

D 1.2 PAR training manual and infographics on PAR activities during project (1)



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation | Description |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| PAR | Participatory action research |
| DG | Driving Group |
| CoS | Community of Schools |
| NCB | National Cordinator Board |
| PMAB | Policy Makers Advisory Board |
| CDG | Gender and Diversity committee |





Executive Summary

The PAR approach is cross-cutting throughout the project, affecting the 4 Pillars (Safe learning, Safe teaching, Safe schools and safe education).

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is collaborative research, education and action used to gather information to use for change on social or environmental issues. It involves people who are concerned about or affected by an issue taking a leading role in producing and using knowledge about it.

The present document gathers a toolkit proposal to apply the PAR approach in the framework of the LET'S CARE project, especially in the community building actions (WP1) and the whole development of the qualitative research (WP3).

In order to work on the PAR approach in the LET'S CARE project, two training sessions have been carried out with a total of 50 participants, including the member of the DG.

The toolkit is organized around 7 central themes: collaboration; Knowledge; Power; Ethics; Building theory; Action; Emotions and well-being.

Finally, a roadmap has been developed that combines actions with reflections and practical examples in order to be able to carry out a practical implementation of the RAP within the framework of the LET's CARE project that can be evaluated.





1. Introduction

The Participatory action research (PAR) methodology is conceived within the LET'S CARE project as a cross-cutting tool, which is taken up from the very beginning of the project (WP1, Task 1.1), but it will be an action that will have repercussions on all the projects.

Participatory action research (PAR)¹ is a research paradigm centred around involving participants as collaborators in research to enact social change. Emerging as early as the 1940s and gaining relevance during the 1970s cultural turn, PAR seeks to radically subvert the inherent power dynamic in traditional research approaches by critically assessing the participant-researcher relationship and "paying attention to ordinary people's knowledge"². Scholars such as Swantz (2007) assert that PAR practices emerged not from one single disciplinary origin but rather through a cultural moment which acknowledges the importance of standing beside those experiencing oppression and inequality and recognising their equal partnership in knowledge production.

PAR asks reflexive questions about whose 'voice' matters in the research process through methodological innovation and infusing community expertise with academic tools and research methods³. The level of involvement of research participants varies according to context, aims and project resources. That said, PAR studies share several underlying assumptions:

- Formal education is not necessary to take part in valuable research.
- Those who have lived experience of an issue or system are experts and therefore are best placed to contribute to related research.
- Involvement of non-academics in research design and production can improve research by reducing biases and bringing new insights and perspectives⁴.

https://research.ncl.ac.uk/methodshub/methods/participatoryactionresearch/

⁴ Organizing Engagement, (2021). Participatory Action Research and Evaluation.



¹Methods Hub, Newcastle University available at:

² Fals-Borda, O., (2006). Participatory (Action) Research in Social Theory: Origins and Challenges, in Bradbury, H., and Reason, P., eds, (2006) Handbook of Action Research: Concise Paperback Edition, London: SAGE.

³ Kindon, S., Pain, R. and Kesby, M. (2009) 'Participatory Action Research', in Kitchin, R. and Thrift, N. (eds.) International Encyclopedia of Human Geography. Oxford: Elsevier, pp. 90-95



Theoretically, participatory action research unifies and transcends social psychology, feminism, Marxism, anarchism, phenomenology, and classical theories of participation and centres the idea of science as socially constructed⁵. It is used across a range of disciplines including Human Geography, Creative Arts Practice and Public Health and can involve both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Commonly used methods within PAR include participatory workshops, group analysis techniques and photovoice.

Key benefits of conducting PAR include the ability to incorporate the lived experience of individuals and communities within social change and thus better address community-identified concerns⁶. PAR calls for a breakdown between subject and object in research, viewing those involved in research as 'thinking-feeling-persons' rather than merely 'participants'.

There are also many considerations within PAR, including the high financial and time cost⁷ (Raynor, 2019) and the reliance on strong rapport and community relationships. Building trust and rapport with community partners can result in more ethical and equitable knowledge production however requires careful ethical negotiation and should not be pursued as a token of 'collaboration' or in a transactional manner.

The Participatory action research (PAR) methodology is conceived within the LET'S CARE project as a cross-cutting tool, which is taken up from the very beginning of the project (WP1, Task 1.1), but it will be an action that will have repercussions on all the projects.

