting the similarities and differences in experience of the coup and how it impacted on the behaviour of women and men in each ethnic group. A limitation noted by SCF was that the process did not include bringing together the different gender and ethnic groups to share the information and experiences that had arisen from the separate focus group discussions. However the PIA findings and report were taken back to the community and discussed.

The Oxfam Bougainville project that was the subject of the PIA targeted women in a poultry raising income generating project and the PIA included consideration of the impact of the project on women's roles and time use, mobility, increased income (and control over this income) and women's status and decision-making in the community. While there had been significant positive impacts from the project both the women project holders and their husbands noted some negative impacts in terms of women's roles in the family and community resulting from increased workloads. In other respects women had benefited from the project with greater mobility, increased income (and control over that income) and improved status in the family and community.

The SEEP training programme included gender equality as a criterion for recruitment of facilitators and both men and women facilitators were recruited and involved in the PIA. A male and female facilitator spent time in the villages engaged in the normal daily activities of men and women in order to ensure a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the community and priority issues for both.

Apart from the gender impacts identified in each of the programmes, the PIA process itself highlighted the situation of women, the struggles they faced and the achievements they had made. Their views and opinions were heard by men and by individuals in powerful positions and their contributions valued. In this respect women's status in their communities was enhanced not only as a result of the projects but also the recognition given to women in the PIA process.

PIA Participants on Gender Issues in PIA ...

The PIA process brought women out of their culture of silence

It [the PIA] has raised questions for further research - particularly on the impact of PIA processes on progressing gender issues in communities.

PIA is successful in focusing on gender-related issues and has helped partner agencies and communities to critically reflect on this and make appropriate strategies. Women members are showing interest to actively participate in these processes.

The pilot PIA exercise generated a lot of enthusiasm among the villagers especially the women to be able to participate in the discussions and the analysis of the project outcome. The good effect of PIA is still continued in the project where the Pilot PIA was undertaken. Women's participation has increased and is valued at community meetings.

4.5 Methods and Tools

A wide range of participatory methods and tools were used to engage various stakeholders in the PIA case studies. These included: drama/folk songs, role plays, focus group discussions, interviews, social mapping, trend analysis, case studies, time matrixes, ranking, Venn diagrams, preference ranking, situational analysis, mobility mapping, pie charts, mood matrix, seasonality and time trends, a knowledge, practice and attitudes (KPA) survey, location mapping, social trends, community mapping and observation, community profiles and questionnaires. (See appendix 2 for examples of how these tools were used in a variety of situations.)

The use of participatory approaches proved not only beneficial in generating information about the impacts of the projects being studied but was in itself an empowering process for all involved, particularly the primary stakeholders. The use of participatory approaches and participatory tools enabled primary stakeholders (including illiterate women, men and children) to be involved in telling their stories in their own ways and to interpret what was discovered. This enhanced their confidence to address issues that affected their lives and to take greater control of them. This was particularly so for women. It created positive energy for the programmes and a wider understanding among some community members about how the various components of the project related to them.

The PIA case studies highlighted a number of issues in relation to the collection and analysis of data. These included:

- the need to ensure the authenticity of data collected

- the need to ensure that participatory tools are relevant and appropriate to the situation and people involved
- the need to check the accuracy of information gained from one source by corroboration with information from other sources
- the need to think about analysis before undertaking the collection of data to ensure data collected relates to key impact indicators
- in data analysis, to consider comparison over time (eg change before and after the project), across groups (eg male/female or use of control groups) and/or against a norm, a standard or a benchmark
- the need to be aware that any situation may be caused by a variety of factors and consider a variety of explanations.

The pilot programme highlighted the importance of thorough training in the use of participatory tools and some participants felt that this might have been more comprehensively addressed in the initial training workshops. During the planning phase a number of the NGOs involved undertook some training in the use of participatory tools and data collection for NGO staff, volunteers and community members. Successful use of the tools was dependent on the adequacy of the training provided and confidence of staff and community representatives in using the tools. In some case studies it was felt that with more time it would have been useful to have wider trialling of the tools in a community setting to ensure that all tools used were appropriate, easily understood and able to be used with confidence.

A common experience from all the case studies was that the active involvement of primary stakeholders in data collection and analysis led to their greater engagement in and ownership of the process and the results.

PIA Participants on the use of Participatory Tools ...

The process creates a sense of ownership and enhances the sustainability as well as the effectiveness of the project

In the beginning of the PIA workshop I experienced some kind of question mark at least in the faces of some participants but through the process they became convinced and appreciative of the process. Convincing government officials is really a very difficult task that I have faced. Their attachment with numbers and quantitative methods is more than what I expected. Another question I have been facing from them is how do we quantify the qualitative data.

