

## **Final Evaluation Seminar – Pesqueira, November 2005**

### **Statements arising from the Project Seminar, held in Pesqueira on 17 November 2005**

I identified, in the discourse of women and men involved in the KaR/DFID Project, a satisfaction not only because they were part of the Project, but also because they felt part of a successful initiative. Among other important aspects present in the various speeches delivered, it was highlighted the desire for continuation of the project with the same focus and following the same lines of action. I also noticed the great importance in regards to its goals and focus on education. There was a great exchange of knowledge among different parties. The project also contributed to introduce several changes on the livelihoods of the local population.


It is my understanding that the main elements which contributed to the success of the project were the legitimacy of the project from the effective participation of the involved parties, especially community members who gave their opinion about all aspects, including in decision-making. Once the population is involved to the extent they were, education plays a very important role as a permanent tool to multiply actions which, in this context, regard the important resource which is water.

*Prof. Ricardo Ferreira, Diretor do INFOC*

Due to the reliance on participative methodology, which is applied on this Project, I observed that the communities absorbed well all of the teaching and training done along the implementation of the Project. I also noticed that this was the most successful project among the ones in which I have participated and this is due to the high involvement of the communities in all of the actions of the Project. As a result of their participation, community members showed the desire to change, to exchange knowledge and to learn about practices that can be applied at their communities on a daily basis.

I believe that an important point about this work was that there was no paternalistic type of relationship involved and, on the contrary, there was a great intention to cause positive changes in the behaviour of the local population. It is more important to share knowledge about how to fish than to give the fish.

*Prof. Ronaldo Freire, UFRPE*

  
**17 and 18 November 2005**  
**São José Seminary**  
**Pesqueira**

Adélia Branco

The KaR Project Final Evaluation Seminar took place at the Seminary São José in Pesqueira and counted with the participation of the Project team members, community members, representatives of the Municipal Government in Pesqueira, teachers, health agents, Xukuru representatives, representatives of partner institutions such as CARITAS, UFRPE, Consutitory and INFOC as well as of invited institutions such as, FUNTEPE, Renascer project, CPRH and CPRM, which represented the State and Federal Governments as well as funding institutions. The total number of participants was 115 individuals. The Seminar was mostly conducted by the Advisory Group members and facilitated by Adélia Branco. The Seminar had the following Agenda:

**Agenda**

**Day 01 – 17/10/05 (Thursday)**

8:30 - 9:15 – Registration and Coffee

9:15 - Welcome Remarks

Jan van Wonderen  
Abelardo Montenegro  
Adelia Branco  
Thaisa Almeida

9:45 – KaR Project Overview

Project Team Members and Advisory Group Members

10:30 – Project Evaluation

Advisory Group Members

11:30 – Questions and Discussions

12:30 – Lunch

14:00 – Environmental Education Programme: An Overview

Maria da Paz and Iran

14:30 – The Environmental Education Programme at the Community Level

Teachers from each of the communities

15:30 – The Importance of Partnership for the Sustainability of the Project

Invited Speakers from various Institutions

16:00 – Launching of the Book for the Students  
Jan van Wonderen

16:45 – Closing Remarks  
Jan van Wonderen

17:00 – Cocktail for the Participants

### **Day 02 – 18/10/05 (Friday)**

9:00 – Visit of participants from Recife to the Fleixeira Velha School

11:00 Return of Participants to Recife

### **Day 1 – 17/11/05**

#### **Morning Session**

The Project Manager, Jan van Wonderen, delivered the opening remarks by welcoming everyone to the Seminar. At that occasion, he invited Seu Djalma, a community representative of Rosário to say a prayer. The Project Manager then said that although he was going to say a few words about the Project, he wanted to highlight the fact that what was most important was what the participants had to say about the project, especially community members. He stated that the main goal of the project was the reduction of poverty in areas affected by the scarcity of water. The main focus was on education, not only formal education at schools, but education at the community level focussing on the sustainable management of land and water. It is through education that sustainability can be achieved as those who learn can disseminate the lessons learned about water and land management. He added that the success of the Project did not depend on the project team members, but on the participants of the Seminar as they were the ones who could actually contribute to the sustainability of the actions. “I do not see the end of the project in a month from now, but the beginning of a new phase”, stated the Project Manager. He said that if he returned in three or four years and the actions had advanced, he could actually see whether this Project had been successful. To finalise, he thanked the participation of all.