1.1 PAR actions in the project

The PAR methodology will be applied throughout the project, putting children and their needs at the centre of the project. To achieve this, we will use the different qualitative techniques provided for in the LET'S CARE project:

⁷ Raynor, K., (2019). Participatory Action Research and Early Career Researchers: The Structural Barriers to Engagement and Why We Should Do It Anyway, Planning Theory & Practice, 20(1), pp. 130-136



⁵ Ídem nº2

⁶ Balazs and Morello-Frosch, (2017) The Three Rs: How Community-Based Participatory Research Strengthens the Rigor, Relevance, and Reach of Science, Environmental Justice, 6(1), pp.9-22.





Figure 1. PAR Methodology: Children Need's Let's Care Project

The actions with NEETS and children foreseen in the project are of utmost importance in order to capture the first-person opinions and feelings of children and NEETS. The PAR approach is perfectly adapted to this purpose. The direct participation of children is essential to be able to take into account their opinions, needs and concerns in first person and not only through the other key players. In addition, the LET'S CARE project must have a PAR approach in its interaction with all the elements that make up the LET'S CARE community:





BUILDING UP A COMMUNITY DG Composed of 16 members (1/partner). CoS 20 schools from each of the countries (Total 120) NCB 2 coordinators per country **PMAB** Group of experts will be invited to give their feedback about the project achievements (technical, economic, social aspects) on annual basis. CDG It will be composed by people with expertise and will be guiding all the field work and the implementation.

LET'S CARE

Figure 2. Let's Care Project: Building Up a Community





To influence real change in order to move towards a model of Safe Schools, Safe Learning, Safe Schools and Safe Learning:

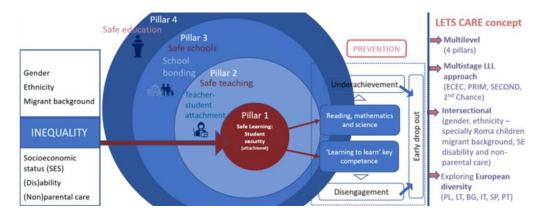


Figure 3. Summary model of the impact of social inequality and attachment on educational opportunities (left).

LETS CARE concept for creating the theoretical and practical Safe Education framework (right)

It is necessary to apply the objectives of the PAR methodology in the educational community, putting the needs of children at the center, it is intended to achieve greater knowledge from the participation and empowerment of the people involved (teachers, families, children, etc.):

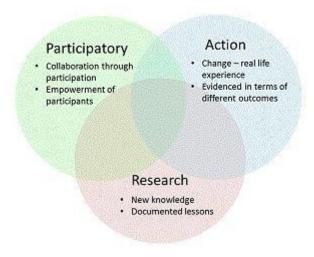


Figure 3. PAR Methodology goals

In order to achieve the project's objectives in terms of PAR, two training sessions have been held, from which materials and conclusions have been drawn that will serve as an action protocol in terms of PAR to be applied during the life of the project.





A LET'S SAFE PAR Toolkit has also been developed, which contains a list of objectives and indicators, as a baseline, that will allow us to correctly monitor the impact of the PAR actions developed in the project.

During the coming year, the results and indicators will be reviewed in order to be able to make the results, if necessary, for the project in relation to the PAR methodology.

1.2 PAR training actions developed in the project 1.2.1. 1st training session June 13, 2023

The training session was held on June 13 from 10:00 to 11:30 (CET) and was attended by all 14 partners, all DG members attended. A total of 29 people participated in the training session, including 19 women and 10 men.

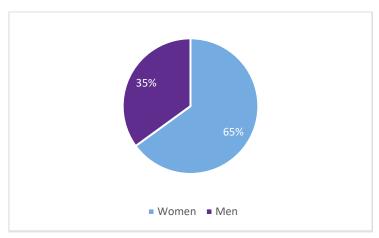


Figure 4. Participants by sex. 1st training session June 13, 2023

The agenda for the meeting was:

Table 1. Agenda 1st training session June 13, 2023

| TASKS | TIME |
|---|----------|
| | |
| Opening exercise: some initial questions | (10 min) |
| Explanation of PAR theory and practice | (20 min) |
| Practical application examples | (10 min) |
| Collective reflection exercise on the application of PRA in LETS CARE | (30 min) |
| Questions and concerns | (10 min) |





The methodology of the session was eminently participative, in Annexes I and II you can see different materials produced in the session (padlet, recommended audiovisual videos).

The objective of this first session was to understand the PAR perspective in order to be able to apply it methodologically to the different areas and phases of the LET'S CARE project.