During the PIA exercise various PLA methods were used to generate community discussions and understanding among the participating communities. We are still using these methods in the impact analysis of the project. The drama and folk songs used during the PIA exercise also are being used and found to be very useful in communicating different messages to the communities.

4.6 Institutional Strengthening/Capacity Building

The nature of the NGOs involved in the PIA pilot programme varied considerably in terms of philosophy, size and the nature and scope of their work. In general NGOs that already had a more participatory approach to project planning and monitoring found the process more readily understood and implemented by staff and communities. For organisations that had a different way of working the process was challenging of some of their approaches.

Size was a factor. For one small organisation in the South Asia phase the full involvement of all staff in the PIA along with the target communities meant that the process had significant impacts on organisational learning, capacity and potential for incorporation of lessons throughout the organisational structures and procedures. For larger organisations with multi-layered management/staffing structures the PIA process served more as a model that may need to be replicated in a number of programmes in different locations for the lessons to filter through the organisation. It will be more difficult and require concerted efforts before PIA as a methodology will be incorporated into organisational systems and procedures.

For some NGOs involved in the PIA pilot programme (particularly in the Pacific phase) there had been limited experience of participatory development prior to this involvement and so the learning curve was particularly steep. For all it was a process of trial and error that was often demanding and time consuming. All NGOs agreed that involvement in the PIA had been a worthwhile experience and that learning by doing is often the most effective approach. However the process highlighted the relative lack of experience in the Pacific region (compared to Asia) of participatory development and the different issues that arise when working in small close-knit communities with strong cultural and hierarchical roles and structures. One outcome of the Pacific PIA was recognition of the need for capacity building in the region on participatory development generally and participatory impact assessment more specifically. There was a need to extend the coverage of training more widely within the region to those organisations with an interest in participatory methodologies and to provide follow-up training opportunities for those that had taken part in the Pacific PIA to deepen their knowledge

All organisations involved in the PIA said that it increased their skill and confidence in planning and undertaking impact assessment and in analysing and understanding the impacts of their programmes. In particular the process enabled them to hear the views of primary stakeholders on the impacts their project had had on them. It also provided an opportunity for the NGOs to experience working with primary stakeholders in a different way.

A number of organisations noted the importance of building staff capacity in facilitating the PIA process in particular in the use of participatory tools and how to involve the community in the collection and analysis of information. All involved found that the PIA pilot programme with its combination of training in the theory, principles and methodologies of PIA as well as practice in implementing PIA had been helpful to them. However there was also recognition from all involved that the resource implications in terms of staff effort, time and cost required to undertake this particular PIA process were high. A number felt the process was very valuable but unrealistic to undertake for all programmes. This highlighted the need to find ways of incorporating PIA from the beginning in the project planning/design process in a manageable and useful way so that it becomes part of the normal working approaches within the organisation. Rajesh Tandon noted, *“When it becomes part of the habit to involve communities in identification, appraisal, design and monitoring of projects, then it will not be felt as an additional burden by organisations and their staff”*.

The PIA pilot programme created a pressure for change in the NGOs involved. Particular issues raised differed depending among other things on the size and nature of each organisation. However one lesson that emerged from the pilot was that if a PIA approach is to be incorporated into an organisation’s work there are likely to be implications for all aspects of the organisation. At the individual level these might include changes in attitudes and the need to learn new skills. At the organisational level these might include changes to philosophies and policies, procedures, appraisal, monitoring and reporting systems and staff training. For the organisation as a whole there may need to be a change in culture with staff being prepared to give up power in relation to the communities in which they are working. The process of change needs to address both individual and organisational aspects if new ways of working are to be sustained.

A further learning from the PIA pilot programme is that undertaking such an approach will change the relationship between the implementing NGO and the primary stakeholders with which it works. It will also change the nature of their relationship with donor or support organisations. PIA legitimises the views and experiences of different stakeholders; it enables them to work together in new ways and requires all involved to accept and work with differences. Involving PIA at all stages of the project cycle can be beneficial in understanding and negotiating these differences. In feeding back the findings of PIA the different needs of stakeholders should also be considered. For example, different kinds of reports may be needed depending on who the stakeholders are. Some will be written, others verbal. Some of the tools used in undertaking the PIA may be useful in sharing the findings with various stakeholder groups.

The challenge for organisations interested in PIA is to develop strategies to incorporate the process into ongoing organisational philosophies, structures and systems in a way that takes account of staff, time and financial resources.

PIA Participants on Change ...

[The PIA] was a really worthwhile experience which has helped to institutionalise participation throughout the organisation. [It has] significantly heightened awareness of beneficiary/community participation and PIA in the project cycle.