Professor Abelardo Montenegro, a member of the TE team from UFRPE, said that it had been very fulfilling for UFRPE to be a partner institution on this Project as communities had such a great participation on the work. Thaisa, who was substituting Suzana Montenegro of UFPE, gave a welcome to the participants and said that she was looking forward to hearing to the participants in order to know what the Project had meant to them.

Adelia welcomed all of the participants and said that it was very good to have arrived at the evaluation stage. She invited Iran and Maria da Paz to talk about their impressions.

Iran said that as a soil scientist, it was very good for him to have participated to the Project team as it was an important learning experience for him. He said his role was to serve as a bridge between the technical and the social spheres and that dealing with both areas was very fulfilling. Maria da Paz said that it was very good for her to participate to the Project as a woman and as an education specialist at rural schools. She also said that the Project focus on education with a focus on water and land management provided the communities the opportunity to discussing their daily problems and try to seek solutions for them. This will certainly lead to a change on their attitude.

Prof. Abelardo Montenegro said that this was an important moment for the evaluation of the work and that he wanted to know whether the communities had understood the reasons for the application of technical actions such as monitoring the water salinity. He said that UFRPE will continue the work with the communities and invited Prof. Ronald Freire to talk about his contribution in the sense of elaborating the low cost monitoring equipment to be used.

Prof. Freire talked about his contribution in designing and elaborating the low cost monitoring equipment and said that this showed how the University works for the benefit of poor communities. According to him, the main goal of science should be the improvement on livelihoods of those in need. He then presented some data and compared the low cost equipment with traditional equipment to prove the accuracy of the data collected through the use of low cost equipment.

Jan van Wonderen thanked Prof. Ronaldo and said that this type of contribution from academia was very important.

Thaisa mentioned the important role of community members and invited Seu José of Cafundó to talk about his involvement with the Project. Seu José said that by learning about how to monitor the water, he improved his own life as he was able to have better crops and harvests. He said that if the Project had not been implemented, he could have never benefited as he did not know how to manage water before.

Manoel also shared about his satisfaction working with community members in monitoring activities. He thanked everyone for supporting the work through their involvement.

### **KaR Project Overview**

In order to facilitate the presentation of the Project overview, Adélia talked briefly about the four themes:

- The Use and Storage of Water for Domestic purposes
- Water for Agriculture
- Soil Management for an Improved Retention of Water
- Institutional and Organizational Aspects for the Management of Groundwater

She talked about the reliance on a participative methodology since the inception stage, when community members participated on the collection of data through the use of a

questionnaire. She then started to invite members of the Advisory Group to share their views on the Project.

Socorro, a health agent from Campo Alegre, was the first to speak. She shared the important experience she and other community members had in participating to the survey data collection. She also said that since that initial stage, nothing was imposed by the team members. The health agents from each of the communities were the ones to suggest the sample to be interviewed as they were considered to have the most knowledge of community members and were therefore consulted. She said that this gave them a feeling of empowerment as they felt part of the project by giving their opinions. She concluded by saying that this Project should not end as it contributed to community empowerment. She hopes that all community members will help in the sustainability of the project.

Penha, a health agent from Mutuca also spoke about her participation. Besides contributing for the survey, she and other health agents from Mutuca participated on the Workshop on theme 1 by delivering a theatre performance. She recalled that the SD team members did not impose anything on them, on the contrary, encouraged them to be creative. According to her, the project team members only talked about the theme of water use and storage for domestic purpose and asked whether they would be interested on presenting something on that. They, therefore, wrote a play and performed it on the three workshop sessions. The play was a big success as it dealt with issues that are part of life in the rural communities. It was a good experience for all, she said.

Geraldina, a health agent from Rosário, talked about the importance of gender in the project. She said that water is very closely related to women as women are usually the ones who have to walk long distances to fetch the resource during droughts. Women play therefore a very important role in the context of water management. Geraldina became very emotional when she spoke about a young woman who had a miscarriage because of her contact with pesticides. She asked the farmers to no longer rely on the heavy use of pesticides. She also spoke about her affectionate relation with the project and that although she believes the project will reach sustainability, she regrets the fact that it is ending this year. As a member of the Advisory Group, she said that this project provided satisfaction in many ways. They had the opportunity to visit other sites and to learn about the experiences and also to exchange ideas with people from other communities.