In order to achieve this objective, the following questions were discussed during the session⁸:

- What does the acronym PAR sound like to you? If it doesn't ring a bell: what do you think it refers to?
- What do you know about the PAR perspective?
- Have you ever implemented the PAR perspective?
- What examples of experiences can you tell us about?
- What are your expectations for PAR at LET'S CARE?

1.2.2. 2ND TRAINING SESSION SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

The second training session was held on September 19 from 10:00 to 11:30 (CET) and was attended by all 14 partners. A total of 21 people participated in the training session, including 19 women and 2 men.

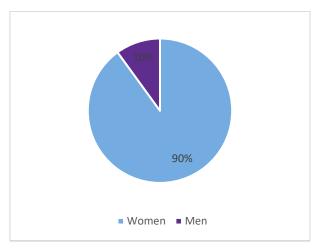


Figure 5. Participants by sex 2nd training session September 19, 2023

The agenda for the meeting was:



⁸ The full presentation and materials of the session are available <u>here</u>



Table 2. Agenda 2nd training session September 19, 2023

| TASKS | TIME |
|--|------|
| Some initial questions. | |
| Nuria Lores - CIDALIA | min) |
| Explanation of PAR theory in the context of the LET'S CARE project and proposal of the | (30 |
| PAR toolkit applied to the LET'S CARE project. | min) |
| Nuria Lores- CIDALIA | |
| Presentation of a successful example of PAR methodology with young people: SmatchS | |
| project: Sports Organizations Matching Social Inclusion Issues co-sponsored. | /20 |
| Bianca Carina Sandbichler | (20 |
| University of Graz (Austria) | min) |
| Presentation of the PAR toolkit applied to NEETS research techniques within the project: | (20 |
| Photovoice methodology. | min) |
| Elvira Mateos - CIDALIA | |
| Questions and concerns | |
| Additionally doubts will be resolved in each session | |
| All participants | |

The session was developed with a theoretical and practical methodology. In this second session, the team of the University of Graz (Austria) in charge of the SmachS project⁹, co-funded by the European Union through the ERASMUS+ call for proposals, was invited to see the practical application and results of the PAR approach in a project with young people. Following the principles of complementarity and creation of synergies between European projects.

The objective of the second session¹⁰ was to apply the PAR theory already seen in a practical way to the LET'S CARE project, being able to offer common tools to the project partners for its implementation.

 $^{^{10}}$ The full presentation of the session and materials are available $\underline{\text{here}}$



https://smatchsproject.wixsite.com/smatchs?fbclid=IwAR0tNUTQGNQ26pBIxVcmo7BaXZZcNgKQhznamzNS7E73FaFefM7WE6qKxl0



The final results of both training sessions are included in the conclusions section.

1.3 LET'S CARE PAR Toolkit

This section includes the RAP toolkit document on the LET's project that was provided to the partners after the two training sessions.

The document is composed of an introduction where it is briefly presented what is the RAP approach and what general actions are contemplated by this approach. Subsequently, an application of the PAR approach to the LET's project is included. It then systematizes, around 7 central themes, the main issues to be taken into account for a correct application of the PAR approach to the LET's project. Finally, a roadmap is proposed for the next year for the implementation of the PAR approach in the LET'S project by the partners, which will be the basis on which the evaluation and the necessary adjustments will be made next year to improve the implementation of the PAR approach in the project for the third (2025) and fourth (2026) year of implementation.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is collaborative research, education and action used to gather information to use for change on social or environmental issues. It involves people who are concerned about or affected by an issue taking a leading role in producing and using knowledge about it. Many names are now used to describe research processes that are in some way 'participatory': e.g. Participatory Appraisal, Participatory Learning and Action, Community-Based Participatory Research.

The objective of the LET'S CARE PAR Toolkit is to provide guidance on how to introduce the PAR approach transversally in the different actions of the project as well as to raise the questions that we will have to ask ourselves throughout the development of the project.

PAR is a research approach, not a method. Many different methods can be used in PAR projects, as in the case of LET'S CARE: focus groups, semi-structured in-depth interviews, life stories, storytelling, photo elicitation, etc.