As regards “relationships and interactions” within my organisation, I think there are two ways in which I may be acting a little differently:

- *projects staff are constantly being asked by other staff members for stories of partners and their work (for fund-raising, educational, campaign and youth materials). I find that I am now giving more emphasis to anything we know of the real changes which have occurred for beneficiaries of programmes than simply to the activities they have undertaken.*
- *at staff meetings and discussion on other activities within my organisation I more regularly think of the potential longer term impact of our planning and raise questions about why we are doing something or what we really hope to achieve.*

The PIA has helped in strengthening confidence and has helped to measure their strength, weakness, threats, opportunities and the impact created among the target people. They [staff] also got feed back from the target people and develop plans by undertaking PIAs periodically and implementing the plans with the participation of the target people. The PIA also helped the staff to analyse their capacity and skill and they have made an effort to update their knowledge in building the wider movement and strengthening their perspective on gender and community development.

It [PIA] has reinforced an awareness of the need to bring a genuinely collective approach to decision-making. It has brought home to us the value of this collective approach both in terms of better decision-making and in terms of encouraging the fulfilment of potential of all within the organisation.

The PIA pilot provided me with an opportunity to understand conventional monitoring and evaluation and their limitations better. The PIA pilot enhanced my confidence to interact with people involved in monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment and share the PIA methodology and many times it was appreciated.

The PIA training component and direct involvement in the planning and field testing of the process was a significant involvement for our staff which has deepened our understanding of stakeholder based assessment, participatory learning tools, and questions of how to measure impact.

Staff have been equipped with PIA skills and techniques and applied them in analysing the impact created by their interventions. They have gained self-confidence and updated their knowledge also. They also learnt from the target community and staff training on PIA process is conducted periodically in strengthening their perspective.

We have incorporated the learnings of PIA into our organisational structure. For example the whole organisation was involved in a participatory budgeting exercise for the organisation. This proved to be a very empowering and valuable exercise.

Our organisation is much keener on participatory impact assessment than before. As a principle it has introduced particular impact questions in its annual and final reporting formats. Project monitoring has become more probing and analytical, significantly focussing on outcomes rather than just outputs.

We have included impact questions in our reporting formats. Much emphasis on impact is given in the appraisal of the projects too.

In monitoring a programme or a project we not only look at the immediate outputs but also analyse the consequences of the project in the future, socially and politically. Particular attention is given to find out and analyse any unintended impacts of the project. The benefit of the project for both men and women is analysed during the monitoring of a particular project.

We are using some additional questions about impact in our monitoring visits, which give us the opportunity to raise matters of impact and methodologies for monitoring it. But our partners are at various stages along the way in this matter. So it is a slow process of seed sowing at present. We have also adapted as an experiment a framework for reporting that includes some emphasis on impact [which] we will trial first before establishing as a permanent set of guidelines. Our TOR for monitoring visits put some new emphasis on impact and on ways in which partners are choosing to measure it. We are updating our project management system and incorporating participatory methods and philosophies into the new system.

PIA has probably sharpened our thinking in the appraisal stage on asking questions about why the project is occurring, thinking through impact monitoring issues and prompting more questions of partners about taking monitoring and evaluation systems beyond the quantitative and addressing key aspects of the objectives or goals.

Due emphasis is given on impact analysis as we fund a new project or a programme. Our project proposal format reflects information requirements and analysis on gender and the long term social and environment impacts of the project. During the appraisal of a particular project, we give attention to appropriate analysis to determine the long-term

social and environmental impacts of the project and benefits of the project on men and women. The appraisal process of new projects is more in-depth using principles of PIA.

Our appraisal, monitoring and evaluation process is changing according to the needs of the communities. Participatory planning processes are key components of new projects. Our organisational manual is growing with the organisation and participatory approaches are a key part in planning new projects.

5 Sharing the Lessons from the PIA Pilot Programme

Most of the comments below on sharing the lessons from the PIA pilot programme come from comprehensive feedback from participants one year after completion of the South Asia pilot programme. They demonstrate an active commitment to sharing lessons from the PIA pilot with other staff and colleagues, with other NGOs and with partners. A significant number have been involved in undertaking further PIAs.

In the Pacific (where participants had not yet been asked to complete a “one-year on” questionnaire) initial feedback also indicates that there has been sharing of the experience within the organisations involved, application of the lessons to other projects and in one case a sharing of the experience at a regional meeting of affiliated NGOs. A significant follow-up to the Pacific PIA is a regional workshop on Participatory Development to be held in Nadi in June 2003. Sponsored by NZAID/VASS, this workshop will involve 24 Pacific NGOs and their New Zealand partners in training on participatory approaches to development, and planning for a project related participatory activity to be undertaken following the workshop. Other ideas for follow-up to the Pacific PIA pilot which were discussed in the final workshop for the Pacific phase (including more training on tools, mentoring for organisations wanting to adopt more participatory approaches to their work and collation of documentation on participatory development experience in the Pacific) will be discussed further both at this workshop and as part of the VASS evaluation of the PIA pilot programme.