Seu Antônio and Seu Djalma were the ones who volunteered to talk about their experience on Workshop 3 in regards to soil management for an improved retention of water as they participated to the workshop as lecturers. According to Seu Antônio, it was only after participating on this project that he realised that he was a knowledgeable person as usually people tend to rate the farmers experience and knowledge very low and of no importance. Besides providing opportunity for him to share his knowledge through Workshops and the Environmental Education Programme, the project also provided more knowledge as team members always had something innovative to deliver. So, he believes the project had a strong impact on the livelihood of community members.

Seu Djalma mentioned his satisfaction about participating on the project and said that he has never heard of a project such as this one before. He also said that water and soil are two

very important things for farmers and that if the soil receives the proper management, there is more water available. He talked about his own work and how he deals with water and soil management on a daily basis. He added that he has always used mulching and that before this project, his neighbours never believed in him. But now, everyone believes he is doing things in the right way. He said he believes the project will achieve sustainability and that he is willing to contribute to that. However, he will miss all project team members as the experience of working together was very good and he will never forget that.

In order to continue the evaluation by community members, Adélia mentioned the importance of a strong community organisation so that the actions implemented could be successful. She then invited a representative of the Xukuru to share his/her views on the project.

Agnaldo, a Xukuru leader and City councilor in Pesqueira gave a small presentation about the Xukuru social organisation and said that he appreciated the fact that the Xukuru was one of the pilot communities. By Paulo's participation in the workshop on theme 4 (institutional and organisational aspects of groundwater management), he said that the other communities became aware of the Xukuru organisation and that it brought the Xukuru closer to non-Xukuru people. It was an important way to solve conflicts and that if it were not for the project, this would not have happened. He said the Xukuru were now sharing water from the Pão de Açúcar Dam with Campo Alegre (downstream) and that this was due to the project. He also said that he believes in the sustainability of the project and that he will do his best to contribute to that.

Erivaldo, a Xukuru teacher who is also a member of the Advisory Group shared his view on the Project by talking about the importance of the visit to SERTA (local NGO). According to him, it was a unique experience and they will never forget what they learned there. He said that one thing is to hear about people's experience and the other is to actually see it. Montanha, of Campo Alegre also evaluated positively the visit to SERTA and said that it was a special moment for her and the others. She is already engaging in some of the methods for cultivation she saw at SERTA.

Adélia invited Mercês Costa, President of the Bitury Water Users Council in Belo Jardim, who had participated and supported several activities of the Project, to share her view. Mercês said that she views the project as a very important initiative, especially because of its focus on empowerment and education. According to her, we can only contribute to change if we raise people's consciousness and the best way of doing that is through education. She concluded her evaluation by reading the poem "Secrets of Life" and wishing success in the continuation of the project.

Adélia invited Sandra Batinga and Maria Rosa, teachers from Pesqueira and Jataúba and Advisory Group members to evaluate the role of the Advisory Group. According to them, the Advisory Group plays a very important role as it is the arena where all decisions regarding the projects are made. This gives a great deal of responsibility and power to the Group members. Group members also have the opportunity to participate to visits to other places as well as listen to important talks. Group members have therefore the responsibility

to share what they learn with others at their communities. They said they were both very happy to participate in the group.

At the end of the session, there was not much discussion due to the advance of time, but Adélia said that there was going to be time for discussion in the afternoon.

## **Afternoon**

### **Environmental Education Programme: an Overview**

Jan van Wonderen initiated this session by saying that his idea to implement a land and water focussed Environmental Education Programme was a result of his contact with Prof. Ronaldo Freire. As he became aware of the low cost monitoring equipment elaborated by Prof. Freire, he thought students could be involved in monitoring activities and learn how to use the equipment. He added that as everyone knows, education implies long term changes and the involvement of youngsters can promote sustainable changes. He was happy with the outcome as he was able to follow the evolution of the Programme from a distance through the reports. According to him, teachers and the Secretariat of Education involved should not only think about reaching the young population, but the adults as well.

Following Jan's initial remarks, the teachers from the various communities initiated their presentations.

