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**PAR and Capacity-building: How can collaborative research lead to enhanced citizenship in the community-at-large?**

Collaborative research can and should lead to enhanced citizenship. In the course of interactions between PAR researchers and community insiders, opportunities ought to be created for both knowledge transfer (sharing information and skills with others) and knowledge co-generation (uncovering and documenting knowledge). These new knowledge (including methods of learning from experience) ought to enhance the capacity of community members to participate effectively in the public policy-making process. The researcher’s outsider perspective should offer other short-term and long-term benefits as well. Appreciation of other (often contrary) perspectives can help insiders deepen their understanding of how their segment of the community is perceived and, in the process, allow them to argue for their interests more effectively. At the same time, PAR relationships should help social researchers deepen their understanding of actual community dynamics, thus enhancing the relevance and legitimacy of their research.

It can be difficult for communities on the front lines of difficult social and economic issues to take a wider perspective that enables them to learn how similar problems have been dealt with in other places. PAR researchers brings the benefits of advanced social science research methods and, presumably, broader (comparative) understanding of the issues at hand. This combination can be productive, enhancing the capacities of the community.

We want to emphasize that the community is not the only beneficiary of “enhanced citizenship.” In jointly defining research objectives, the PAR researcher must think in practical terms about the utility to communities of the results of his or her research—something that is not always at the top of the list for academic researchers. In our view, taking these concerns into account enhances the level of citizenship of the PAR scholar.

Perhaps the most robust form of “enhanced citizenship” is the way in which PAR interactions can unify the researcher and the community that is being studied. Placing emphasis on the initial stage of jointly defining goals and the scope and style of interaction between the researcher and the community can get both “sides” to think as a unit.