PIA Participants on Sharing Lessons from the Pilot Programme ...

The PIA was discussed within the working group and with wider staff. These were primarily presentations or discussions of the methodology followed and the key outcomes.

The PIA has been published in the quarterly Newsletter of a PRA network. I have made a presentation on PIA in the networks bi-monthly experience-sharing meeting.

I have not given any seminar workshop on PIA as such but engaged in many discussions with colleagues, supervisor and field staff in other projects. Have discussed the possibility of doing an impact assessment of some other projects. In June next year I will be involved in an evaluation in Cambodia and I have already indicated my desire to see some qualitative changes (impacts) on the lives of the people.

We have held a half-day in-house training on the PIA process for our Projects Committee. This proved to be very engaging and useful as well as a means of Committee learning the process. We also invited partners/spouses of Working Group members as secondary stakeholders, receiving from them some very interesting and surprising feedback. This will be followed up in later sessions.

We are doing an evaluation of another project in Cambodia this year. We are sure to add perspectives from the PIA in the evaluation process.

I have explained the process within the staff team here. We have shared with staff informally and at staff meetings the focus and some of the outcomes of the PIA programme. We made a report to our Board, who showed interest. We shall look at ways to proceed from here in assisting other partners to explore or engage in the process.

We have completed two further PIA processes with two target communities with staff taking responsibility of facilitating the PIA process with the leaders and members of other groups.

After the pilot PIA I was involved in doing participatory impact assessment with three NGOs. This has provided a great opportunity to enhance my understanding of PIA and practicing skills. The recent one is a workshop cum field application done with an NGO in central India. Two members from the NZ partner, and ten participants from different parts of India participated. It was very successful.

He [the South Asian partner] has shared the PIA experience with 15 colleagues from different parts of India. He has since moved to a new programme but he takes the PIA concept with him and will be able to use the PIA principle there. He already has talked to his staff about the PIA and is looking at doing a PIA exercise in the near future.

A project has been selected where PIA has been included. Project staff have been briefed on identifying indicators that are measurable and developing questions and appropriate tools.

We have been providing funding for a major shift in philosophy in a partner in Africa. Independently of us they planned a major PRA exercise in 140 communities. We obtained funding to support the process which mobilised 10,000 people in a two-week training process, held in different districts of the country. In dialogue with us and their other partners, the organisation has followed this up with additional capacity building work in the same communities, focusing on participatory ways to monitor and evaluate within the communities the changes that are occurring through the implementation of Community Action Plans. Two further processes are planned, including one which will involve the communities in evaluating against their own agreed indicators. We will help fund these stages. The processes used in all this training are very creative: role plays, drawings, maps and charts, gender analysis, time-use charts, etc. And the good thing is that it is all being documented at each location. We will visit the partner in 2003 and hope to bring

back learnings that we can share with other partners. Our partner's staff have been greatly enthused by the process. They acknowledge that it has been hugely demanding of them during the training and follow-up stages, but they are really clear that they are moving in the only direction which will really ensure that development is owned by the communities.

We have undertaken two PIAs among the grassroots Women's Movement. The PIA process helped in evolving new programmes to address the livelihood needs of grassroots women by undertaking micro income generation programmes, encouraging women to become more involved politically at the local level and addressing women's rights violation issues. Application of PIA periodically for reviewing the activities promotes community participation. We are analysing the gender impact, social impact and the operational strategies of the organisation and wider movements with which we are working.

We are making plans at present for evaluation of two programmes over the next 18 months. One will be with the partner in the PIA, so we are hoping to discuss fully with them the effect of the PIA training on their work since then, the costs to the organisation and the beneficiaries, the benefits, changes that have occurred in the programme plan as a result of the first PIA and any ways in which they have continued to work with it. So this will be an important evaluation for us. The other is a small group in another country in Asia. We have begun already to think about how we can work with them to carry out some form of impact assessment when our current round of funding comes to an end.

One significant outcome from our involvement has been our enthusiasm to share our newfound understanding with some of our other partners around the world. We are supporting some training on PIA with a partner in Cambodia conducted by [the South Asia PIA facilitator and one of the NZ NGO participants involved in the pilot].