As explained above, the PAR approach should be oriented to these actions:

- Participatory
 - Collaboration through participation
 - Empowerment of participants
- Action
 - a. Change-real life experience
 - b. Evidenced in terms of different outcomes
- Research
 - a. New Knowledge
 - b. Documentd lessons





Therefore, a PAR project involves a recurrent process of Planning, Action, Reflection and Evaluation:

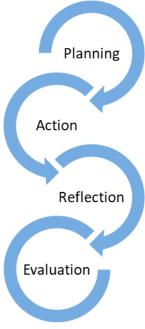


Figure 6. PAR Process

In order to establish a common framework for the PAR approach in the LET'S CARE project, we present below some common questions that will allow us to keep the PAR methodology in mind throughout all the actions we carry out in the framework of the LET'S CARE project. We have organized the questions around 7 central themes¹¹:

1. Collaboration

- Who will be involved in conducting this research?
- What roles will they have?
- Do we need to invite outside experts?
- What principles will we agree in working together?
- How will we work? For example, how frequently do we need to meet, and what will we do between meetings?
- Who will we facilitate meetings?
- How will we plan the details of the research? for example,



¹¹ Adapted from Pain,R., Whitman, G. and Milledge, D. (Durham University)& Lune Rivers Trust (2010-2011). Participatory Action Participatory Action Research Toolkit: An Introduction to Using PAR as an Approach to Learning, Research and Action



- we used the '5Ws' can be useful as a way of organising decision-making actions to be taken:
 - WHAT will be done?
 - WHO will be involved?
 - WHERE will it take place?
 - WHEN will each stage happen?
 - Output Description
 Output Descript

2. Knowledge

- What questions are most important?
- What different kinds of knowledge are going to be important?
- What methods do we need to use to find the answers to our research questions?
- What kinds of skills will be needed? Do we have these skills among the group, or do we need to bring in other people to provide help?
- What can each person present contribute to the research process?

3. Power

- Who usually carries out research and makes decisions on issues like the ones we have identified?
- Does our research allow others (outside of the project)? The transferability of knowledge must be present at all times.
- Are those people who are facilitating and involved in the steering group representative of the wider group affected by this issues?
- Are there people who are not represented, who we need to involve at certain stages? If so, how?
- How will we conduct meetings so that everyone is listened to and nobody dominates?
- How will we deal with disagreement, be sure that we don't gloss over differences, but discuss and work through different opinions?

4. Ethics

- Do individuals (or the whole group) want to be anonymous?¹²
- How are we going to store information in a way that preserves confidentiality?
- How are we going to be accountable?
- How to record what is said and what happens during the research process, from the start?



¹² Only applicable to stakeholders and policy makers, the rest are mandated to be anonymous.



- Who should get to see this information?
- What are the potential sorts of harm that the research might cause? How can we avoid these?
- What are the potential benefits the research might lead to? How can we maximise these?

5. Building theory

- How will we record discussions, ideas, and the development of the research?
- How will we stand back from time to time to reflect on how the research is going and what has been achieved?
- Who will be involved in analysing the findings, and will everyone understand how this was done?
- Who will be involved in interpreting what the findings mean?
- How will we plan what outputs should be produced from the research?

6. Action

- What changes are needed, according to the findings of the research e.g. to understanding, behaviour, policy? Deciding on the implications of the research for action is a crucial stage in PAR. Occasionally, a PAR group might agree that no action is needed (for example if the findings show there isn't a problem after all; or everyone agrees that the learning that has taken place during the research is enough).
- Who will do what? Who has the time and ability to get involved in follow-up actions? What resources would help? Should the findings be shared outside of the group for this to take place? Sometimes, the findings will be used only by the group itself. Often, you may want to use them to influence others.
- How do we want to share and promote the findings of the research? There are lots of possible
 modes of disseminating findings, and you should decide which are most appropriate and
 feasible. For example: a public meeting, a report to policy-makers, a press release, a poster
 campaign, a website, direct changes to practice, advocacy work, further meetings with those
 responsible or affected by the issue in your research.
- Who could help us to get the messages across and stimulate change?

7. Emotions and well-being

• Is the research topic something that people care passionately about, or that directly affects their well-being? Generally researchers and scientists are presumed to put their feelings to one side when conducting research. But none of us actually do. Especially where we are researching a social or environmental issue that we care about, it is normal to feel emotionally invested in research to some degree. Depending on the topic, strong feelings may is normal to feel emotionally invested in research to some degree. Depending on the topic, strong





feelings may be involved and these may affect participants inside and outside the research meetings.

- How will we ensure that the space we work in is as comfortable and hospitable as possible for participants?
- How will those involved in meetings deal with negative emotions?
- Might the research affect others outside of the PAR group?
- Do we have back up strategies, such as pointing people to sources of advice for particular problems or counselling services, for participants who need them?