The teachers from Mutuca were the first to speak. They spoke about how the curriculum was adjusted to the Environmental Education perspective. Environmental Education is a transversal theme and instead of being treated individually, it crosses all disciplines. After explaining the particularities of that, the students from Mutuca performed a play. The play was created by the students themselves and featured how reporters dealt with the issue.

Following that, there was the presentation of the Xukuru, which was initiated by a presentation of students from the Pão de Açúcar school. They presented a play about the Earth Planet and the role of water in the planet. After the performance, the teachers talked about the impact of the programme on the school and on the lives of the Xukuru people. They said that the whole community was benefiting, not only the students as the latter shared what they had learned at school with their parents.

It is important to mention that the Xukuru as well as all the other schools, brought poems, painting and other materials produced by the students. The material was displayed at the Seminar.

The third presentation was by the Mimoso Seco group. Instead of engaging in a theatre performance, the students from Mimoso Seco read the texts they had written about land and water management and monitoring and showed their drawings. There was also the presentation of a video they did on the Environmental Education Programme. The video featured the activities undertaken in the field, in which the students as well as the teachers and farmers took place.



Seu Djalma talked about the experience he is having as a farmer to participate in the programme. He said it has been an important measure to raise the self-esteem of farmers, like him, who did not have the opportunity to spend much time at school. By involving farmers, the project is also placing high value on local and traditional knowledge and this will contribute for students to rating the rural areas as important and instead of migrating to cities, stay in their place of origin.

The other presentations focussed on how the teachers viewed the future of the Environmental Education Programme. According to them, the first step, which is the most difficult one, has been taken, that was comprised of the training of the teachers. The second step has been the implementation of the programme which is underway and the third step will be the continuation of the programme. Since the first two steps have been taken successfully, it is very probably that the programme will continue and reach sustainability. This is the case, especially because there is strong support and interest from the Secretariats of Education in Pesqueira, and Jataúba and the Xukuru Association of teachers.

Maria da Paz spoke about the support the KaR project was providing to the schools through the provision of basic materials which the schools lacked such as, illustrations and maps. She also said that before the implementation of the project, environmental issues were dealt with isolated and the teachers lacked knowledge to deal with the subject in a systematic way. The training and monitoring of the programme have been essential for its sustainability. Teachers have had the opportunity to discuss problems and clarify issues which they are not familiar with and have also had the opportunity to participate in the elaboration of the material. She said it was good that the programme is being dealt with through an interdisciplinary way. The project also offered the opportunity to insert Environmental Education in the school curriculum and this shows that it will achieve sustainability.

Iran stated that the most important factor for the project to achieve sustainability is to have the teachers involved and this is certainly happening. Furthermore, the involvement of the farmers with the teachers and students shows that education is including the whole community and does not exclude anyone.

Jan van Wonderen thanked everyone for their presentations and said that he hoped that the programme was indeed going to reach sustainability. He also said that he was going to contact several people and offices in Recife to find out whether anyone could keep supporting the implementation of the programme.

### **The Importance of Partnership for the Sustainability of the Project**

This session was devoted for the participation of the partners, i.e. the various representatives of institutions which had been invited to the Seminar, to give their opinion about the project and its sustainability.

Antônio Guedes, the representative of the Renascer Project (World Bank supported) was the first one to speak. He complimented the project team and the community members and said that he believed the Environmental Education Programme will achieve sustainability as it was planted with solid roots. He gave a brief presentation of the Renascer project in the municipality of Pesqueira and encouraged local Associations to apply for projects. He said that they were going to meet with Jan next week and that he was going to see whether the Renascer Project could support the KaR Project follow up.

Marco Aurélio, the FUNTEPE representative, said that he was pleased to see the results of the Project and that it was good to know the Universities were involved and producing low cost equipment. He said that academia is sometimes very distant from real life and that their involvement on actions like that was very encouraging. He said FUNTEPE as a State institution would be willing to support in whatever way needed and that he hoped the project achieved sustainability.

Enjorlas Medeiros, a geologist from CPRM, the Brazilian Geological Services, who has done extensive work on groundwater in Northeast Brazil, called attention to the importance of women in the context of the project. He said that women can give great sustainability to actions as they usually transmit knowledge better than men as they are responsible to raise their children and therefore interact a lot with them. He said he was impressed with the project and the participative methodology used and he was sure that the project was going to achieve sustainability due to the high involvement of community members.