We facilitated the conduct of a PIA exercise in conjunction with an Indian partner and our PIA facilitator. There were 10 staff from our local partner and two from NZ participating alongside the facilitator and 6 different communities in the area. The trainer guided us through the process from establishment and validation of indicators through to presentation of data and analysis to the community. It was a fully interactive and indeed participatory process for all involved. The process was for all concerned absolutely invaluable. It served a number of key purposes:

- It laid the foundation for a partnership based on trust, equity, mutual understanding and genuine human relationship.*
- It brought us all to an understanding that all people have a will both to improve their lives and to take opportunities to direct a process which is in line with their will for this improvement.*
- It provided our partner and the communities with a baseline from which to cooperatively design and assess future development programmes.*
- It provided both our partner and our own staff with a practical understanding of participatory methodology and tools.*

We have shared the [PIA] experience with other [partner] organisations at a Pacific sub-region meeting. PIA is now being suggested to our partners for project appraisal and monitoring and has been incorporated into our programme strategy.

6 Conclusions

The PIA pilot programme aimed to give a number of New Zealand NGOs and their partners experience in undertaking a different type of project assessment, namely participatory impact assessment and to assess the potential of this new approach in improving the effectiveness of their development work.

While all agencies wish to achieve sustainable outcomes from their programmes and believe in the importance of involving primary beneficiaries, the PIA pilot programme demonstrated an approach that brings these two things together – a focus on the project goal and long-term impacts and the active engagement of stakeholders in all stages of the project.

All of the NGOs involved found PIA to be useful in identifying project impacts some of which had not been anticipated. Through the PIA process and engagement of primary and secondary stakeholders both the organisations involved and beneficiaries learnt more about the impacts of the projects. In many cases organisations were encouraged by the positive impacts project interventions had had on the lives of beneficiaries. In some cases the process identified unintended negative consequences. The process has in some cases already influenced project implementation, clarified important issues and future directions with a much greater involvement of project beneficiaries. At an organisational level a number of participants indicated that they had adapted their appraisal, monitoring and reporting systems to place greater emphasis on obtaining and analysing information on the impacts of their development interventions.

Perhaps more important than the specific project impacts that were identified was the learning from the process itself. The PIA challenged existing relationships at all levels -between partners, within organisations and between the NGO and the community it sought to assist. The PIA process strengthened relationships between the NZ NGOs and their partners and fostered more equitable and transparent relationships. Through engaging stakeholders and in particular primary stakeholders at all stages of the PIA process it deepened understanding of the nature of participatory development and was in itself a learning and empowering experience for all involved. In particular the process provided an opportunity for the organisations involved to hear the voices of the people they sought to assist. This provided a valuable and rich source of information to help the organisations plan with the communities how to more effectively meet their needs. The involvement of the primary stakeholders in the process served to increase their ownership of the programmes and their commitment to determining future directions relevant to their needs and aspirations.

The use of participatory methods and tools enabled a wide range of stakeholders, including illiterate women, men and sometimes also children, to participate actively in reflecting on and analysing programme impacts to date and to contribute to future planning. In some cases this encouraged a shift in power between the NGO and the community as beneficiaries took ownership of the process and modified it to reflect their own perspectives and concerns. Women gained status and recognition through their involvement in all of the PIA case studies. Their situation and struggles were heard and their contribution valued, increasing their power in the community. For many of the organisations involved there was an increased realisation that even without formal education beneficiaries were able to participate actively in all aspects of the programme that had significant implications in terms of future relationships and planning.

An important part of the PIA process was capacity building of the NGO staff and representatives who attended the workshops and worked with the PIA facilitators in planning and implementing the PIA. It also built skills of community members who in many cases were actively involved in the PIA training, planning, data collection and analysis. While much was learnt through the process of actually undertaking a PIA many involved felt that there was a need for further training of NGO staff on participatory methodologies and in the use of participatory tools. Some of the NGOs involved have undertaken further training and some have undertaken or supported further PIAs. In some cases these have been assisted by the facilitators involved in the PIA pilot programme.

There was some concern over the resources (both staff time and costs) required and the demands placed on communities (such as heavy workloads at harvest times etc) when planning activities such as this. There was recognition of the need to find ways to incorporate PIA into on-going appraisal, monitoring and evaluation systems so that impacts can be assessed at all stages of the project cycle without adding the demands of intensive detailed assessments such as were undertaken in this pilot programme.

The PIA pilot programme highlighted the need for organisational change at different levels of the NGOs if participatory impact assessment is to become part of their everyday way of operating. This includes the need for reassessment of organisational culture, structures, systems and staff training. Feedback from participants indicated that many steps have already been taken to address the need for organisational change at all these levels. At a personal level many of those involved indicated that they have deepened their understanding of participatory development and the importance of all stakeholders being actively involved in considering the impact of development interventions.

