

Wheelbarrows full of frogs

Social learning in rural resource management

Cees Leeuwis and Rhiannon Pyburn (eds.)

International research and reflections

2002  KONINKLIJKE VAN GORCUM

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	5
Social learning in rural resource management	11
<i>Introduction to the book</i>	
Cees Leeuwis and Rhiannon Pyburn	
Part 1 Significance and theories of social learning	
Beyond the aggregation of individual preferences	25
<i>Moving from multiple to distributed cognition in resource dilemmas</i>	
Niels Röling	
Cognition, development and governance	49
<i>Some lessons from knowledge systems research and practice</i>	
Paul Engel and Monique Salomon	
Social learning: major concepts and issues	67
<i>Lessons from natural resource management in 'terroirs' and 'landelijke gebieden'</i>	
Marleen Maarleveld and Constant Dangbégnon	
A systemic model and theory for facilitating social learning	85
Christine King and Janice Jiggins	
Linking up with local dynamics: learning to listen	105
<i>Lessons from West African experiences</i>	
Dominique Hounkonnou	
Part 2 Social learning in agriculture: an interactive research approach	
Farmer researcher teams, farmer field schools and community IPM	121
<i>Different platforms for different research and learning objectives</i>	
Elske van de Fliert, Russ Dilts and John Pontius	

Linking social and technical components of innovation through social learning	135
<i>The case of potato disease management in Nepal</i>	
Dindo Campilan (with contribution from Birendra Bir Basnyat)	
Social learning for integrated soil fertility management in sub-Saharan Africa	147
Toon Defoer	
A management toolkit for interactive learning	167
<i>Farm innovation with cactus pear and cochineal in Cochabamba</i>	
Antoni Tekelenburg, Eric Goewie and Alvaro Rojas	
Poverty alleviation among farmers	183
<i>The role of knowledge</i>	
Anne van den Ban	

Part 3 Facilitation

Three challenges in the facilitation of system-wide change	199
Annemarie Groot, Natasha van Dijk, Janice Jiggins and Marleen Maarleveld	
Monitoring for social learning	215
<i>Insights from Brazilian NGOs and Dutch farmer study groups</i>	
Irene Guijt and Jet Proost	
Cultivating conflict and pluralism through dialogical deconstruction	233
Fanny Heymann and Arjen Wals	

Part 4 Divergent discourses

Institutional conditions for transformations	245
<i>A plea for policy making from the perspective of constructivism</i>	
Mathieu Wagemans	

Joint learning with Geographic Information Systems	257
<i>Towards participatory technology development</i>	
Rhodora Gonzalez	
Having it both ways	271
<i>Local participatory learning informing global policy and programme management</i>	
Christine van Wijk and Mariela Garcia	
Community Based Natural Resource Management as dogma	289
<i>A case from Mozambique</i>	
Bart Pijnenburg	
The delicate discourse of support	301
Joyce Lamerichs and Hedwig Te Molder	

Part 5 Social learning and institutional change

Sustainability, social learning and the democratic imperative	317
<i>Lessons from the Australian Landcare movement</i>	
Jim Woodhill	
Learning to beat Cochrane's treadmill	333
<i>Public policy, markets and social learning in Chile's small-scale agriculture</i>	
Julio Berdegúe	
Facilitating the co-evolution of land use practice and institutions	349
<i>Insights from an agroforestry initiative in Northeastern USA</i>	
Louise Buck	
Soft systems thinking to initiate Nepal's forestry sector reform	365
Frank van Schoubroeck and Jan Brouwers	
Institutionalising Farmer Participatory Research	375
<i>Lessons from a comparative study</i>	
Laurens van Veldhuizen, Ann Waters-Bayer, Scott Killough, Marise Espineli and Julian Gonsalves	

Part 6 Broadening the theoretical base

Making explicit the social dimensions of cognition	391
Cees Leeuwis	
Understanding platform processes through Actor-Network Theory	407
Nathalie Steins	
Dealing with uncertainty in solving complex problems	421
Noelle Aarts and Cees van Woerkum	
Social learning	437
<i>A construction of reality</i>	
Maria Koelen and Enny Das	

Part 7 Epilogue

Concluding reflections on social learning	449
<i>Tadpoles, lily pads and lotus flowers</i>	
Cees Leeuwis and Rhiannon Pyburn and André Boon	
About the authors	471

Wheelbarrows full of frogs

Social learning in rural resource management

Standing in contrast to technological interventions and economics, 'social learning' reflects the idea that the shared learning of interdependent stakeholders is a key mechanism for arriving at more desirable solutions to complex problems in rural environments. Degradation of natural resources, vulnerability of agricultural systems, fragile institutions and rural poverty are but some of the interconnected challenges to which new answers must be found. Recognising that such predicaments are anthropogenic, social learning is a 'third way of getting things done' based on interactive problem solving, conflict resolution, shared learning, convergence of goals, concerted action and the like. The idea of social learning has become a 'praxiology': a theory that informs (intervention) practice.

In characterising the process of social learning, Professor Niels Röling has frequently drawn upon the Dutch metaphor 'wheelbarrows full of frogs'. The balancing act of keeping all frogs (multiple stakeholders) inside a wheelbarrow (a platform for social learning), while manoeuvring across potentially difficult terrain (rural resource management dilemmas), is a challenge demanding engagement, presence of mind, flexibility and stability (from facilitators, negotiators, evaluators, etc.). A fitting title of a book with contributions from leaders in the field, offering different perspectives and challenges for future research and practice.