Finally, we offer you, as a suggestion, **the following roadmap** that we can carry out within the LET'S CARE project in terms of PAR both in the actions of building community and in the research process. The following table proposes different actions and reflections that can be developed in the next twelve months, both in terms of community building and research actions.

Table 3. PAR LET'S CARE Roadmap¹³

| PHASE | ACTION IN BUILDING COMMUNITY | ACTION IN RESEARCH |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Action | Establish relationships and common agenda with stakeholders Collaboratively decide on issues | Establish relationships and contact with main people to interview Collaboratively decide on issues |
| Reflec- tion | Work on collaboration framework | On research design, ethics, knoweledges and accountability |
| Action | Build relationships Identify roles and responsabilities Discuss potential outcomes | Build relationships Identify roles and responsibilities Collectively design research processes |
| Reflec- tion | Working relationships and information required | On research questions, design, working relationships and information required |
| Action | Enable participation of all members Collaborative plan future actions | Work together to implement research and collect data Enable participation of all members |

¹³ Adapted from Pain,R., Whitman, G. and Milledge, D. (Durham University)& Lune Rivers Trust (2010-2011).

Participatory Action Participatory Action Research Toolkit: An Introduction to Using PAR as an Approach to Learning,
Research and Action





| | | Collaboratively analyse findings |
|---------|--|---|
| | | Collaborative plan future actions |
| Reflec- | On working together | On working together |
| tion | Has participation worked? | Has participation worked? |
| | What else do we need to do? | What else do we need to do? |
| Action | Begin to work on feeding research back to | Begin to work on feeding research back to |
| | all participants and plan for feedback on | all participants and plan for feedback on |
| | process and findings | process and findings |
| Reflec- | Evaluate both the action and reflection pro- | Evaluate both the action and reflection |
| tion | cesses as a whole | processes as a whole |
| Action | Collective identify future actions and im- | Collective identify future research and im- |
| | pacts | pacts |

At the end of the next 12 months, an internal evaluation of the actions developed in the framework of the project will be carried out in order to collect a second PAR roadmap adapted on the basis of the results and lessons learned for the following years of the project (third and fourth year).





2. Conclusions

General issues:

- The PAR approach is a necessary approach to take into account the opinion of the different actors involved in the projects and to be able to carry out the co-creation of the results obtained as well as their appropriation.
- Dissemination, advocacy and policy action are being developed by the creation of specific infrastructure involving relevant stakeholders at the local, national and international levels (public authorities, policy makers, NGOs/Civil Society, school teachers, school leaders, students, parents' associations- and academic, institutions) and supported by carefully designed co-creation and collaboration mechanisms.
- The actions with NEETS and children foreseen in the project are of utmost importance in order to capture the first-person opinions and feelings of children and NEETS. The PAR approach is perfectly adapted to this purpose.
- Providing training on these approaches to all project partners facilitates implementation and collective learning in order to achieve better results. The interest in these sessions is evidenced by the participation in both training sessions.
- Having other examples of European projects and practical experiences already developed contributes to the creation of synergies and the acquisition of lessons learned and avoids duplication.
- From actions to facts. By means of these theoretical and practical actions, what is foreseen in the formulation is carried out in theoretical terms and contributes to a better appropriation and understanding of the project.

Specific issues:

- In order to evaluate the degree to which the PAR approach has been applied in the LET'S project, the following aspects have been developed:
 - Common guidelines that apply to all partners.
 - A system for evaluating and monitoring the degree of implementation.
- In deliverable D1.3 PAR report scheduled for month 24, the evolution of the application of the PAR approach in the project and the results obtained through this approach will be shown.





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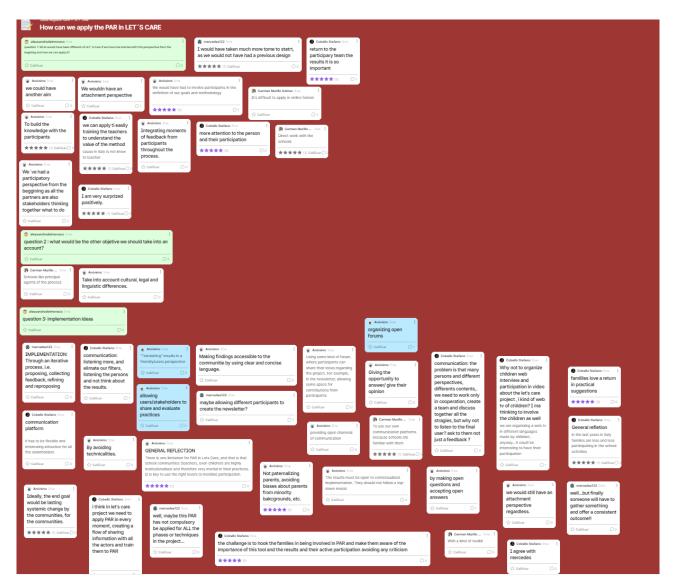
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Annex I: Padlet training sessions PAR