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Appendix 2: Participatory Methods and Tools used in PIA Case Studies

Drama/Role Plays/Simulation Games: A number of case studies used plays, song, role plays and simulation games to involve stakeholders in the PIA. In two cases the projects being studied involved theatre and radio drama and the case study was designed to assess the impact of these programmes. For example the Save the Children Fiji project involved the use of two plays and playback theatre to work with communities and children traumatised by ethnic conflict to help people talk about the experience and discuss how to overcome the conflicts created in their community. The PIA was to assess the effectiveness of this approach. Wan Smolbag's case study aimed to assess the impact of a radio drama on people's attitudes and behaviour in relation to reproductive health issues.

Some examples of use of drama, song and role plays during the PIA are discussed below.

- Plays: were used effectively by World Vision Banskura to introduce the concept of PIA to two project communities; what it was all about, the benefits for the community in participating and why it was important for women to be actively involved. This method enabled a stimulating discussion and paved the way for collaboration with the communities during the PIA. A folk song was used to highlight the importance of women's full participation.
- Role Plays: TBF used role plays to promote discussion on violence against women. Two volunteers were selected to play the role of husband and wife. They were asked to show through role play a situation concerning husband/wife relations before and after self help groups were formed. In the discussion that followed the role plays it was realised that while wife beating remained an issue in some groups, in others it had decreased. This was found to be due to various factors.

WDRC used role play to assess the extent to which the project had helped to address issues such as domestic violence, exploitation by landowners and bonded labour issues by comparing the situation before and after formation of the women's groups.

- Simulation: TBF used a simulation exercise to understand decision-making and conflict resolution in self-help groups. Issues related to group decision-making on the distribution of loans. Members were given different roles, including NGO worker, self-help group leader and group members and given a task to simulate the process of group decision-making on the distribution of loans. The decision-making and conflict resolution process of the group as demonstrated through the simulation was analysed in the debriefing and the relevance of what occurred to members own self-help groups was discussed.
- Game: TBF used a group exercise to assess the development of leadership in the groups. The existing leaders of the self-help groups were made the leaders of a team of seven members. The task given to the group was to make a strong, tall and beautiful house with locally available materials in 30 minutes. After the

construction, the role of the leaders and the relationships between the leader and members were analysed. This analysis was then applied to the existing situation in their self-help groups.

- Case studies: Case studies were used by some NGOs to promote discussion on a variety of issues such as abuse of women's rights (including domestic violence) and access to and use of loans. During the TBF case study women were divided into small groups and asked to discuss a case study and the issues it raised. This led to a discussion about their knowledge of laws relating to women rights and action they could take if their rights were abused.

Community Mapping and Observation: Community mapping was used by Oxfam Bougainville both as an ice-breaker to get participants involved and to show the location of various community facilities and significant features including those directly related to the project (such as poultry houses and poultry project roads). The women project holders mapped and listed all hamlets and households, the poultry house, proposed piggery project site and other significant features such as the river, the mountain, the church, the meeting hall, water storage tanks and pit latrines. The husbands of the project holders also drew their own map and the two were compared.

Wan Smolbag Theatre also used a form of community (social) mapping with particular emphasis on the places of social importance for young men and women in the community (eg the meeting house, the sleeping house, boy-girl meeting places, the nightclub etc.).

Community Profiles: Save the Children Fiji facilitated the setting up of community PIA committees to oversee the implementation of the PIA process. Following training by SCF staff, one of the first tasks of the committees was to collect information and prepare a community profile including information on issues such as the traditional and administrative structure, population, land tenure, education, health, economy, food and dietary patterns, transport/communication, employment, housing, water, lighting and cooking fuel, toilet and rubbish disposal, community facilities, religion, traditional and cultural practices and general concerns. The profiles provided useful information on the context in which the project intervention took place. Preparing the profiles was found to be an extensive but valuable exercise that provided a tangible outcome that will be of benefit to the communities in the future.

Mobility Mapping: This was used to assess changes in the mobility patterns of target communities. In one case study the main materials used were round pieces of coloured paper or in some places (especially with the women's groups) bangles. Two areas were demarcated on a large piece of paper. An inner circle depicted places inside the villages, while an outer circle depicted places outside villages. The group members were asked to nominate the places they were free to go inside the village and pieces of coloured paper or bangles depicting these areas were put inside the circle. This process was repeated by asking members of the group which places they went to outside the village and placing coloured pieces of paper or bangles in the outer circle. Different coloured paper or bangles were used to demonstrate inaccessible places in the circles. In the case of the

World Vision PIA a before and after the project analysis of mobility showed a number of previously inaccessible places were now frequented by the target communities.

Caritas also used this tool to assess the mobility of women. Here circles were drawn to depict the hamlet, village, union, upazila, district and other more distant places. Participants drew pictures of different places on each circle with one colour to show where they went before the project began and different colours to depict places where they began to visit following the project intervention.