Tereza Brandão, a specialist on Environmental Education from CPRH, the state Environmental Institution, said that she was happy to participate in the Seminar and that CPRH would be very much willing to support a follow up of the Project, especially in the area of Environmental Education. Beyond the Environmental Education programme, she said that she was impressed with the Advisory Group and the way it works. She had never seen anything like that in any other project. She congratulated everyone and wish for the sustainability of the project.

Chico Siqueira, the representative of SERTA, gave a brief explanation about the work done by SERTA NGO and said he was happy to hear the positive remarks of the Advisory Group members who visited SERTA. He said that the KaR project is in the right way in terms of reducing poverty and contributing to a better livelihood of the population. Education is key and academia should be involved. He said he hoped the project achieved sustainability and that SERTA would be willing to support a follow up of the project.

Cleide Oliveira, the secretary of Education of the Municipality of Pesqueira said that the Seminar was very productive. She thanked Jan for the support to the Environmental Education Programme. She said that the role of the University was to work with the people and not to be isolated from the real world. She said the project was important because it valued rural livelihood. She also said that since the teachers and students are all very involved, the Environmental Education Programme was probably going to achieve sustainability and that the municipality will continue supporting the actions.

After everyone had spoken, Prof. Ronaldo Freire gave away three rain gauges to the participants and said that as the Head of the Department on Rural Technology at UFRPE, he would like to encourage the teachers to work on a post-graduate degree at UFRPE as there are several courses which would be of interest to them.

### **Launching of the Book for the Students**

Jan van Wonderen launched the book published for the students. He said that the books looked small and simple but that actually they were very rich in content. He talked about the content of the books and congratulated Maria da Paz for writing part of the text in the form of poems.

After that, he gave a few copies to some of the participants and invited Maria da Paz to speak about the work.

Maria da Paz said she was happy to have being able to contribute and that she was sure that the students were going to make good use of that.

Jan invited the students who made the illustrations for the book to speak about their experience and they all said that they never thought they would have such an opportunity in their lives. Jan gave each of them a t-shirt with the name of the project.

After the launching of the book, Jan closed the Seminar by thanking all of the participants. He said that it had been a pleasure working on this project and that he hoped the actions will be sustainable. He said that that collaboration and participation were very important to achieve success in anything that is done. He said he hoped to return there someday and to see the fruits of the seeds that were planted during the KaR project.



**Day 2 – 18 November**  
**9:00 -10:30**

The second day of the Seminar comprised a visit to the Municipal School Francisco Xavier de Freitas, located in Fleixeira Velha. There were approximately 15 of the Seminar participants, the majority of whom were from Recife and Advisory Group members. The reason why not all of the Seminar participants took part in the visit was the high cost involved. In case everyone had participated, they would have to stay overnight in Pesqueira and that would incur cost for the project, therefore, the visit was initially planned for those who were not as familiar with the Environmental Education Programme as the community and Advisory Group members.

The visitors had the opportunity to meet with students from one classroom. There were 30 students from ages 7 to 10. The teacher, Vanda Maria da Silva Marinho, talked about the material she was covering. She also explained how she is covering the various subjects in the different disciplines: Portuguese, Mathematics, Arts, Sciences and History. According to her, the Environmental Education Programme has been very successful. After receiving the training, she is more confident to teach about the subject and the students are very interested in the material being delivered. They also enjoy engaging in monitoring activities and the participation of the farmers in the classes. According to the teacher, there were only three students who had presented difficulties in understanding the monitoring activities. For the teacher, the experience of working with the farmers has been unique as they always contribute with their practical experiences and make the classes very dynamic.

The students displayed their drawings, paintings and poems. They also gave several presentations to the visitors such as performing plays, singing songs, reading poems they wrote and explaining about the monitoring activities. After the presentation in the classroom, the students showed how they monitor water by explaining how they used the rain gauges and other equipment. The students also talked about the organic agriculture garden they planted at the school external area with the help from the farmers involved in teaching: Seu Djalma and Seu Geraldo.

There were several questions to the students, the teacher and the farmers Seu Djalma and Seu Geraldo and the visitors evaluated the visit as very positive.

After the activity, the teachers thanked the presence of all and the contribution of the KaR Project in supporting the implementation of the Environmental Education Programme.





Sustainable Use of Groundwater in the Semi-arid Ribbon Valleys of Northeast Brazil

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