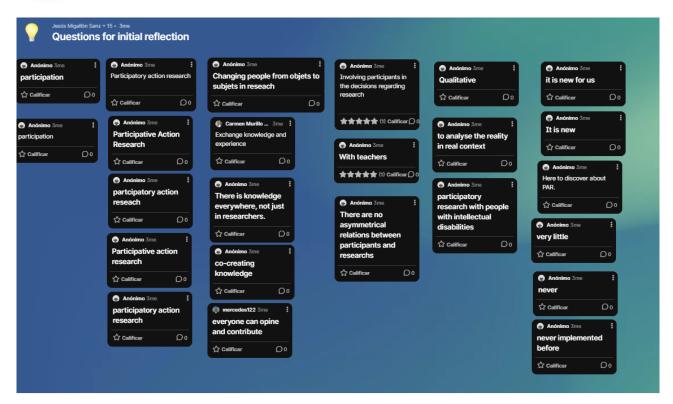


https://padlet.com/jesusmigallon/how-can-we-apply-the-par-in-let-s-care-go38i2vptvtce3jn





D1.2 –PAR training manual and infographics on PAR activities during project (1)



https://padlet.com/jesusmigallon/questions-for-initial-reflection-bh66ahpec84cckrg





Annex II: Audiovisual material PAR

Here you can watch some videos. Some of them explain the PAR perspective, to review the theoretical part. Other videos are presentations of specific projects, so that we can visualise the application of the perspective to very different contexts and objectives.

1. What is participatory action research?

Institute of Development Studies

This video provides a basic introduction to Participatory Action Research, explaining its fundamentals and principles.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ISI7JKQuxw&t=5s

2. Participatory Action Research (PAR) with children

NIHR ARC North East and North Cumbria

An oral presentation on the methodology.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkKN_Q1by6o:18 / 6:54

3. Pa'lante Restorative Justice: Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)

Pa'lante Restorative Justice

A Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) project where they engage in critical action research to address a problem that is relevant to their lived experience at Holyoke High School.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJ5dHttlwRU

4. Community Based Research In Action

An example of research and action to make a Beirut street pedestrianised, taking into account the challenge of meeting the needs of all parties.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t88F5IHlvo

5. Nature as pathway. A participatory action research project

A project pioneering examples in Finland of Green Care practices, nature-based activities with a social innovation purpose





https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2qL xI8Rfs

6. Youth-Led Peacebuilding: Participatory Action Research

United States Institute of Peace

This video documents an initiative undertaken in Kenya in 2017 and 2018 and explores its utility and effectiveness as an approach for youth-led peacebuilding in marginalized communities marked by violent extremism.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvsNeKlbbss

7. PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Focus on co-generation of knowledge with community-level stakeholders in Kenya

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zekv0ouN6og

8. Participatory Action Research (PAR) Social Mapping

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In this video we can see an example of a social mapping workshop to identify the most pressing social, economic, political, police and cultural problems/needs of communities.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPF9d5EkS8Y

9. Participatory Action Research - Finding solutions for pastoralists to increase climate resilience

Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania

Here is another practical example of the PAR application, Farmer-Centred Research (FCRP) in Tanzania. It is a research platform that has helped farmers to obtain practical solutions to their agricultural and livestock problems.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHyMy-rRdoE

10. Participatory Action Research in a Fiji Context

Another example from the Fiji context

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32ufnXCV4W8

11. Participatory Learning and Action approaches to improve food and nutrition security in India.





A project to improve nutrition knowledge and hygiene among women and Anganwadi Workers in Madhya Pradesh.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkxA-uZFo7E

12. Health Systems Strengthening - Participatory Action Research in Guatemala

A participatory action research project in Guatemala, funded by the Director's Catalyst Fund at LSTM, that co-designed a tool for health leaders and community partners to assess and improve urban health governance (presentation)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUSzH08Y4YA