SCF used mobility mapping to collect data on changes in movement of participants following the coup and also after the intervention of the WAC drama group. Participants were asked to list 10 places (in order of distance from their home) that they used to go to before the coup (indicating with a star those places they considered safe to go to at that time). They then placed a different coloured dot beside the safe places they went to after the coup and, with a third colour placed a dot beside the safe places they go to following the WAC intervention. This was followed by the group listing reasons for lack of freedom of movement after the coup, and when and why they started going back to “unsafe” places (if they had done so).

Matrix Ranking and Scoring: This was used by Caritas to assess the most important benefit derived from savings and credit. Benefits were identified and listed and individually, women voted for the benefits considered most important to them. This was followed by discussion and analysis on the benefits of savings and credit.

Time Use Matrix: TBF used a time use matrix to assess women’s workload. Daily activities undertaken by women and men were drawn on the board. It was found that women were working more than men, were paid less and were engaged in unskilled and unpaid work.

Situation Analysis: Situational analysis was used by several NGOs to obtain data on the existing situation (or how a situation had changed over time). In most cases this provided a basis for a focus group discussion following the exercise. Caritas used a variation of the time use matrix to assess the extent to which there had been change since the project interventions in women’s workload. After listing all activities undertaken by women, participants were asked to indicate on the left hand column of the matrix who did these activities before joining the group (eg men, women or both). Then they were asked to indicate on the right hand column who was doing the activities currently (men, women or both). After all participants had completed these tasks, the whole matrix was presented to them and there was discussion on the changing nature of women’s workloads. The activity showed some gradual sharing of responsibilities by the men and women particularly in relation to household work.

Situational analysis was used extensively by SCF to collect data in relation to how people’s behaviour had changed (eg in relation to sharing of food, borrowing, respect for authority) following the impact of firstly the coup and secondly the WAC drama intervention. The exercise involved drawing charts for several different activities and/or

attitudes. For instance, each participant was asked to list the main people they would normally share food with, borrow from and consider leaders in their school or community. Each participant was then asked to place a tick (under three columns) beside those they related with in these ways or considered as leaders before the coup, after the coup and after the WAC intervention.

Seasonality and Time Trends: World Vision used this method in order to see the pattern of crops grown throughout the year. This was helpful in assessing the use of new crop varieties and the changes in crops sown as a result of the project intervention. The use of new technologies such as the use of tractors and fertilisers was also noted.

Impact Flow Chart: This was used by Caritas to assess the extent to which awareness of issues such as education, health, income generation, legal rights, dowry and divorce had increased during the life of the project. A paper symbolising the group was placed in the centre and pieces of paper with the issues represented on them were placed near or far from the centre depending on the degree of awareness developed.

Listing and Prioritisation: This method was used by Caritas to determine which social actions most benefited the group. The participants listed all action and identified which were the important ones by putting dots beside them. A lot of discussion was generated on the actions that received the highest number of dots.

Venn Diagrams: This method was used to assess changing patterns of social relationships. Venn diagrams were used by Caritas to assess the contacts and the relationships the group had built with different agencies. The participants were asked to nominate the Government offices and NGOs with whom they had established linkages. They were asked to re-size the pieces of paper according to the importance of the organisation. A symbol of the group was drawn in the middle of a big piece of paper and the participants were asked to place the circles representing government agencies or NGOs closer or further away from the centre according to the frequency of contact. After completing the diagram they analysed the findings and changes that had occurred.

In the World Vision case study, two coloured papers were used to depict bhil (tribal) and yadav (scheduled caste) communities. Coloured papers were placed nearer, or further away from each depending on mixing of the two communities in relation to parameters such as access to education, water resources, eating together, sitting together, acceptance of food from each other and inter-community marriages. The difference in social relationships before and after World Vision's intervention was assessed in this way.

A combination of social mapping and trend analysis was used by TBF to understand the impact of the project on dalit oppression, the degree of empowerment they had achieved and the changing social relationships of dalits with other castes (eg through assessment of access to and use of community facilities such as wells and temples). The participants were divided into small groups and were asked to draw the pictures on a chart showing their distance from different social structures before the interventions and now. Along

with this they were also asked to note the changing trends in the relationships of dalits with others.

In the WDRC case study, the use of pen and paper in social mapping was found to distance the women from the exercise as they were illiterate and the WDRC staff held the pen. So the method was adapted into a form of role play. Staff took the roles of husbands, tax collectors, the moneylender and the police etc. and were “placed” by the group in the centre closer or further away from them to demonstrate the nature of the relationship. This led to animated discussion as to why some people had been placed closer or further away.

