

Issue 59 of **Participatory Learning and Action** will be co-published by IIED and CTA in **June 2009**

in printed format. A CD-based multilingual and multimedia (English and French) version will follow. Most articles in this special issue are based on presentations made at the Web2

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Dev conference 2007: Participatory Web for Development, held in Rome, 24

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September 2007 and related follow-up events which took place in 2008.

About this special issue

There are dozens of emerging interactive web applications and services (often referred to as the participatory web, or Web 2.0). These can enhance the ways we create, share, and publish information. But these technical opportunities also bring challenges that we need to understand and grasp. This special issue will seek to address issues such as:

- How can Web 2.0 applications be used for development?
- What are the challenges and barriers to people's participation?
- How do we address factors such as access, equity, control, and oversight?
- Can Web 2.0 applications challenge fundamental social inequalities?

This special issue publishes a collection of articles, providing working examples, theory and reflection on Web 2.0 practice in development.

Articles include information about the technologies and applications used, but without excessive technical detail. They explore issues such as:

- Implementing methodologies, giving consideration to issues of power in the process;
- Practical outcomes of such approaches; and
- Critical analysis of the lessons learnt, the challenges, and ideas for ways forward.

Additional resources

Aside from the articles in this special issue, we have our usual In Touch section, which includes reviews of resources – books, videos, CD-ROMs, websites, and Web 2.0 tools. The CD version will include also a video-documentary produced by CTA and people's TV on Web 2.0 applications used among farmers in Africa.

About the guest editors

Most issues of Participatory Learning and Action have a special theme section, as well as a selection of general articles and regular features. Special issues draw on the expertise of guest editors to provide up-to-the minute accounts of the development and use of participatory methods in specific fields.

The guest editors for this special issue are Jon Corbett, Ben Garside and Holly Ashley. Jon Corbett is Assistant Professor at the Centre for Social, Spatial and Economic Justice at the University of British Columbia-Okanagan, Canada, and also a member of the Web2forDev Steering Committee. Holly Ashley is one of the Co-Editors of the Participatory Learning and Action series published by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Ben Garside is a web developer and researcher with the Sustainable Markets Group at IIED. Ben is currently working on a pilot project to explore the use of Web 2.0 tools in development, and their impact on livelihoods.

The editorial process

All articles are peer-reviewed by our team of International Editorial Advisors, all of whom are experienced participatory development practitioners, as well as 'expert' reviewers who are familiar with participatory web technologies and approaches.

About the series

The **Participatory Learning and Action** series aims to provide a forum for all those engaged in participatory work – community workers, activists and researchers – to share their experiences, reflections and innovations with others. The series is of a practical nature and seeks to publish frank accounts, address issues of immediate value, encourage innovation, and act as a 'voice from the field'.

For more information about the Participatory Learning and Action series, including free downloads of previous issues, visit: www.planotes.org

Subscriptions to PLA are free to individuals and organisations from the South and to community/voluntary groups from the North with limited or no funding for resources. We ask individuals and organisations from the North (including those based in the South) to pay a modest subscription. This helps support the cost of free subscriptions in the South. For more information visit: www.planotes.org/subscribe.html

This issue will also be available via CTA's online catalogue: <http://catalogue-en.cta.int> .
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