Oxfam Bougainville used Venn diagrams to depict the relationships and linkages between women project holders and their own families, their community and others outside of their community before and after the project intervention. The women project holders were represented by a circle in the middle of a piece of paper with other individuals/communities with whom they interacted (eg husband, family members, friends, urban residents, schools, businesses, other community projects) noted around the paper. Participants were asked to draw two different coloured lines extending further or closer from the centre toward each of these different entities to represent their interactions before and after the project. This provided a basis for discussion about the changes in social relations resulting from the project. Husbands of women project holders also completed a similar exercise.

Location Maps: This variation of Venn Diagrams was used by Wan Smolbag Theatre to determine the sources of information available to young people in the community on reproductive health issues. The distance of the different sources of information (as represented by cards with the name of the information source) from the group represented by an individual in the centre indicated the importance of that source of information.

Social Trends: A further variation Venn Diagrams used by Wan Smolbag Theatre was collection of data on social issues of current concern to young men and women by asking them to write down a list of all social and reproductive health issues affecting young people in their community. Larger or smaller circles drawn around these issues signified the importance attached to them.

Pie Chart: In Caritas the APEX leaders were asked to find out what planning and monitoring activities women developed skills in. They identified the activities and showed them on a Pie Chart. Finally they explained the issues relating to each activity.

Vote and Mood Meter: Caritas used a vote and mood meter to assess participants' reactions to loans. A matrix was prepared indicating on the horizontal axis the number of loans received and on the vertical axis three options – a happy, average or sad face. Participants were asked to put dots under the column of the number of loans received and how they felt about this according to the “mood” represented in the faces. Finally the participants explained why they were happy or sad with the loans received.

Mood meters, in which participants were asked to represent their feelings by ticking under a sad face, a neutral face or a happy face were also used by Oxfam Bougainville. This tool was used to collect data on how women project holders (and their husbands) felt about changed activities and behaviour before and after the project in relation to key issues (eg unity within the community, money coming into the community, feasting and cultural ceremonies, changes in women's roles in the community, contact with the outside world, sources of protein in the community and employment opportunities for women in the community). While most areas showed positive impacts, both women project holders and their husbands indicated that there had been some negative impacts in relation to changes in women's roles in the community (given the extra demands of the poultry project). This resulted in more detailed discussion in relation to women's roles in child rearing, home care, productive activities (eg gardening and poultry farming) and community management. Mood meters were also used by Oxfam Bougainville to evaluate how primary stakeholders felt about their involvement in the PIA.

SCF used mood meters to collect data in relation to trust in individuals (particularly from another ethnic group) before and after the coup and after the WAC intervention.

Score Causal Diagram: In the Caritas case study participants were asked to identify the sectors where women felt they had attained empowerment. Considering empowerment as 100 they were asked to distribute scores to the different sectors (eg education, health, environment) according to the achievement of the group. Finally they discussed issues relating to the benefits women had obtained in each sector.

Focus Group Discussion: This method was used by all the organisations to promote discussion on a variety of issues. Discussions were mostly semi-structured and gave space to the respondents to express their views, attitudes and feelings. In most cases NGOs using focus group discussions included separate group discussion for men and women as well as mixed groups.

This was a particularly important tool for Wan Smolbag Theatre in Vanuatu that made extensive use of focus groups to discuss issues relating to reproductive health and the impact of the radio drama *Famili Blong Sarah* to increase awareness and change attitudes and behaviour in relation to reproductive health issues.

In the SCF case study focus groups were divided along ethnic lines and included groups of children only. A conclusion from the SCF case study was that bringing the different focus groups together to discuss issues identified would have provided a further opportunity to promote discussion within the community.

Surveys: In a number of case studies, surveys were used alongside more participatory tools. These including unstructured interviews, structured interviews using questionnaires and in one case a Knowledge, Practice and Attitude (KPA) Survey.

- Interviews: One on one interviews were used in most of the case studies. In some cases, individual interviews followed focus group discussions where some group members were identified for interview. In some cases, secondary stakeholders were also interviewed. In TBF interviews were carried out to gain information on changes in relation to areas such as the extent to which housework was shared, education of the girl child, incidence of physical abuse, increase in self confidence, improvement in literacy, increased access to Government facilities, self employment, savings, assets, and regular income. Wan Smolbag Theatre used questionnaires to obtain detailed information on reproductive health issues and individual interviews as a way to discuss sensitive issues that would not have been appropriate in the context of a focus group discussion.
- Knowledge, Practice and Attitude (KPA) Survey: A KPA survey was used by World Vision Banskara to assess knowledge, practice and attitudinal change among the wider communities in which the project was operating, although like other survey methods it relied on a sample. A sixteen-question survey was designed and tested and a number of community members trained in its use before undertaking the study in their communities.